Indian School of Business

Consulting Prep Casebook

2025

Copyright Notices & Issues

This casebook is the refined **edition** prepared by the ISB Consulting Club, Hyderabad, for the PGP Class of 2026. It has been created as a student-led initiative, with the sole purpose of supporting the learning, preparation, and professional development of MBA students. A huge thanks to all the previous PGP classes for their combined efforts passed on with the earlier editions of this casebook.

Prior Edition - Sep 2023
Latest Edition - Oct 2025

Acknowledgements

The Consulting Casebook is a collective effort by the consulting club of ISB Hyderabad campus, that builds upon the experiences and insights of the ISB community across placement seasons. It serves as a comprehensive resource to support your preparation for consulting, strategy, and general management roles. As we refine its design and content, we remain mindful of the legacy entrusted to us by our alumni, whose contributions have been the cornerstone of this initiative.

This edition brings together frameworks, industry primers, and real cases from past placement cycles to help you navigate the demanding learning curve of case preparation with greater confidence and clarity.

We are deeply grateful to the Class of 2025, our alumni, and professionals from recruiting firms who generously shared their time and guidance in mentoring our peers. We also extend our appreciation to consulting clubs at peer B-schools across the country, whose resources have been instrumental in shaping parts of this casebook.

To all aspiring consultants: approach this book as a structured guide to your preparation journey. Leverage the sections systematically, complement your learning with external resources, and most importantly, stay consistent in your practice.

Wishing you the very best in your placements and beyond.

Warm Regards
Consulting Club
Class of 2026

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Forward from the President & Chief Editor

We are deeply grateful to the ISB's ecosystem of professors, alums, experts and our batchmate for their support and contributions. Their expertise and inputs have enriched the section and ensured a stronger, more relevant resource for your preparation.

This casebook marks the beginning of a legacy. It is the first edition of what we hope will become a proud tradition, a casebook built by the students of ISB, for students, that evolves with each passing year. It signifies our collective ambition to further cement ISB's reputation as a premier, consulting-focused business school.

While we are proud of this foundational effort, we view it as a starting point. We have laid the first stone, and we wholeheartedly believe in the power of continuity. It is our sincere hope that future cohorts of the PGP and PGP-YL programs will take up this mantle, building upon this work to elevate the ISB Casebook to a top-tier industry resource in the editions to come.

Thank you for being a part of this journey.

Sincerely
Tejas Ganotra | President, Consulting Club
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Consulting Club Team (Class of 2026)

Overall Index

Consulting Prep 101

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What is Consulting?

Consulting is a professional service provided by individuals or firms with expertise in a specific field or industry. Consultants are hired by organizations or individuals to provide expert advice, analysis, and recommendations on various business challenges and opportunities.

Consultants typically work on a project basis, collaborating closely with the client to understand their needs, assess the current situation, and develop strategies or solutions to address the identified issues.

Expert Advice

Consultants offer specialized knowledge and experience to provide tailored recommendations for clients.

Problem Solving

Consultants analyse complex challenges, identify root causes, and develop effective solutions.

Value Creation

Consulting optimizes processes, enhances efficiency, and drives growth for organizations, resulting in improved performance and profitability.

Type of consulting

Consulting

Management Consulting

Strategy
- Corporate Strategy
- Economic Policy
- Mergers & Acquisitions
- Organisational Strategy
- Functional Strategy

Operations
- Process Management
- Supply Chain
- Procurement
- Finance Operations
- Outsourcing
- Project Management

Human Resources
- Organisational Change
- HR Technology
- Learning & Development
- Benefits & Rewards
- Talent Management

Financial Advisory
- Corporate Finance
- Restructuring
- Actuarial Services
- Risk Management
- Real Estate Advisory
- Forensics & Litigation

Technology
- IT Advisory
- ERP Implementation
- Data Analytics
- App Development
- System Integration
- Enterprise Architecture

Who's who of Consulting? (1/4)

Particulars	McKinsey	Bain & Company	Boston Consulting Group	L.E.K	Accenture
Type of Consulting	Strategy	Strategy	Strategy	Strategy	Strategy
Focus areas	Multi-industry	Multi-industry	Multi-industry	Education	Business, Technology, Operations
Typical roles offered to an MBA graduate	Junior Associate	Junior Consultant, Consultant	Senior Associate, Consultant	Consultant	Analyst, Consultant, Manager
Location	Gurgaon, Mumbai, Bangalore, Chennai, Hyderabad, Kolkata	Gurgaon, Mumbai, Bangalore	Gurgaon, Mumbai, Bangalore, Chennai	Mumbai	Gurgaon, Mumbai, Bangalore
Recruitment process	Resume shortlisting, 2-3 case interviews	Resume shortlisting, 2-3 case interviews	Resume shortlisting, 2-3 case interviews	Resume + cover letter shortlisting, 2-3 case interviews	Resume shortlisting, 2-3 case interviews

Note: This is not an exhaustive list and does not necessarily represent status quo processes of companies. The information might differ from the one stated here

Who's who of Consulting? (2/4)

Particulars	Alvarez & Marshal	Kearney	Arthur D. Little	Analysys Mason	Samagra
Type of Consulting	Strategy	Strategy	Strategy	Strategy	Advisory
Focus areas	Turnaround, M&A	Sourcing, Procurement, Operations	Multi-industry	TMT	Governance
Typical roles offered to an MBA graduate	Manager, Senior Associate	Senior Analyst	Senior Business Analyst	Associate Consultant	Senior Associate, Consultant
Location	Mumbai	Gurgaon, Mumbai	Gurgaon, Mumbai, Bangalore	Gurgaon	Delhi, Bhubaneswar, Shimla, Chandigarh, Lucknow
Recruitment process	Resume shortlisting, 2-3 case interviews	Resume shortlisting, 2-3 case interviews	Resume shortlisting, 2-3 case interviews	Resume shortlisting, 2-3 case interviews	Resume + video shortlisting, 2-3 case interviews

Note: This is not an exhaustive list and does not necessarily represent status quo processes of companies. The information might differ from the one stated here

Who's who of Consulting? (3/4)

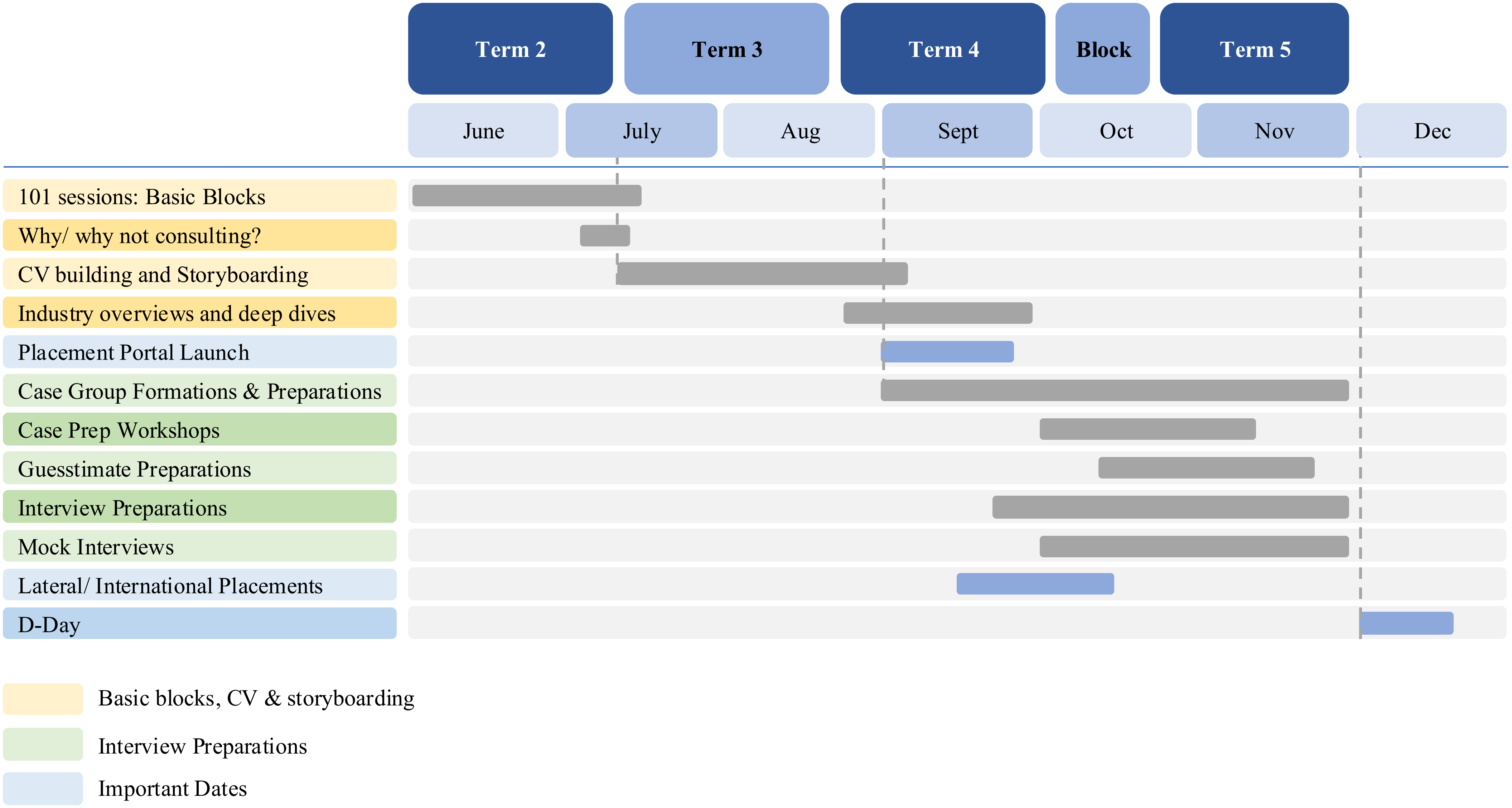
Particulars	ZS Associates	Diamond	Dalberg	Seimens	FTI Consulting
Type of Consulting	Strategy	Strategy	Strategy	Strategy	Advisory
Focus areas	Healthcare & Others	Multi-industry	Policy advisory & implementation	Digital transformation	Finance sector
Typical roles offered to an MBA graduate	Consultant –Business Ops, Tech, Decision Analytics	Associate – experienced, senior across functions	Consultant, Senior Consultant	Consultant	Consultant
Location	Pune, Bangalore, Gurgaon	Bangalore	Delhi, Mumbai	Mumbai	Delhi, Mumbai
Recruitment process	Resume shortlisting, 2-3 case interviews	Resume shortlisting, 2-3 case interviews	Resume shortlisting, 2-3 case interviews	Resume shortlisting, 2-3 case interviews	Resume, cover letter, 2-3 case interviews

Who's who of Consulting? (4/4)

Particulars	Deloitte	KPMG	EY	PWC	Infosys
Type of Consulting	Strategy	Strategy	Strategy	Strategy	Strategy
Focus areas	Multi-industry	Multi-industry	Multi-industry	Multi-industry	IT transformation
Typical roles offered to an MBA graduate	Consultant	Associate Consultant, Consultant	Associate, Consultant	Associate, Associate Consultant	Business Dev Exe, Consultant – Finacle, Business Consultant / Senior Consultant
Location	PAN India	Gurgaon, Mumbai	Bangalore and more	Bangalore, Delhi, Mumbai, Pune, Ahmedabad, Hyderabad, Kolkata, Chennai	NCR, Bangalore, Pune, Mumbai, Chennai, Hyderabad
Recruitment process	Resume shortlisting, 2-3 case interviews	Resume shortlisting, 2-3 case interviews	Resume shortlisting, 2-3 case interviews	Resume shortlisting, 2-3 case interviews	Resume + video shortlisting, 2-3 case interviews

Note: This is not an exhaustive list and does not necessarily represent status quo processes of companies. The information might differ from the one stated here

Timelines



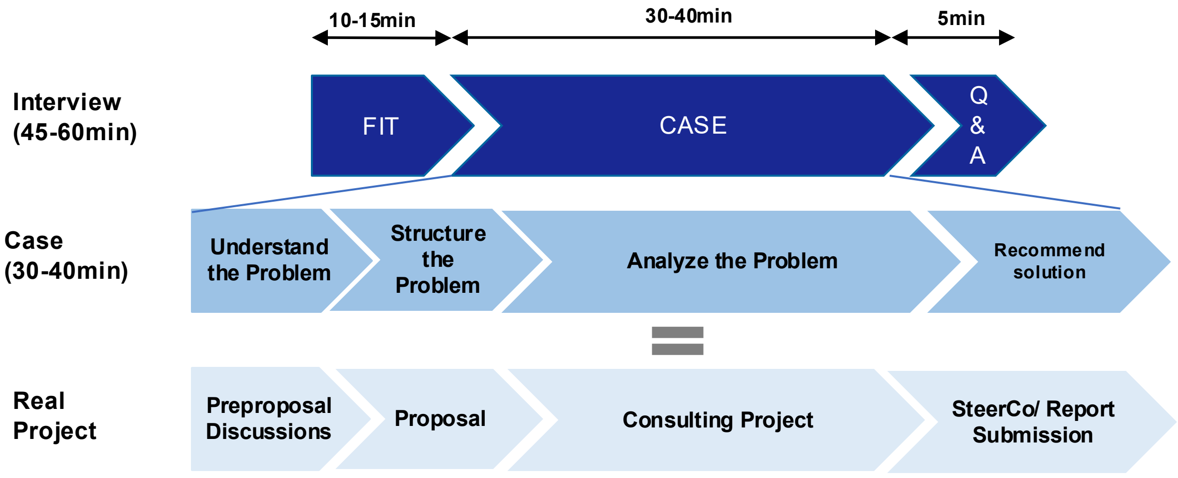
Term 2
Term 3
Term 4
Block
Term 5
June
July
Aug
Sept
Oct
Nov
Dec
101 sessions: Basic Blocks
Why/ why not consulting?
CV building and Storyboarding
Industry overviews and deep dives
Placement Portal Launch
Case Group Formations & Preparations
Case Prep Workshops
Guesstimate Preparations
Interview Preparations
Mock Interviews
Lateral/ International Placements
D-Day
Basic blocks, CV & storyboarding
Interview Preparations
Important Dates

Process and Evaluation

A case interview is a hypothetical business situation that is presented during an interview process to determine how a candidate thinks about a particular problem and how they would solve it.
e.g. *Your client is a coffee chain struggling with profitability issues, how can you help?*

Process

Application Screening	Assessment	First Round	Final/ Partner round
Screening of CV and Cover letter	Assessments of various types: - Psychometric - Numeric/logical thinking - Case solving	2 interviews, typically conducted by Sr Consultants or Managers	2 interviews conducted by Principal/Director and Partners (at least 1 Partner interview)



Evaluation

Problem Structuring
Taking a very large, ambiguous problem and breaking it up into smaller pieces that are easier to digest, analyze, and address

Synthesis
Digesting those facts and developing an insight into what the client should do and why they should do it.

Analytical Thinking
Addressing problem in systematic, structured way so that the approach can be backed by logic, analysis and data

Structured Communication
Ability to engage in persuasive communication using story lining, top-down communication etc.

After Shortlist

What it entails?

- Consulting firms allot one of their people (generally, someone less tenured – perhaps at an Associate level) to guide candidates through the recruiting process with the firm. This entails helping candidates with cases, inputs about the firm and connecting with leadership/relevant stakeholders from time to time
- The cadence of conversations is mutually agreed upon between buddies and tends to be once a week.

Why are they important

- The good news is, buddy interactions are non-evaluative. This means no hiring decisions are based on input from buddies. Therefore, the potential negative consequences of buddy feedback are muted.
- However, it is important to note that the recruiting process is after-all human led. Feedback from buddies does transfer to those who make decisions either formally or informally. Making a positive (first) impression offers a disproportionate advantage. Therefore, if one puts their best foot forward – be it in cases, interactions, or the likes – the upside is huge.

Preparation

- There is no real preparation required for the buddy process, besides always bringing you're A-game to these interactions. You may misfire on case(s), but if you are pushing to imbibe all the feedback you got, you are covered.

Special Note

- The above holds true for consulting firms at large, apart from boutique consulting firms & consulting firms that do not hire in large numbers
- In such cases, the buddy process is used as a soft evaluation and feedback from these interactions is factored in while making final decisions.
- Candidates have, in the past, reported receiving questions from buddies such as "Which firm are you leaning towards", which is atypical for those that hire critical mass from ISB.
- While the approach we prescribe remains largely the same, it is important that candidates be mindful about the things they share with their buddies.

Case groups

Forming case groups is one of the most important steps in effectively preparing for the case interviews. Forming and effectively utilizing case groups to practice mock case/normal interviews is paramount

Size:
Ideal case group should consist of 4 to 6 students from diverse backgrounds / industries /functions. Having a diverse case group will help students equip themselves with diverse industry business acumen and concepts that might come handy during the interview day

Timelines:
Case groups should be formed 45 to 60 days prior the D-day/interview day. Ideal time to start practicing cases within the case group is also 45 to 60 days prior the D-day

Workplan:
Case groups should be used to discuss all the questions that can be fired at candidates during interviews – Cases, Personal Interview Questions, Industry Frameworks, Guesstimates

In the event a person is not able to form a case group:

Try to schedule 30 to 60 minutes slots with your friends and solve cases. Try to strike a balance between diversity and stability – practice cases with both, a range of people and yet limit the number of people to those who are thoughtful about the feedback they share and your time

Myth Buster:

Contrary to popular belief, the case group is more a space to discuss feedback, cases, insights and learnings than cases themselves. Case groups may or may not be used to practice cases among themselves, but it is imperative that all time together is utilized to discuss takeaways

Case interview preparation

Steps:

1. Watch **Victor Cheng videos / read case in point** to get acquainted with case conduction
2. Read case frameworks from this book. Also glance through frameworks from other books, if needed.
3. Pick up **one framework at a time**, discuss with study group and make notes. Practice 2-3 cases per day with your study group / alum buddies
4. Conduct **20-25 min interview in pairs** in your case group and then discuss what could have been done better
5. Reflect on the cases at the end of the day maintaining **a log table** with improvement areas and learning from each case
6. Go through the log book at the end of 4-5 days to check if you have **improved upon your mistakes**. (This book serves as a great resource for revision even before D-day)
7. After you are comfortable with a framework, move on to another. **Do not spend too much time on one**. Move ahead while still practicing fewer cases on the previous one.
8. Leave ample time at the end to practice **abstract cases** as they come in plenty during actual interviews. Make sure you are comfortable with guesstimates, if not, practice
9. Practice cases randomly with **people out of your study group** to get familiar with different personalities and note down feedbacks

Interviewers are necessarily looking to see you show your prowess in solving a case across four broad steps. *[REMEMBER 3S -> Scope, Structure, Summary leads to 4th S Success]*
Define the Problem -> Structure the Problem -> Analyse logically to develop answer -> Synthesize the discussion

General Tips

- Make **a detailed plan with your group** on how to go about the prep with sufficient time to grasp concepts, practice and reflect.
- While practicing a case, the interviewer [person who prepared the case] would ask the interviewee. Let it be as **formal as possible so that there would not be any jitters on the interview day**. Even **PI questions** can be mixed with the case to be as realistic as possible.
- **Leverage your buddies**. The cases you do with them are truly invaluable because they are in the industry and can give you accurate feedback. Share those feedbacks and cases with your peers and vice versa.
- Discussing **industries from the industry primer with the study group** can be really helpful. This helps in strengthening the concepts.
- **Practicing cases at a particular time during the day** (say morning time when the interviews happen on placement day) builds a habit
- You should try to **cover cases from multiple industries and sectors** to get a decent understanding of various industries. Often, the interviewer can also start discussing about the industry in which the candidate has previously worked.
- Cover **breadth and depth of cases -case group** can make a sheet with different industries and can keep tracking their development in different sectors and whether cases from every industry has been covered or not.
- Running a **case marathon as a simulation of the placement day** is a helpful exercise in which one person gives back to back interviews as on D-day.
- **Take breathers as and when necessary. Do not burn out**. Do not fall into FOMO of solving many cases a day. Remember **Quality > Quantity**.

What it entails?

- Shortlisted candidates are invited to either virtual or in-person meals (generally, dinner) in a bid to get to know them better in informal settings. These sessions involve a plenary session wherein a regional leader talks through their journey/firm's value proposition, and breakouts wherein smaller groups of students interact with firm leaders.

Why are they important

- Let us start off by saying that they do not have a bearing on the final decision around one's candidature, i.e., no hiring decisions are made on this day. However, these dinners are an important way to cast a positive impression on leadership; or, better yet, avoid casting a negative impression.
- At the same time, it is important to remember that these dinners are a good way to evaluate the other way round too. These interactions
with leadership are a pivotal step in evaluating what the culture of the place is like, how one can expect to grow, etc.

How can one prepare for this?

- Preparation for these dinners involves getting smart on 2 things only –

✓ **Perfecting your introduction:** Develop a solid 45-60 second elevator pitch about yourself, which could potentially entail
  - Where you're from
  - Where you've worked
  - What you're passionate about, etc.

People will remember you by your introduction and the confidence you project!

✓ **Asking questions:** Curate a list of questions that display your genuine interest in the firm and/or its work; this could possibly entail
  - Those around an industry you want to work in
  - Those around growth, mobility, etc.
  - Those around the firm's value proposition

Any questions asked for the sake of asking are easy to spot and make one reek of inauthenticity

Guardrails to observe:

Collaborate, not compete:

Do not talk over others - it is meant to be an easy-going conversation among a group of individuals! It is about being a meaningful contributor and not the loudest voice in the room; if some questions remain unanswered, you can always reach out to firm leaders separately

Be a good listener:

Some individuals tend to ask questions only for the sake of asking them, and in that they end up asking questions that have already been answered. This is of course, not good practice and if anything – only places you in bad light. There is also a natural flow to a conversation – also be mindful about when you ask your questions.

What it entails?

- Generally, the first 5-7 minutes of an interview are used by recruiters to get to know the interviewee at a personal level. The questions could be pre-determined (which the recruiter's thought of asking come what may), those based on your CV (which the recruiter might have handy then) and those that come up by way of conversation.

Why are they Important?

- Consulting is a people-led business. Employee evaluations (semi-annual, annual) are based on a people development model, which is anchored around competencies such as –
  – Personal leadership
  – Ability to work in teams
  – Ability to hold a sensible and interesting conversation
- While traditional wisdom dictates Case Interview makes or breaks a candidate's chances, it is the personal interview that helps distinguish one candidate from the other. This is because technical skills are replicable but qualities such as presence and gravitas are not.
- In addition, these conversations are used **to evaluate whether or not the candidate is a culture fit for the** Popularly known as the **'Airport Test',** recruiters look to assess whether or not the candidate would be someone they'd be able to/comfortable talking to if they were stuck at the airport with them on account of a delayed flight.
- Finally, well-begun is half done. Starting the interview on the right note always makes it easier to crack the case – even seemingly twisted ones.

How can one prepare for this?

Preparation for the personal interview involves getting smart on 3 aspects –

- **Resume:** It is incumbent upon the candidate to know everything there is to know about their CV. Questions can be shot off on –
  - the number
  - the context
  - the learnings/takeaways from an experience

  If there is one way to destroy one's credibility during an interview, it is by not being able to answer a resume-based question adequately.
- **HR Questions:** These are questions around your story, strengths, weaknesses and the likes. They are aimed at developing a deeper understanding on who you are at your core and what your aspirations are. Sample questions follow.
- **Questions to Ask:** Asking questions that you genuinely want an answer to displays your (sincere) interest in the firm. Sample questions follow.

Guardrails to observe

STAR STRUCTURE

Stories, especially when pressed for time, come to life when told methodically. Anchoring one's story around the STAR framework is a way to get this quick win in an interview. STAR stands for –

Situation: Set context
Task: What was needed to be done
Action: What was done
Result: What was achieved

Sample HR Questions

Personal

Tell me about yourself

Note: This is one question that you will certainly be asked in the beginning of every interview. Have a crisp one-to-two-minute answer prepared for this (don't overshoot two minutes). Broadly, cover your education, work experience and your interests (mention special achievements, if any). Within the two minutes as well, dedicate the lion's share to your work experience. Make sure you can speak for at least five minutes on anything that you mention when you introduce yourself, because most interviewers will pick queues from this to lead the rest of the interview. Hence, measure each word well and prepare thoroughly for this one.

Do you have other offers? Why would/wouldn't you take our offer over one of the others?

Note: This question can come if you are interviewing later in the day. The response to this question could swing either ways – take a judgement call on how you want to play it.

Personal

- What would you like me to know about you that is not on your resume?
- What are the three most important events of your life?
- What were you doing during this gap of time I see here on your resume?
- Where did you grow up? What are your three major accomplishments?
- What was an experience in your life that you would want to go back and change?
- How would your friends describe you?
- Give me three words to describe yourself
- Enlist your top three qualities

Goal

- What new goals have you established for yourself recently?
- What are your five-to-ten-year career goals?
- What are your career and educational goals?
- What are the attributes of an ideal job for you? If you could do “it” all over again, what would you do differently?
- What are you looking for from this role?
- How long a commitment do you plan to give me?
- What is your ideal job?
- What other types of positions are you considering?
- What kind of boss would you prefer?
- Why are you pursuing this field?
- What would you like your lasting impression to be?

Goal

- Do you have a final statement?
- What are your career options right now?
- How could you have improved your career path?
- What salary are you expecting? In addition to salary, what benefits would most interest you?

Values

- What does “success” mean to you?
- What does “failure” mean to you?
- Which is more important to you: money or the type of job?
- Who do you admire? Why?
- What do you get passionate about?
- Who is your hero, and why?

Experience

- Do you have an offer from the firm you worked with before doing your MBA? If yes, what are your thoughts on the offer?
- If no, why do you think do they not want you back?
- What can you tell me about your past bosses?
- How do you think a former supervisor would describe your work?
- What did you enjoy most about your last employment? Least?
- How did you find your internship experiences?
- Describe the job or the activity, which has had the greatest impact on your career goals

Management style / leadership

- What is your management philosophy?
- Define leadership
- Tell me about a time when you successfully resolved a conflict or disagreed with your boss.
- Give me an example of a leadership role you have held when not everything went as planned.
- What qualities should a successful manager possess? Do you have these attributes (of a good manager)?
- What two attributes are most important in your job?
- Give an example of a situation in which you provided a solution to an employer.
- Give an example of a time in which you worked under deadline pressure.
- Name a point in your life where you turned a negative into a positive.
- Tell me about a decision you have made that you later regretted.
- How do you feel about working overtime?
- Give me an example of how you manage multiple projects.
- What would you say to a boss that has a sub-par idea?

Strengths / Weaknesses

- Are you creative? Give me an example. What have you done that you consider creative?
- What are your strongest abilities?
- What is your biggest weakness?

Note: Do not sugar-coat your weaknesses as strengths. Be genuine and recognise your shortcomings. Never say that being a perfectionist is your biggest weakness. Some applicants think that this makes you look better, but it seems that you not secure. Also, mention what you are doing to overcome the weakness.

Strengths / Weaknesses

- Why should we hire you?
- Give me an example of something that you have done that shows initiative.
- What makes you stand out among your fellow students?
- What makes you different from the other candidates for this position?
- What can you do for us that someone else cannot do? What was the most important thing you learned from your previous experience/internship?
- How do your skills relate to our needs? What can you offer us?
- What have you disliked in your past jobs?
- How long before you can contribute? In the past year, what have you been dissatisfied about in your performance?
- What major problem have you encountered and how did you deal with it?
- Have you ever had any failures? What did you learn from them?
- How do you feel about working in a structured (or ambiguous) environment?
- Are you able to work on several assignments at once?
  - In what kind of work environment do you do your best work?
  - What kinds of tasks and responsibilities motivate you the most?
  - What has been your greatest challenge?

Course Knowledge

- Primarily for case preparation, core course knowledge comes very handy as most of the cases are also based around concepts taught in core courses. So, candidates should start accumulating material and refine their concepts. The **ISB Gyankosh** works as a good database for a complete summary of course concepts.

- Do ensure that following courses have been understood well and revised before the final interview. During case prep as well, cases should be marked where concepts from courses have been used and those cases should be used to understand as to how to apply the concepts in an interview setting. Following Concepts should be particularly focused:
  - Marketing Frameworks
  - Competitive Strategy Frameworks
  - Microeconomics
  - Macroeconomics
  - Operations Management / Strategy
  - Accounting & Corporate Finance (Valuation etc.)
  - Mergers and Acquisitions

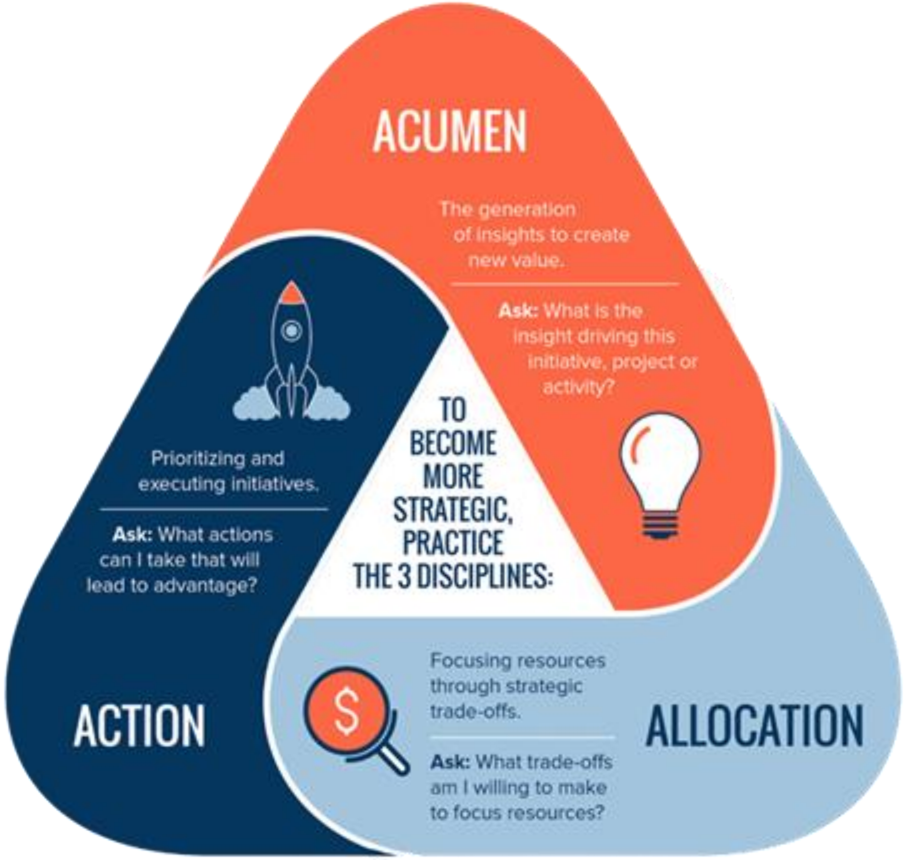
- Also, some of the electives are also handy but electives should be chosen considering the workload one can manage as lot of preparation and time goes for resume and case prep process.

Case Frameworks

Click here for Main Contents page

Strategy vs Tactics

For case prep, it's important to think **strategically, not tactically**. **Tactics** are about short-term execution, completing tasks, reacting to problems, and focusing on immediate actions without necessarily connecting them to the larger goal. They're important, but limited. **Strategy**, as the article highlights, is about the bigger picture — understanding the full context (internal culture, external market, competition), generating insights, and then innovating to create new value., and managing your own performance.



Source: HBR Article: How to Become a Better Strategic Thinker

Acumen (How you think)

Context Awareness: Understand internal (culture, processes) and external (markets, trends, competition) environments.
Insight: Curiosity-driven ability to capture, reflect, and share learnings.
Innovation: Applying context and insights to create new value by solving problems creatively.

Allocation (How you plan)

Focus Resources: Direct limited resources (time, talent, capital) to high-impact areas.
Decision Making: Generate alternatives, analyze trade-offs, and manage risks.
Competitive Advantage: Build and evolve unique value for customers to stay ahead of rivals.

Action (What you do)

Collaboration: Work openly with others, exchange ideas, listen without judgment.
Execution: Apply discipline and focus to bring strategies to life.
Personal Performance: Manage time, energy, and mindset with flexibility and resilience.

Overview

What it entails?

- Frameworks are useful tools to structure thoughts in a case. They help you ask the right questions and find answers.
- Frameworks are effective for standardized cases like Profitability and Market Entry.
- Interviewers may present abstract cases where standard frameworks don't apply.For abstract cases, relate the problem to a business situation and create a custom framework.
- The provided frameworks cover classic cases from profitability to M&A. Use these frameworks as guidelines and adapt them for specific cases.Not all aspects of a framework may be relevant; use judgment to focus on key components. Demonstrate awareness of other relevant aspects by mentioning them verbally for efficiency.

How to use these frameworks?

Use these frameworks as a guiding tool for you to create your own notes based on daily practice and keep improving upon them with time. 4Ss are pertinent to every case: **Scope, Structure, Solve, Synthesize**. Frameworks generally form the structure and solving part of any case. Scoping and Synthesis more or less remains the same.

- **Scope:** Scoping a problem statement is clarifying the and then asking relevant questions that will narrow down the scope of the problem statement for you. There are various aspects of scoping but **3CPR** is the most common way of scoping. (Do not spend a lot of time here)
- **Structure:** Structuring the problem statement by ensuring MECE is very relevant to make sure you are taking the correct approach and the interviewer is following your approach properly. There are many ways to ensure MECE structuring. (Main portion of the case)
- **Solve:** Solving the problem might mean drilling down to the Root Cause or solving guesstimates. (Make sure you don't make silly mistakes)
- **Synthesize:** Synthesize does not mean summarize so do not go on summarizing everything. Synthesis should be of 1 minute and crisp and to the point. (You want to ideally cover everything in 3 points taking a top-down approach and **mentioning the hook of the case**)

Types of Cases

#	Case Topic	Description	Example Problem Statement
1	**Profitability**	Diagnose declining profits and identify improvement levers.	*A premium coffee chain in London has seen its same-store profits decline by 15% over the past six months. Diagnose the reasons and suggest ways to restore profitability.*
2	**Market Entry**	Evaluate if the client should enter a new market	*A European electric vehicle manufacturer is considering entering the Southeast Asian market. Should they proceed?*
3	**Growth Strategy**	Explore ways to grow revenues or market share.	*A regional quick-service restaurant chain wants to double its revenues in the next 3 years. How should they achieve this?*
4	**M&A (Merger & Acquisition)**	Assess whether acquiring or merging with another company makes sense.	*A global consumer goods company is evaluating the acquisition of a niche organic skincare brand. Should they go ahead?*
5	**Pricing Strategy**	Determine optimal pricing for a product	*A software company is launching a new SaaS product for SMEs. What should be the optimal pricing strategy?*
6	**Operational Efficiency Improvement**	Identify cost-reduction or process-optimization opportunities.	*A luxury hotel chain is facing rising operating costs despite stable occupancy rates. How can it improve efficiency without compromising guest experience?*
7	**Investment**	Evaluate potential investment opportunities and expected returns.	*A private equity firm is considering investing $200M in a renewable energy startup. Should they proceed, and what ROI can they expect over five years?*
8	**Capacity Expansion**	Decide whether to increase production capacity.	An Indian cement manufacturer is running at 95% capacity utilization. Should they invest in new capacity?

Consulting is spread across several industries, diverse practice covering all topics and industries is key

Scoping (3CPOR):

A. Objectives

- Clarify the objective of the case & repeat the case statement
- Is there a secondary objective?

B. Company

- Current business model
- Value chain and capabilities
- Geographies
- Consumers (Target)- Any specific demographic (
- Channel of sales/ distribution

C. Product

- Product mix?
- What is the USP?
- Any substitutes available?
- Where is the product in the lifecycle?
- Is the concern due to cyclicity/ seasonality?

D. Competitors

- Is it an industry wide issue?
- Market fragmented or concentrated? Our market position?

E. Context

- From how long is the decline seen ?
- Any specific geography or product seeing the decline?
- Quantum of decline?

F. Regulation

- Any government regulation/constraint that should be considered?
- Any impact due to Covid? (depends on the timeline of the issue)

Tip: *The major buckets of the scoping questions mostly falls under the given buckets for almost all the framework, only the type of question changes depending on the problem at hand.*

E.g. Context for profitability would be to access the period of decline, but for market entry problem, context question would be 'why do we want to enter the market, what is our target?'

Problem-Framework Mapping- Profitability

Problem

"Revenue is declining/ Profit is declining/ Unable to make profit/ bleeding money"

Profits = Revenue - Costs

Revenue: Price X Units Sold

Costs: Fixed + Variable

Revenue Diagnostics

Problem type: *"What's suppressing revenue or gross margin on the revenue side?"*

Sub-types:

- Volume Decline
- Revenue Mix (Higher sales of low margin products or sales through low-margin channels)
- Retention Issue
- Loss of high margin cohorts
  - Cannibalization & Product Lifecycle
  - Add-ons not selling
  - Promo effectiveness (Are promos moving volumes but killing profits)

Cost Side Diagnostics

Problem type: *"What's driving costs up or squeezing margins on the cost side?"*

Sub-types:

Variable Costs

- Raw material & supplier costs
- Manufacturing losses
- Direct labor paid per output or overtime
- Logistics & delivery
- Cost-to-serve per order

Fixed Costs

- Overheads & admin
- Baseline plant/ store rent & insurance
- Core salaried labor
- Regulatory/ compliance program costs

Frameworks

What is causing the profit decline?

- Profitability tree (P=R-C)
- Volume-Mix-Price (V-M-P) Bridge
- Segment P&L Cut

Why?

- 3Cs
- Customer Journey Funnel
- Root-Cause (5 Whys + Fishbone)

Revenue Side Levers

- 4Ps / 7Ps Tuning
- Ansoff Pathways
- Pricing & Realization Toolkit

Cost Side Levers

- Porter Value Chain
- Cost-to-Serve / Activity-Based Costing
- Lean / Six Sigma / OEE

Questions You can ask

- **Diagnostic Lens:** Start broad to pinpoint the source of the bleed—is it a revenue shortfall, a cost explosion, or a margin squeeze impacting the bottom line?
- **Revenue Lens:** Deconstruct revenue into its price and volume levers to see if the client is charging less, selling less, or both, and across which specific product lines, customer segments, or geographic regions.
- **Cost Lens:** Dissect the cost structure into its fixed (e.g., rent, SG&A) and variable (e.g., raw materials, direct labor) components to identify which specific line items are driving unexpected increases or inefficiencies.
- **Market & Competitor Lens:** Scan the external landscape to determine if competitive actions (price wars, new products, marketing campaigns) or broader market trends (shifting consumer preferences, economic downturns) are eroding the client's sales or pricing power.
- **Internal Operations & Product Lens:** Look inward to challenge recent internal changes—has a product reformulation, a new operational process, or a strategic shift inadvertently damaged the customer value proposition or inflated the cost base?
- **Customer Lens:** Probe the customer's perspective to understand the "why" behind declining sales volume—has perceived quality dropped, is the value proposition no longer compelling, or are customer needs fundamentally changing?

Profitability (1/2)

PROFITABILITY

Revenue

Price
- **Price Sensitivity**
  If Inelastic (<1) then P↑
- Check response of competitors

Volume

Market Size

Demand

Product
- Customer Behaviour Changed
- Usage Decreased
- Demographics

Industry
- Product Life Cycle (mature/decline)
- Cyclic
- New competitors
- New Substitutes

Macro Factors
- Economic
- PESTEL

Supply
- Supplier Constraints
- Raw Material
- Labor union issue
- PESTEL

Market Share

Demand

Awareness
- Ad spent
- Channels
- Message (purpose, communicate purchasing behavior)
- Discounts, cashbacks
- Types (Paid/ Unpaid social media word of mouth)
- Brand Perception

Preference
- Product Quality, price for complement, perceived benefits, core attributes packaging, SKU size
- Service Quality, price
- Complement/Substitutes
- Right customer segment?
- Logistics post purchase
- Returns & After sales

Availability
- Channels Convenience, Accessibility, feature (stock outs/replenishment, display, shelf spare, % penetration)
- Operational hours
- Distributor/Retailer margin
- Salesforce effectiveness by channel
- Place features
- 6 senses: ambience, look & feel,
- design, size, hours, accessibility

Supply

(find bottleneck in value chain)

Product Mix

If avg prices decreases

Internal
- P ↑ to ↑ R & it did not work
- Transfer pricing (internal division transfer)

External
- Price wars
- Government regulations
- Change of other margins in value chain
- Customer preference changed

Cost
(On next slide)

PROFITABILITY

Revenue
(On previous slide)

Cost

Product Mix Changed

Product related problems
- Quality
- Inadequate product width/depth/quantity
- Network effects (with
- other products)

Service related problems
- Poor service
- Costly service
- Inadequate accessibility or customer service
- Inadequate training

Customer Preference

Change in needs

Costs (Fixed vs Variable)

Fixed
- Rent
- Employee salaries
- SG&A
- Marketing
- Equipment
  - Depreciation
  - Repair and maintenance
- Insurance
- Interest expense
- Overhead/Other expenses

Variable
- Contractual salaries
- Utilities
- Raw and packaging material
- Overhead/other expenses

Costs (value chain) – (at every state it is good to ask the difference wrt competitors

R & D
- Equipment
- Human capital
- Cost of financing (loans, interest)
- Patents

Demand Forecasting

Procurement Costs

(Raw materials & Inbound logistics)
- No. of materials
- cost per unit
- Bulk orders/contracts
- Supplier party
- Transportation
- Wastage / Use efficiency

Processing Costs
- Machinery
- Factory rent
- Labour hours
- Technology
- Capacity
- utilization
- Packaging
- Utilities
- Admin costs
- Defects (Quality checks)

Distribution

Storage & Outbound Logistics
- Warehousing costs
- Inventory holding costs (trapped capital)
- Transportation costs

Salesforce
- Different sales channel
- Salesforce costs (Bonus, Training cost (#trainings X Avg. cost X Type), Salaries, Benefits, Retention cost)
- Rent & Utilities
- Quality checks

Marketing and Sales
- Channels
- Ad spend on each channel
- Conversion rates per channel
- Promotions

Customer Service
- After sales service cost – repair, spare, returns
- Maintenance
- teams

Miscellaneous
- Finance (Interests, Taxes, Depreciation, Inventory write-off)
- Support `activities (Firm's infra, HR, Tech)

Problem-Framework Mapping- Pricing

Problem

New Product or Service Pricing

We have a new product. What price should we launch it at?

Specific Questions You'll Tackle:

- What is the **value** this product provides to the customer ?
- What is the customer's **willingness to pay**?
- What are our **costs** ? This determines the price floor.
- Are there any **competitors or substitutes**? How are they priced?

Competitive Response

How should we react to a competitor's price change, or how can we change our price to gain an advantage?

Specific Questions You'll Tackle:

- What is the price elasticity of demand for our product?
- How will our competitors react if we change our price?
- What is our brand positioning?
- What is the cost structure of our company Vs competitors? (Can we afford a price war?)

Pricing Model Optimisation

Is our current pricing model the best one, or is there a better way to capture value?

Specific Questions You'll Tackle:

- How do different customer segments value our product?
- Can we create a recurring revenue stream instead of one-off?
- Can we use bundling to create more attractive offers?
- How will a change in the pricing model affect customer behavior and long-term value?

Frameworks

Cost floor & Unit Economics *(Focus for New Products)*

- Cost-plus pricing,
- Breakeven analysis
- Contribution margin

Analysing Customers' Willingness to pay (Imp for all 3)

- Price elasticity
- Conjoint analysis
- demand & Supply curve estimation

Competitive benchmark (Focus for Competitive Response)

- Value & Position Mapping
- Ansoff Matrix
- Balanced Scorecard

Generate Pricing options (Focus for Model Optimisation)

- Bundling Economics
- Versioning pricing
- CLV impact

Questions You can ask

- **Profitability Split (High-Level):** Asking whether the client is aiming for topline (revenue) or bottom-line (profit margin) growth is a crucial first filter in any pricing discussion.
- **Segmentation & Price Discrimination Lens:** Asking whether different customer segments, channels, or geographies have distinct willingness-to-pay helps reveal opportunities for tiered pricing or versioning.
- **Scenario & Sensitivity Lens:** Asking what success would look like in base, optimistic, and pessimistic cases ensures financial robustness and prepares for volatility.
- **Pilot & Experimentation Lens:** Asking whether the client is open to A/B testing or geo-based pilots de-risks the recommendation before full rollout.
- **Risk Assessment Lens:** Asking what risks (price wars, churn, cannibalization, regulation) the client is most concerned about helps prioritize mitigations.

PRICING

- **New Product**
  - Value Based Pricing
  - Cost Based Pricing
- **Existing Product**
  - Competition Exists
    - Competitor Based Pricing
    - Cost Based Pricing
  - No Competition
    - Value Based Pricing
    - Cost Based Pricing

Competitor Based Pricing

- *Existing Products*
- *If new product, NPV of substitutes*
- *Supply-Demand Considerations*

Value Based Pricing

- *Willingness to pay*
- *Benchmark against similar products*
- *Opportunity Cost*

Cost Based Pricing

- *R&D Cost*
- *Production Cost*
  - *Fixed Costs*
  - *Variable Costs*
- *Breakeven Period, Margin*

Problem-Framework Mapping- GTM Strategy (1/2)

Problem

Where to Play?

Go-to-Market (GTM) Strategy Design

Problem type: *"What next once we decide to enter?"*

Sub-types:
- **Segmentation / Targeting:** Which customers first?
- **Positioning:** Mass-market vs. premium? Differentiation levers?
- **Channel strategy:** Online, offline, omnichannel, distributors
- **Marketing & sales:** Awareness, promotions, salesforce structure
- **Pricing strategy for launch:** Penetration, skimming, freemium, bundle

Common prompts:
"How should a fintech launch a payments app in India?"
"How should a new electric scooter brand go-to-market?"

Frameworks

Market Segmentation & Targeting
- STP, & 4Ps of Marketing
- AARRR Funnel
- Customer Journey Mapping

Positioning & Value Proposition
- Positioning Map
- Blue Ocean Strategy
- 4As of Marketing

Channel Strategy
- 4Ps (Place)
- Omnichannel lens
- CAGE (distance)

Marketing & Sales Execution
- 4Ps (Promotion)
- Customer Journey Mapping
- Salesforce Design

Questions You can ask

- **Objective Alignment (Strategy Lens):** Clarify whether the client seeks rapid adoption, sustainable profitability, diversification, or defensive entry, ensuring the GTM aligns with mission, vision, and timeline expectations.
- **Market Quality (Attractiveness Lens):** Test if the market's growth is structural or fad-driven by probing demand stability, customer jobs-to-be-done, and competitive dynamics through Porter's Diamond.
- **Competitive Positioning (Differentiation Lens):** Assess whether the product can occupy a defensible white space on perceptual maps or leverage Blue Ocean opportunities, eliminating me-too strategies that are easy to copy.
- **Financial & Risk Validation (Viability Lens):** Challenge assumptions by stress-testing break-even volumes, worst-case downside, and scalability options using real options analysis and risk–impact mapping to discard financially reckless or inflexible strategies.

Problem-Framework Mapping- GTM Strategy (2/2)

Problem	Frameworks	Questions You can ask

How to Win?

Problem

Market Adaptation / Localization

Problem type: *"How should the product/service be adapted to this market?"*

Sub-types:

Cultural / regulatory tailoring

Product features or pack sizes for local affordability

Pricing adaptation (local vs global parity)

Brand communication fit

Common prompts:

"Should an American fast-food chain adapt its menu for India?"

Scale-up & Rollout

Problem type: *"How do we expand after initial entry?"*

Sub-types:

Pilots vs national rollout

Phased regional expansion

Franchise vs company-owned scaling

Marketing spend ramp-up decisions

Common prompts:

"How should a beverage company scale after successful pilot in Delhi?"

Frameworks

Cultural & Regulatory Fit

- CAGE Distance, PESTEL
- Regulatory Gap Analysis
- 4As of Marketing

Product & Pricing Adaptation

- Ansoff (Product Development quadrant)
- Pricing Triangulation
- McKinsey 7S

Geographic & Segment Prioritization

- GE–McKinsey Matrix
- Build–Operate–Transfer (BOT)
- Decision Matrix

Marketing & Investment Ramp-Up

- S-Curve Adoption Model
- ROI-Based Budgeting
- Risk–Impact Matrix

Questions You can ask

- **Local Context:** Clarify whether regulatory, cultural, or infrastructural factors require tailoring by applying PESTLE and CAGE Distance, ensuring the product or service aligns with local realities.
- **Communication & Branding:** Assess whether the brand's global positioning resonates locally, or if messaging, language, and imagery must be adapted, using STP and perceptual maps to avoid misalignment.
- **Pilot Validation:** Test whether initial pilots demonstrate financial viability and operational readiness through Balanced Scorecard metrics and break-even/unit economics, ensuring expansion is backed by evidence.
- **Risk Management:** Stress-test rollout assumptions with scenario planning and risk–impact mapping to identify adoption risks, supply chain challenges, and overextension traps, ensuring scaling remains sustainable.

Problem-Framework Mapping- Market Entry

Problem

Should We Enter?

Market Attractiveness / Entry Feasibility

Problem type: *"Should we enter this market at all?"*

Sub-types:

- Geographic expansion (new country, state, city)
- New customer segment (e.g., SME banking, Gen Z consumers)
- New channel (online → offline, D2C → retail, digital platforms)

Where to Play?

Entry Mode Choice

Problem type: *"What's the best way to enter?" (Build Borrow Buy)*

Options to analyse:

- Organic (greenfield)
- JV / Partnerships / Licensing / Franchising
- Acquisition / Inorganic entry

Common prompts:

"Should a retail chain build stores, franchise, or partner with a local distributor?"

Frameworks

Understand the Objective of Entry

- SMART Goals
- Profitability Split
- Ansoff Matrix

Industry & Company Fit- *Similar to Growth Frameworks*

- Porter's 5 Forces
- VRIO, SWOT, McKinsey 7S
- PESTLE TAM SAM SOM

Entry Mode Choice

- Build–Buy–Partner Matrix
- CAGE Distance Framework
- GE–McKinsey Matrix

Go-to-Market (GTM) Strategy

- STP, & 4Ps of Marketing
- AARRR Funnel
- Customer Journey Mapping

Questions You can ask

- **Objective Lens:** Clarify whether the client seeks scale, diversification, first-mover advantage, or defensive entry into the new market.
- **Attractiveness Lens:** Test if the target market is structurally appealing — size, growth, demand stability, regulatory environment, before committing resources.
- **Fit Lens:** Probe whether the client has transferable strengths (brand equity, distribution muscle, financial depth) or must build/acquire new capabilities.
- **Entry Mode Lens:** Ask whether the client prefers control and capex-heavy routes (greenfield), speed via acquisition, or risk-sharing via JV/licensing.
- **GTM Lens:** Identify how the client will acquire and retain customers — product adaptation, positioning, channel selection, launch sequencing.
- **Risk Lens:** Challenge the plan with "what could derail entry?" — competitive retaliation, cultural mismatch, regulatory shocks, or overstretched resources.

Market Entry

Scoping:

- In addition to the general scoping focus on why are we planning to enter this specific geography/product

Imp question:

- Any preferred mode of entry to explore?
- Evaluation Metrics: ROI, IRR, Cashflow, Market share, profit

A. Industry attractiveness

- Market size*Market share
- Growth/ Lifecycle
- Profitability
- Barriers to entry
- Regulatory
- Economies of scale

B. Financial viability

- Upfront investment and opportunity cost of investment
- ROI/IRR, Payback period
- NPV/ Profit
- Cash flows

Tip: Try to create a formula to solve this part.

C. Modes of Entry

Organic

- **Build**
- **Import**

Inorganic

- **Joint venture/Partnership**
- **Merger and Acquisition**
- **License**

D. Operational Feasibility

Value Chain:
Check feasibility of setting up a value chain at each stage procurement, production, distribution, marketing, supply, etc.

GTM: (Optional)
If Go to Market strategy is asked, then cover STP and 4Ps
STP: Segmentation, Target, Positioning
4Ps: Price, Product, promotion, place

Risk:

- Entry Risk
  - Porter's five forces: Competition, New entrants, Buyers, Suppliers, Substitutes
  - Risks (PESTLE)
- Exit Risk
  - FDI Regulations
  - Huge Capital Investment
  - Brand/reputation Impact

E. Strategic viability

- **Short term**

Prior experience in new market entry
Synergy with existing operations
Competitive response/ Tactical decisions (4Ps)

- **Long term**

Creating customer lock in
Creating barriers to entry/exit

Problem-Framework Mapping- Growth

Problem

Market/ Industry (rows) × **Company/Product** (columns)

	New	Existing
Existing	**New Product / Service Growth** How should a bank grow by offering wealth management to its retail base?	**Core Market Growth** How do we grow revenues in our current market?
New	**Diversification Growth** Should e-comm launch a payments business?	**New Market Growth** Should an Indian snack brand expand to Middle East?

Other Growth Problems:

Operational Levers for Growth
A ride-hailing company has high demand but low driver supply — how can it grow?

Customer Lifecycle Growth :
How do we get our loyal customers to spend more with us?

Frameworks

Industry Attractiveness

- Porter's 5 Forces
- PESTLE
- TAM-SAM-SOM

Company's Current Position

- SWOT
- VRIO
- McKinsey 7S

Growth Impact Goal

- BCG Growth-Share Matrix
- Ansoff Matrix
- Balanced Scorecard

Implementation Levers

- 7Ps of Marketing
- Customer Journey Funnel
- Risk Analysis Matrix

Questions You can ask

- **Clarification on 5Cs**: asking initial questions about the Company's objectives and the Context of the problem is a perfect way to scope the engagement.
- **SMART Goals:** A mental checklist to ensure the client's objective is **S**pecific, **M**easurable, **A**chievable, **R**elevant, and **T**ime-bound.
- **Profitability Framework** (High-Level): Asking if the goal is topline (revenue) or bottom-line (profit) growth is a crucial first step.
- **Ansoff Matrix (Growth Path):** Clarifying whether the client is considering Market Penetration, Market Development, Product Development, or Diversification directs the problem into the right growth lever.
- **Constraint Lens:** Asking about budget, regulatory limits, capacity, or risk appetite ensures that recommendations are realistic and discarding options.

Growth (1/2)

Step 1

Scoping /
Understand the current industry
(3CPOR)

- Market size, growth
- Life cycle
- Competition
- Customer price elasticity
- Customer preferences
- Product differentiation

Step 2

Look at growth avenues

Within Same Industry

Outside Industry

(Last resort only if the previous industry is saturated)

Step 3

Evaluate an Prioritize
Draw 2X2 matrix at the end to evaluate the ideas
(required only if time permits)

Organic Growth

# of items

Supply

- Capacity Expansion

Demand

On next slide ★

Revenue per item

- Avg. price/unit (check sensitivity)
- Product mix (upselling) / cross selling
- Introduce Loyalty Programs
- Discounts/ Bundling / Subscriptions

Inorganic Growth

Related

- Horizontal Integration
- Vertical Integration

Unrelated

- Joint Venture
- Partnership
- Acquisition

Growth (2/2)

Demand ★

Existing Markets

Same Capability/Product

Market Penetration

Awareness
- Better Marketing
- Promotion Channels
- Increase reach/ frequency
- Identify right customer segment

Accessibility
- Improve existing channels
- New channels (online/ offline)

Likeability
- Focus on Product Differentiation
- Better packaging
- Increase SKUs
- Variety (Usage/Uses)

New Capability/Product

Product Development

Adjacent categories/services
Complimentary products
(check risks of PORTER and PESTEL)

New Markets

Same Capability/Product

Market Development

- New geography
- New customer segment
- Reposition products to cater to a wider/ new group
- Different sales/ marketing channels

New Capability/Product

Diversification

- New product/ new segments
- New marketing channels

Problem-Framework Mapping- M&A

Problem

- Should we acquire?
- Who to acquire?
- How much to pay?
- How to merge?
- How/when to exit?

Frameworks

Strategic Rationale

- Market Entry Framework
- Strategic Fit Matrix
- Ansoff Matrix

Target Assessment

- 4C
- Porter's 5 Forces
- SWOT

Synergies & Value Creation

- Revenue Synergies
- Cost Synergies
- Value Chain Breakdown

Deal Structuring

- DCF
- RoI / NPV
- Sensitivity

Risks & Integration

- Cultural Integration
- PMI Checklist
- Risk Analysis Matrix

Questions You can ask

Client Context
- Why is client interested in M&A?
- Deal alignment with corporate strategy?
- What are the alternatives considered?

Success Metrics
- What is the specific outcome expected?
- What is the time horizon?
- How will the success be measured?

Target Profile
- Core business, scale & market position?
- Overlaps & competencies?
- Defensibility of competitive advantage?

Deal Economics
- Desired valuation?
- Structure of the deal?
- Ownership & control being sought?

Risks
- PESTEL Risks present in deal success?
- Challenges in post-merger integrations?
- Market Reactions anticipated

M&A

Scoping:
1. Understand the client and the target company
2. Understand the objective of the merger

- **Synergies**
  - Cost
    - Acquisition Cost
    - Integration Cost
  - Operational Benefit
    - Revenues (how to increase revenue)
    - Costs (how to reduce cost)
  - Financial Benefit
    - Low cost of funds
    - ability to raise funds
- **Post Merger Integration**
  - People
    - Monetary
      - *Pay structure*
      - *Perks & benefits*
      - *Other schemes (e.g.: ESOP, etc.)*
    - Non-Monetary
      - *Cultural*
      - *Behavioral*
  - Technology
    - *Diff IT systems*
    - *IP issues*
    - *Information exchange*
  - Process
    - Internal
      - *Corp. governance*
      - *Backend*
    - External
      - Customer facing
      - Outreach Activities

A. Objectives

- Why: Strategic/financial
- What: Metrics of evaluation (Revenue, IRR, profit, growth, NPV)
- When: Timelines (Exit strategy)

B. PE Firm

- Firm Size: Capacity of investment
- Risk Appetite/Investment style; Early/late investors
- Industry portfolio: Check that the direct competitor of target should not be in the existing portfolio of PE firm (conflicting interest)
- Evaluation Metrics: (IRR/NPV, etc.)

C. Industry Attractiveness of the target

- Basic: Market size, growth rate, profitability
- Porters forces: Barrier to entry, competition, customer power, supplier power, substitutes.
- PESTEL external risk (cost vs risk comparison)

D. Evaluate the Target

3CP

- **Company**: Geography, revenue stream, value chain
- **Customer**: Customer segment, their preferences and future growth
- **Competition**: Market share (Product and customers)
- **Product**: (SKU, USP, Premium Ness, price, patent)

E. PE firm and target Fit Evaluation

Analysis:

Financial

- **Market Size**
- **Market Share**
- **Gross Rev**

- **Margin profit ability**
- **RACC (risks)**
- **Valuation**
- **Risk**

Non-financial

People

- Management
- Willingness to sell

Process

- Business model
- V.C capabilities

Tech

- Competitive edge

Synergies

- Reputation and knowledge
- Portfolio help (operational efficiency)
- Unlock potential (leverage)
- Geographic knowledge
- Customer base

F. Exit

- Public: IPO
- Private: Another fund, back to company, to individual investor

G. Recommendation

Yes/No basis on

- Industry attractiveness
- Target fit evaluation
- Financial Metrics
- Non-financial consideration (softer aspects)

Abstract

Breaking down the problem statement

- 4W
  - What
  - Why
  - Who
  - When
- How

Scope

Objectives

What does the client want?

- Strategic
- Financial KPIs

Define scope of the case:

- Do we need an overall approach?
- Do we need to come up with a winning bid, etc.?
- Are there any **constraints** to be considered?

Structuring

- Use equations for increase/decrease parameters. Subsequently, focus on each parameter and discuss it further. Examples:
  - Birth rate – Death rate = Migration Rate
  - Cash balance = Cash in – Cash out
- Decision making problems, following can be considered:
  - Stakeholder cost-benefit analysis
  - Decision trees
  - Pay-off matrix
- Implementation problems: Outline the value chain and then get buy-in on focus areas
- Various ways of approaching what to do with a resource: Use it, Sell it, Give it away
- Problem solution:
  - Investigate 'why' problem exists
  - Give solutions to solve problem
  - Explore further opportunities
- One can also use *7S : Strategy, Structure, Systems, Shared Values, Style, Staff, Skills* to identify what needs to be aligned to improve performance

Sales Effectiveness

- **# people**
  - Redeploy Talent (across levels)
  - HIRE (Full time/ Temporary
    - Campus (UG/PG)
    - Lateral
      - Internal
      - External
    - Referrals
    - Direct job postings
    - Headhunter (poaching)
    - Agencies
  - Attrition
    - Internal
      - Organisation specific issues
    - External
      - Better Opportunities
      - PESTEL

- **Efficiency**
  - Skill
    - Re-skill
    - Upskill
      - Foundation
      - New-Tech
        - External training & conferences
        - Externships and Rotations
  - Will
    - Internal
      - Incentives
        - Monetary
          - Salaries
          - Variable pay
          - Perks and perquisites (F&B. Etc.)
          - Insurance
          - Bonus and subsidies
        - Non-Monetary
          - Leaves
          - Travel
          - Rewards and recognition
          - Work life balance
      - Org Support
        - Professional
          - Promotion
          - Career growth
          - Performance/goal measurement
          - alignment with organization
          - Networking opportunities
          - IP protection
        - Personal
          - Company culture
          - Brand
          - Status
    - External
      - Labour Union
      - Govt. mandates (max. working hrs)

Governance (1/2)

Governance Matrix

Panchsutras for Governance Transformation

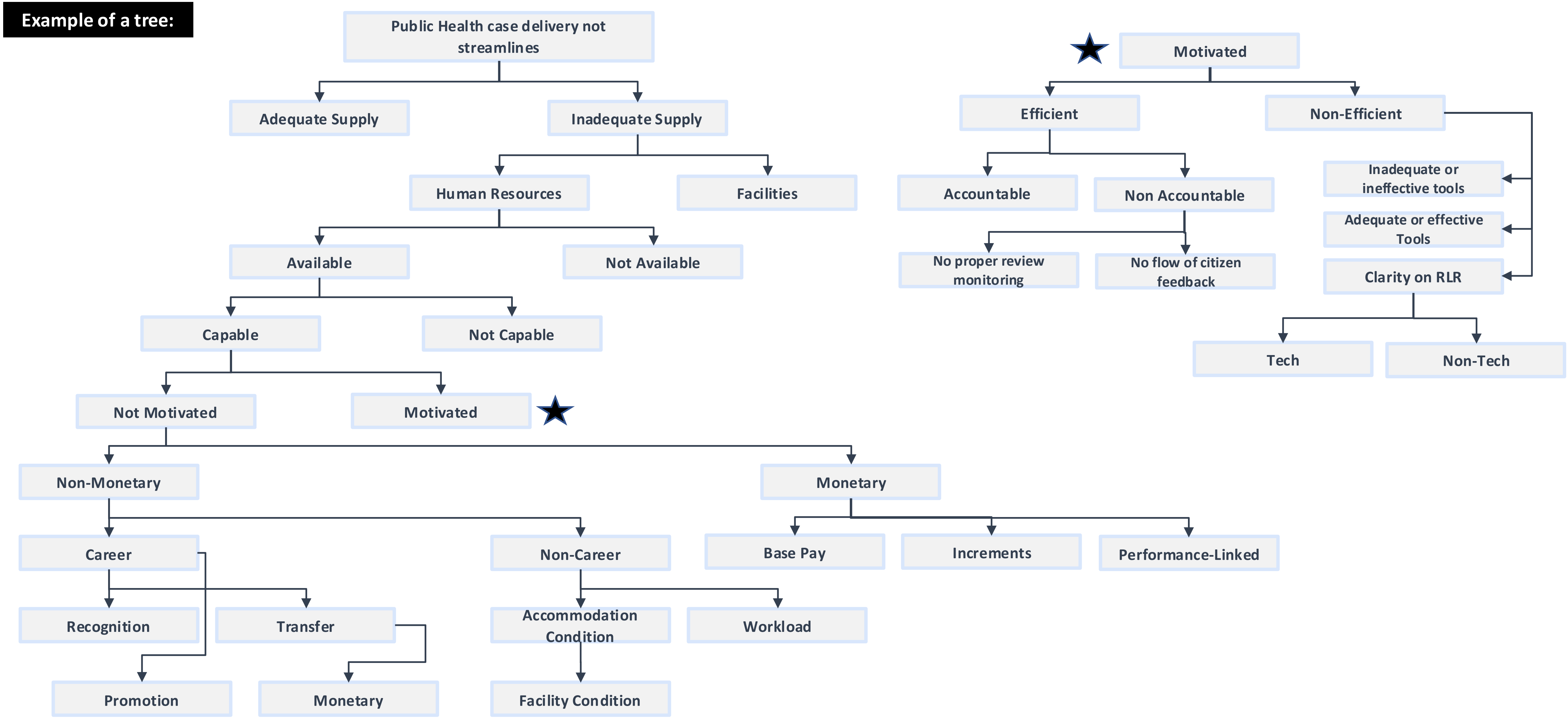
1. Sustained political will and bureaucratic championship is a must have
2. A tangible and cascaded goal is important to keep all system actors aligned
3. Visible and credible progress towards the goal is key to maintaining momentum
4. Leading with administrative enablers paves the way for complex technical initiatives
5. Sustainability is driven by embedding a new way of life, aligning incentives & creating institutional structures

Key principles for tree creation

1. Branching at every node to be MECE
2. Power of two - branching into two is ideal
3. More knowledge / better judgement improves branching quality
4. Oral narrative / explanation accompanying a tree is essential
5. Hypothesis to be explicitly stated during tree creation

Governance (2/2)

Example of a tree:



Some more tips

Ways of MECE

A. Algebra

- Break down in a formula

B. Process Structure

- Start Mid End (Time / Money)

C. Customer Journey

- Break down the customer journey
- Or go through the route of value chain deep diving into each part
- Or Planning – Acquisition - Retention

D. Conceptual frameworks

- 3CP, 4P, PPE, 3U (Users, Usage, Uses)

E. Opposite words

- Internal / External
- Supply / Demand

F. Stakeholder Analysis

- Note down all the stakeholders involved and analyze

VRIO (Sustained Competitive Advantage)

- Valuable, Rare, Imitable, Organized

STP (Marketing)

- Segmentation, Targeting, Positioning

Porter's 5 Forces

- **Barriers to Entry:**

Entry deterring regulations / capital requirements / proprietary technologies / brand differentiation / access to distribution / economies of scale / economies of scope /entry deterring prices

- **Buyer Power:**

Buyer concentration / switching cost /competitive product / threat of forward integration

- **Supplier Power:**

Supplier concentration / Alternative suppliers / switching cost / threat of backward integration

- **Threat of substitutes:**

Direct substitution – Better functionality / Increased product usage

- **Competitive Rivalry:**

#rivals, Basis of competition (price, features etc) , Industry growth rates, fixed costs

Typical Case Flow

Understand the Problem

Listen
- Pay attention to detail
- Observe the interviewer's communication style

Paraphrase
Summarize the problem - statement for better understanding of situation and objectives

Clarifications
Ask targeted questions corresponding to the topic, criteria for success evaluation, to eliminate ambiguity

Information
Gather all relevant information needed to develop a suitable framework

Structure the Problem

MECE based Framework
- *Are all analyses covered?*
- *Are the any potential overlaps and gaps in analyses?*

Relevance in Framework
- *Are all components relevant?*
- *Does the approach give enough visibility on goals?*

Feasibility
- *Has feasibility in implementing strategies been considered?*

Structure and Approach
- Start with the most important topics
- Provide a roadmap of the case
- Follow a top-down approach in communicating the framework

Analyze the Problem

Quantitative Analysis
- Build logic based on objectives
- Understand data sufficiency for calculations and make logical assumptions in agreement with the interviewer
- Provide a walk-through of calculations
- Perform sanity checks to ensure consistency in data (titles, footnotes, etc)
- Check for efficiency and logical accuracy in calculations

Qualitative Analysis
- Structured answers in a logical sequence
- Tie answers back to objectives
- Constantly communicate thoughts with the interviewer

Recommend solution

Consistency with Objectives
- State your recommendation as a direct response to the problem/ objective
- Include next steps

Justification
- Incorporate key metrics/findings as part of your recommendation

Caveats
- Include potential risks of recommended solution

Candidate Evaluation Template

Candidate ______________________ Interview Date ______________

Interviewer ______________________ Interview Round 1 ☐ 2 ☐

Probing ☐
Identifies relevant questions, frames the questions well

Quantitative Analysis ☐
Formulates efficient equations, does error-free calculations, reads charts effectively

Structuring ☐
MECE, Relevant, Logical sequence, Actionable

Communication ☐
Top-down, crisp, demonstrates active listening, comfortable in thinking out loud

Analytical thinking ☐
Identifies key issues and data requirements, implications, prioritizes and demonstrates creativity

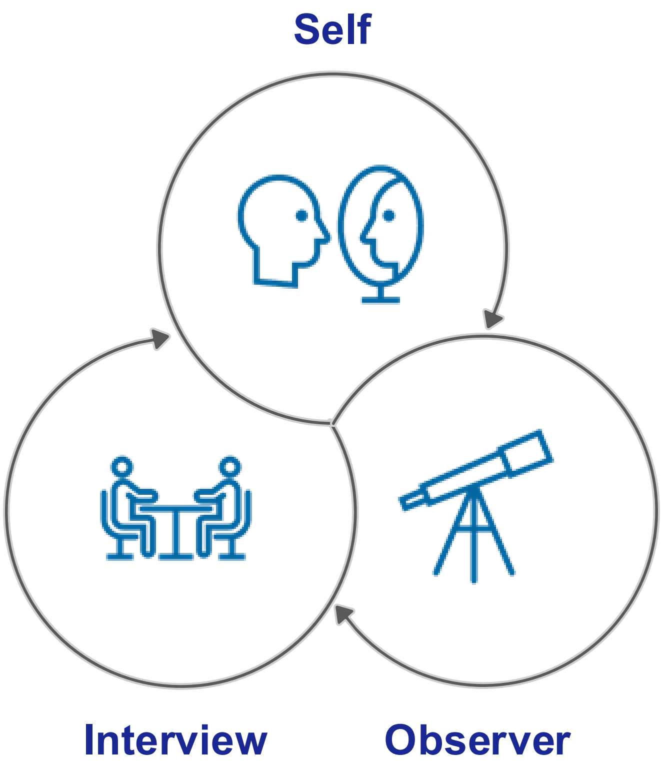
Attitude ☐
Positive, demonstrates confidence, showcases problem leadership

Final Recommendation Yes ☐ No ☐

Comments ______________________

Performance Review and Feedback

Case reading/watching is not case practice. Crack cases in Triad, Invest time in feedback and reflection



Self
- *What did you do well?*
- *What could have been done better?*
- *What will you do to improve?*

Observer
- *What is your feedback for the candidate?*
- *What would you have done differently*

Interview
- *Did you clear the interview round?*
- *Why? Why not?*

Case Examples

Profitability

(1 / 2) Your client is a ceiling fan manufacturer based in India. Over the past year, they have been facing a decline in profitability. You have been hired to diagnose the root cause and provide recommendations.

Before starting, I'd like to clarify a few things. Since when has profitability been declining and by what quantum? Is this issue specific to our client, or is it an industry-wide trend? What types of fans are we considering here—ceiling, table, exhaust? Does the client only manufacture, or are they also involved in sales and distribution?

The decline has been for the past one year; quantum is not relevant. This issue is specific to our client, not industry-wide. You can assume India as the market. Let's focus only on ceiling fans. The client manufactures and sells via traditional retail stores as well as online platforms such as Amazon.

Understood. To structure this, I'd like to break down profitability into revenue minus cost. Has the decline been due to falling revenues or rising costs?

Revenues have been stable. The problem lies on the cost side.

Alright. To explore costs, I'll take a value-chain approach. Costs could come from raw material sourcing such as steel & copper, from production like plant maintenance & wastage, from logistics & distribution including warehousing and transport, or from post-sales services such as warranty and repairs. Do we know the stage driving the issue?

Focus on the post-production stage.

Got it. That likely points to logistics, distribution, or post-sales. Let me check channel-wise—Is the issue happening with traditional retail sales or Amazon sales?

The problem is specific to Amazon sales.

Interesting. That suggests the business model with Amazon is raising costs. I'd like to explore further—are we seeing higher returns from customers, is there a difference in warranties compared to offline, or is this related to how the client has structured its logistics with Amazon?

It's not about returns or warranties. Focus on logistics and the way our client works with Amazon.

Okay. Many manufacturers selling on Amazon choose between two fulfillment models. In the Fulfilled by Amazon (FBA) model, the manufacturer stores inventory in Amazon warehouses and Amazon manages delivery & customer service but charges storage, handling, & logistics fees. In the Fulfilled by Merchant (FBM) model, the manufacturer manages logistics & delivery themselves, with Amazon only facilitating the order platform. Could the difference be due to client's fulfillment model choice compared to competitors?

Exactly. The client has opted for a different model compared to competitors, which has made logistics through Amazon more expensive for them. Competitors are using cheaper third-party logistics, while our client is bearing higher fulfillment with Amazon.

Understood. So the root cause is not industry cost inflation but a strategic choice of fulfillment model. There are 2 costs heads under the FBA model - first is the logistic fee itself and the other is the commission that amazon charges. I'd like to compare the per unit cost of each head under FBA and FBM. Do we have the value of both cost heads under each fulfilment order?

We don't have the data split handy but how would you use it once we get the data?

I'd like to identify which cost head under FBA overshoots the FBM cost by a higher %. IN case it is logistics cost % difference is higher than the acceptable range, then the client should re-evaluate the fulfillment model and consider shifting from FBA to FBM. We need to keep in mind that Amazon is a much more trusted partner so a slight premium might offset the cost of damages. In case, the % difference in commissions is higher, they could negotiate with Amazon for better commission rates by leveraging volume, benchmark competitor logistics partners Finally, we should explore channel mix optimization by strengthening retail sales or diversifying online presence beyond Amazon to reduce dependency.

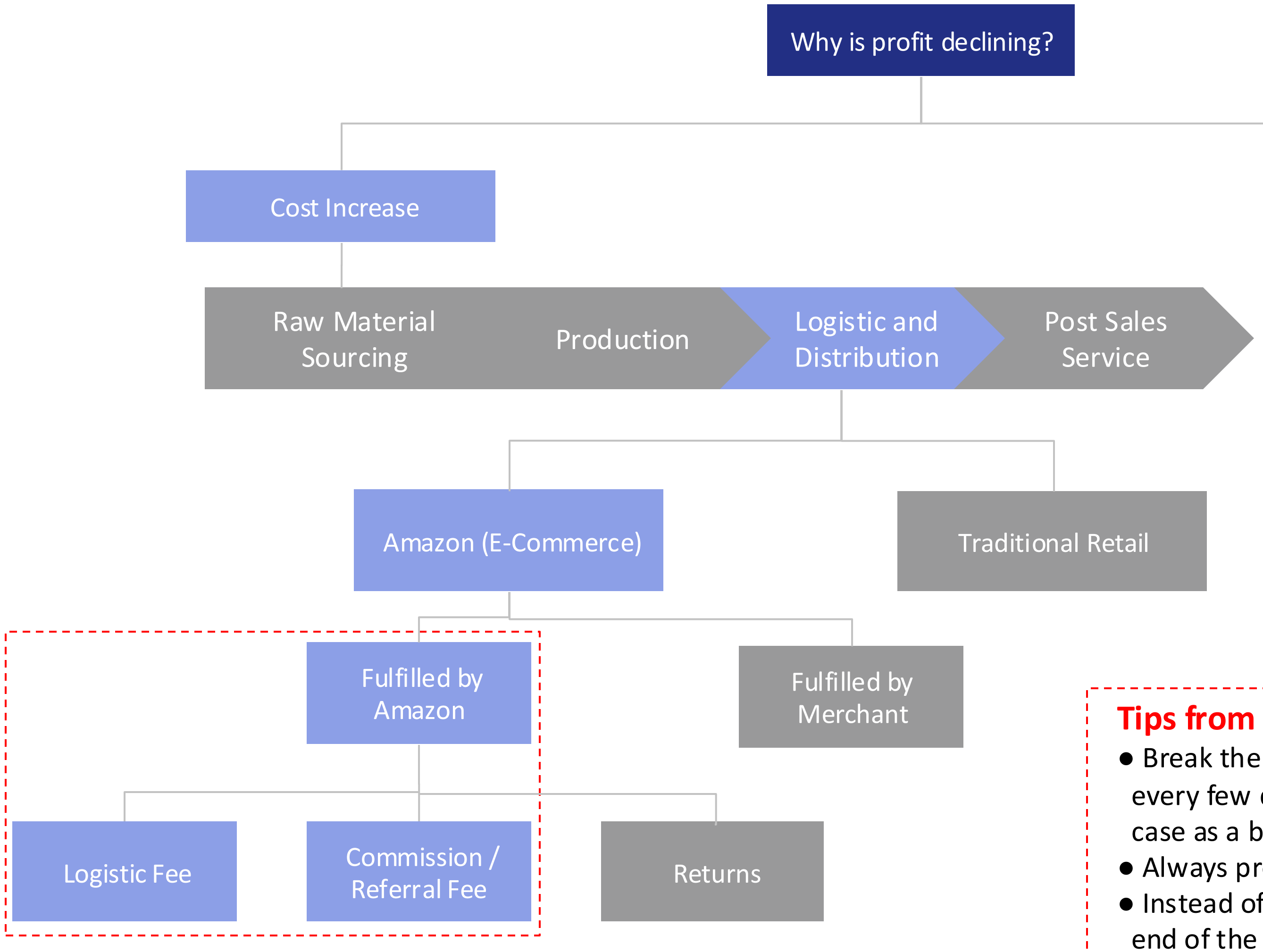
2/2 | Your client is a ceiling fan manufacturer based in India. Over the past year, they have been facing a decline in profitability. You have been hired to diagnose the root cause and provide recommendations.

Interviewee Notes

- Profitability issue observed only for the client, not industry-wide
- Problem identified to be on the cost side.
- Revenues are stable; issue arises post-production.

Recommendations

- Action 1: Re-evaluate fulfillment strategy (shift from FBA to FBM where feasible)
- Action 2: Negotiate with Amazon on storage and commission rates leveraging sales volumes
- Action 3: Negotiate with Amazon on storage and commission rates leveraging sales volumes



Tips from Expert:

- Break the problem down into small pieces after every few questions. The idea is to to treat the case as a bunch of mini-case studies
- Always present multiple recommendation
- Instead of assuming that you've reached the end of the problem, it is always good to check if there is any data available to confirm your hypothesis

1/2 | Your client is a car repair shop located in a major metro city. For about a year now, they've seen their revenues steadily declining. Figure out why this is happening and how would you approach this?

Could you tell me a little more about the shop? Is it a specialized shop, like for luxury cars or transmissions, or a general-purpose repair shop?

It's a general repair shop that handles a wide variety of cars and services.

Okay but when we say revenues are declining, do we know if this is because the shop is servicing fewer cars, or if the average spend per car has gone down?

Our initial look at the numbers suggests the primary driver of the decline is the total number of cars being serviced. The average ticket size per repair has remained relatively stable.

That's very helpful. So, the core problem is a drop in customer volume. To diagnose the root cause, I'd like to structure my analysis by looking at two main areas: External Factors and Internal Factors.

External factors would be things outside the shop's direct control, like new competitors entering the area, changes in the neighborhood, or broader trends in car ownership or reliability. Internal factors would be things specific to the client's operations, such as their pricing, service quality, marketing effectiveness, or customer experience. Does this structure seem reasonable to you?

Yes, that's a very logical way to break it down. Where would you like to start?

Let's begin with External Factors, as they could be affecting the entire market. My first thought is competition. Have any new repair shops, particularly large chain stores or dealership service centers, opened in the vicinity in the last year or two?

The competitive environment has been stable. No new major players have opened up nearby.

Okay, that makes a broad market issue less likely. It points me more towards factors specific to our client. So let's move to the Internal bucket. Given that the number of cars is down, I'd want to understand if we are failing to attract new customers or if we are failing to retain existing customers. Do we have any information on the mix of new versus repeat customers?

That's a sharp question. We've noticed that the number of repeat customers has seen a significant drop over the past year.

That's a critical insight. A decline in repeat business is a strong signal that the issue isn't about marketing or brand awareness, but rather about the core customer experience. Loyal customers don't just stop coming back without a reason. This leads me to hypothesize that the root cause lies in either a decline in service quality, uncompetitive pricing, or a poor customer experience.

That seems plausible. How would you investigate that hypothesis?

To test this hypothesis, I would focus on gathering customer feedback through three key actions: Analyze Online Reviews: To identify recurring negative themes in public feedback. Implement Post-Service Surveys: To collect direct, real-time data from recent customers. Review Internal Operational Data: To correlate any changes, such as key staff turnover, with the decline in service quality. This approach should quickly help us pinpoint whether the problem is with the quality of the repairs themselves, the customer service at the front desk, or how pricing is communicated.

2/2 | Your client is a car repair shop located in a major metro city. For about a year now, they've seen their revenues steadily declining. Figure out why this is happening and how would you approach this?

Interviewee Notes

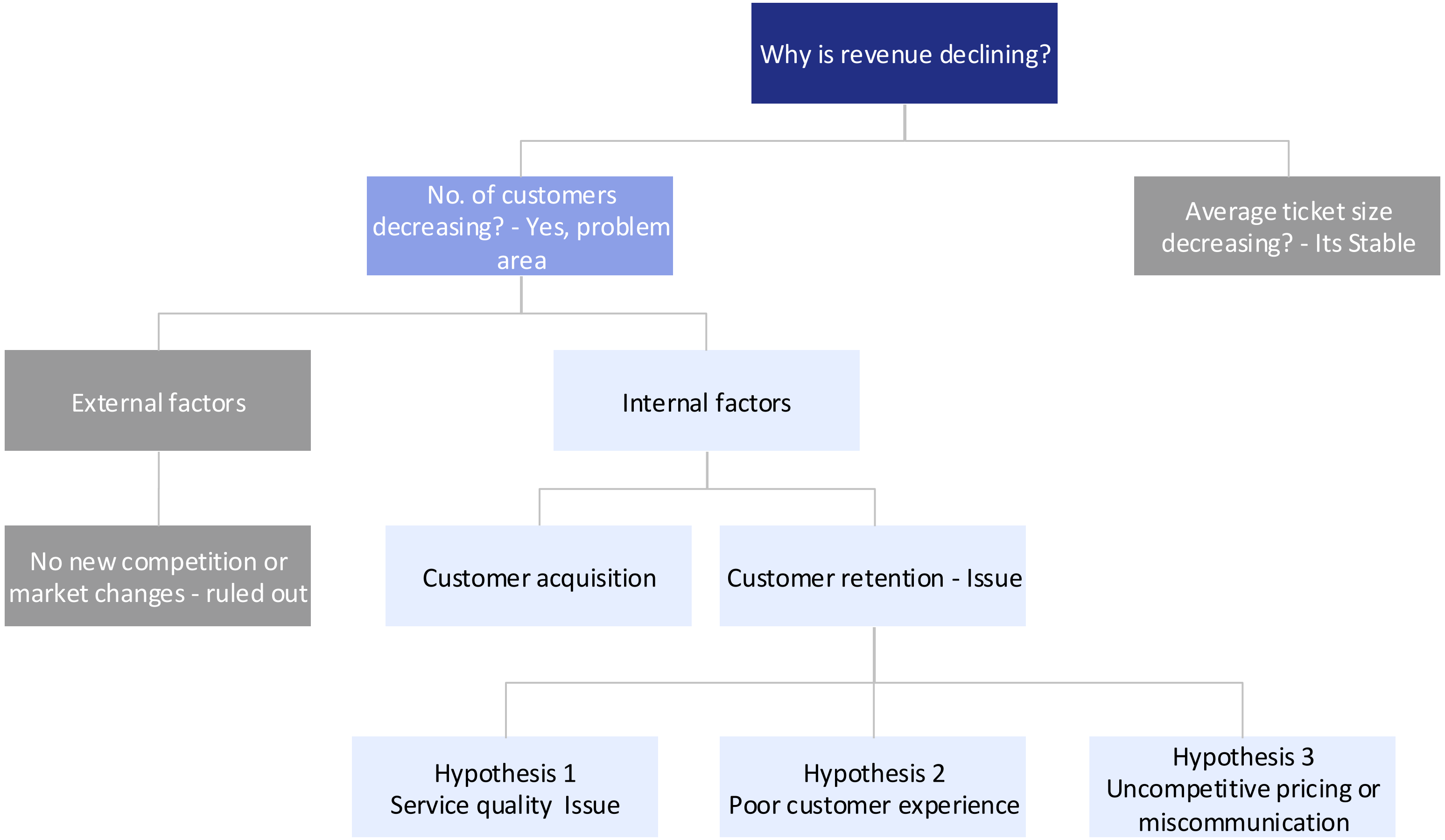
- Client is a general-purpose repair shop.
- Revenue decline is driven by a drop in the number of cars serviced (volume).
- The key issue is a significant decline in repeat customers.
- The competitive landscape is stable; no new major competitors have entered the market.

Case Notes

- Initial framework structured around External vs. Internal Factors.
- Ruled out external factors (competition) as the primary cause due to market stability.
- Pivoted to internal factors, specifically focusing on customer retention vs. acquisition.

Recommendations

- Action 1: Analyze Online Presence. Scour online review sites for recurring negative themes
- Action 2: Implement Customer Surveys to gather direct, real-time feedback.
- Action 3: Review Operational Data. Investigate internal changes, such as key staff turnover, that could correlate with a drop in service quality.



1/2 | Your client, a leading chocolate manufacturer in India (think Cadbury), wants to reduce product costs to maximize profits. They have ~600 SKUs and distribute via retail, modern trade, and online channels.

Great. Processing can be broken into four main heads: machines, labor, materials, and infrastructure. Is there any indication which is problematic?
Material costs are high.
Then I'll break materials into two: ingredients (cocoa, milk, sugar) and packaging. Should I analyze both?
Focus on packaging
Alright. For packaging, I'll look at: Type of packaging (plastic, cardboard, tin, premium). Quantity utilized (excess layers, oversized boxes). Quality of packaging (durability, cost per unit). Do we have many SKUs with customized packaging?
No, we use two standard box sizes.
In that case, my initial recommendation would be: Optimize box size to reduce wastage. Shift to recyclable/reusable packaging to reduce recurring cost. Explore procurement partnerships to reuse packaging (e.g., incentivized returns for customers).
How would you implement reusable packaging?
We could incentivize customers to return boxes (e.g., cashback, free chocolates) at retail stores. The saved cost on producing new boxes would eventually offset the collection cost, though we'd need a break-even analysis before scaling.
Anything else?
In parallel, we can explore lightweight, eco-friendly materials and negotiate supplier contracts for bulk procurement.

2/2 | Your client, a leading chocolate manufacturer in India (think Cadbury), wants to reduce product costs to maximize profits. They have ~600 SKUs and distribute via retail, modern trade, and online channels

Interviewee Scoping questions to the interviewer

- Which cost head is currently driving high expenses?
- Should you analyze both ingredients and packaging?
- standardized or customized packaging across SKUs?
- Are there multiple SKUs?
- What cost lever to consider?
- any constraints on shifting to recyclable or reusable packaging?

Conclusion as per Interviewer's reply to the above questions:

This was an open-ended case where the interviewer directed the candidate to focus on packaging costs within materials. Since SKUs use standard box sizes, the candidate was expected to scope optimization levers such as right-sizing boxes, shifting to recyclable/reusable packaging, and exploring procurement partnerships to reduce costs.

How to reduce product costs to maximize profits

- Machine
- Labor
- Material
  - Packaging
    - Type of packaging
    - Quantity utilized
    - Quality of packaging
  - Ingredients
- Infrastructure

Since the company uses only two standard box sizes, the initial recommendation:

- Optimize box size to reduce wastage
- Shift to recyclable/reusable packaging to reduce recurring cost
- Explore procurement partnerships to reuse packaging (e.g., incentivized returns for customers)

Implement reusable packaging by incentivizing customers to return boxes at retail stores. The saved cost on producing new boxes would eventually offset the collection cost

1/1 | Your client is a chemicals manufacturer. Company is not able to achieve its target profits. You need to come up with a solution to this situation.

Interviewee	Where is our client based out of?
Interviewer	How does that matter?
Interviewee	It would affect our customer profile.
Interviewer	India, it is!
Interviewee	What are the various uses of the product?
Interviewer	It is used only for two purposes, one for making tyres and another for printing various newspapers.
Interviewee	How many competitors do we have? Is it a fragmented market or concentrated in the hands of a few?
Interviewer	3, Delhi, Gujarat and Tamil Nadu.
Interviewee	Are they facing the same trend?
Interviewer	No, only us.
Interviewee	I will take a few seconds to structure my thoughts and get back to you, is that okay?
Interviewer	Sure Came up with performa of revenue statement and discussed about FC and VC. Interviewer stopped and gave extra information.
Interviewee	The overall equipment effectiveness of our client is 70-75% and that of competitors is 95%.
Interviewer	What do you mean by equipment effectiveness?

Interviewee	Overall Equipment Effectiveness can be broken down into three parts:- Plant Quality, Plant Availability and Productivity. Quality means that the products produced are as per specifications, Availability is effective time availability after taking care of breakdowns, etc. and productivity is the number of units produced in relation to time Is there any specific segment out of the three which is a concern?
Interviewer	Yeah, let's dive into Plant Availability
Interviewee	Do we see a change in the time spend after tackling the breakdowns?
Interviewer	Yes
Interviewee	So the issue could be in either of the three scenarios: 1) time spend per breakdown has increased 2) no. of breakdowns have increased 3) waiting time has increased.
Interviewer	Yeah, so the waiting time has increased due to the increase in the occupancy rate of the machines. The manufacturer has recently doubled the quantity of production and so the machines are running at full capacity thereby leading to wait time increase in breakdown initiation. What would you recommend?
Interviewee	Did synthesis and recommended that the company can either think of buying more machines of the same strength or larger machines. If space is a constraint, it can look into possibilities of rent/ buying/ expanding the existing factory.
Interviewer	Thank you! That will be it.

2/2 | Your client is a chemical manufacturer. The company is not able to achieve its target profits. You need to come up with a solution to this situation

Interviewee Scoping questions to the interviewer

- Where is the client based? (India)
- What are the main uses of the product?
- Lead competitors in the market?
- Is the market fragmented or concentrated?
- Redirect to where the core of the problem lies?

Conclusion as per Interviewer's reply to the above questions:

This was an unconventional case where you get to solution by probing more questions for interviewer

How to achieve targeted profits

Equipment Effectiveness: overall equipment effectiveness of the client is 70-75% vs competitors' 95%.

Plant Quality (Products are as per specifications.)

Time spend per breakdown has increased

Plant Availability (Time available after accounting for breakdowns)

no. of breakdowns have increased

Productivity (Number of units produced in a given time)

Waiting time has increased

The waiting time has **increased due to the increase in the occupancy rate of the machines.** Doubled production has maxed out machines, causing delays in breakdown repairs.

The interviewee recommends buying more machines or expanding the current facility, which the interviewer confirms is a viable solution.

Pricing

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(1/2) Your client is a real estate developer in Mumbai. He has recently built a housing complex and wants to figure out how to price the apartments. Please advise.

Interviewee	I would like to know a few more details about the housing complex. What kind of locality is it located in and how crowded is the market?
Interviewer	The complex is located about an hour away from the city. It is an upcoming region with not a lot of complexes around.
Interviewee	Is there a specific reason for this location?
Interviewer	The Government has announced a new airport in the area and there are a few offices coming up nearby.
Interviewee	Understood. How many apartments are there in the complex?
Interviewer	There are 4 buildings with 250 apartments each.
Interviewee	So, 1000 apartments in total. Are there different categories of apartments or are they all homogenous?
Interviewer	You can assume that they are all homogenous with the same amenities across.
Interviewee	How much has the builder invested in this project, and is there a target gestation period in mind?
Interviewer	The builder has invested Rs. 100 crores and expects a 10 year gestation period.=
Interviewee	Okay, and what is the size of the apartment?
Interviewer	Approximately 2000 feet.

Interviewee	Noted. For pricing these apartments, I will consider three approaches, cost based, competitor based and value-based pricing. So, I have a few questions before I begin. I want to know about the expected profit margins and maintenance charges per flat, expected sale schedule and pricing strategy to be followed for different flats
Interviewer	Consider profit margins to be 10% of the cost incurred and maintenance charges to be payable annually and thus not included in the pricing of the apartment . The client is expecting to sell 20% of the flats every year in the next 5 years. Assume floor 1-5 to be priced 10% higher than 6-10.
Interviewee	Our price should be such that it should include the cost incurred by the client and the profit expected out of the project. Considering the profit to be 10% of the investment made in the project. The total expected revenue would be 280 crores.Expected Revenue = number of flats*price/square feet*square feet. Since some flats are to be priced higher than others, price/square feet for floor 1-5 would be 1467 and price/square feet for floor 6-10 would be 1333 INR. Since all the apartments would not be occupied in the first year, we can increase the price of the apartment in future years to account for growth, improvement in surroundings and inflation.
Interviewer	Okay, and how would you consider competitor-based pricing?
Interviewee	I would find the competitors' prices and costs in the economy category to gauge their margins. Moreover, I would compare their offerings with ours to see if they offer more or less for unit price. I will then price the apartment basing competitor as the benchmark
Interviewer	What about value-based costing?

(2/2) Your client is a real estate developer in Mumbai. He has recently built a housing complex and wants to figure out how to price the apartments. Please advise.

Interviewee	Well proximity to airport and office spaces certainly be a reason to add a premium to the competitor - based pricing I had discussed earlier, if the competitors don't offer this advantage. We can also look at proxies in other parts of the city to analyze the pricing strategy followed by builders. Therefore, I would price the apartments at a premium above the competitors' prices, with an overall constraint of keeping prices above or equal to the cost-based rate that was computed.
Interviewer	Finally, what would you recommend in this case?
Interviewee	Since it is upcoming region and metro services are not being offered right now, so competition and value-based pricing would not help us much and we should go with cost-based pricing till the area is sufficiently developed.
Interviewer	We can end this case here. Thank you for your recommendation.

Tips from Expert:

1. Clarify context early

- Don't wait for the interviewer to reveal floors/buildings/flats. Ask upfront:
  - *"How many buildings and floors are in scope?"*
  - *"Are all 250 flats total, or per building?"*
- This shows structured thinking and avoids confusion later.

2. Structure revenue & profit calculation

- Break it step by step:
  - Total project cost ÷ total flats = **cost per flat**.
  - Add 10% margin = **base price per flat**.
  - Adjust for floor-based pricing (e.g., top floors at premium).
  - Multiply across flats = **total expected revenue**.
- If interviewer throws in extra details (like ₹280 cr.), reconcile your math → call out gaps.

3. Ask about financing

- In real estate, financing costs are often major.
- If not given, ask: *"Should we consider debt financing or ignore it for simplicity?"*
- Even if told to ignore, it shows you think beyond surface-level math.

4. Anticipate risks & practicalities

- Mention that project economics aren't only about construction cost + margin:
  - Financing cost
  - Sales cycle speed (how quickly flats sell)
  - Competitor pricing in nearby projects

5. Drive the conversation

- Don't let the interviewer spoon-feed calculations. Instead, say:
  - *"Let me calculate revenue assuming all flats are equally priced, then adjust for premium floors."*
  - *"I'd also like to test sensitivity: what if sales are slower or financing costs are higher?"*

6. Keep flow tight

- Start broad → *"Does this project make sense financially?"*
- Then go deep → cost, revenue, pricing tiers, financing, risks.
- End with recommendation → *"Given costs, expected revenue, and risks, the project generates ~X% return, which looks attractive if sales assumptions hold."*

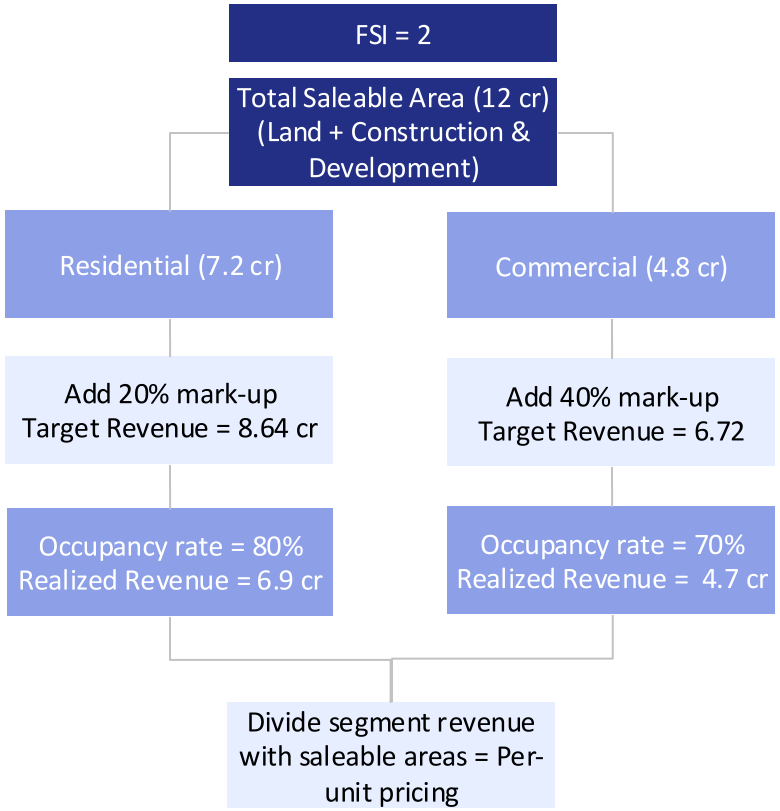
(1/1) You're a consultant with a Real-Estate developer who needs your help in determine sale price of commercial & residential plots in a newly built township

Interviewee Notes

I first calculated the total saleable area using the FSI of 2 and split it between residential and commercial plots in the 3:2 ratio. Then, I allocated the total project cost of ₹12 crores (land plus construction & development) proportionately between the two segments. I added developer margins of 20% for residential and 40% for commercial to arrive at the target revenues for each. Occupancy rates of 80% (residential) and 70% (commercial) were applied to adjust for realistic revenue realization. Finally, I divided the segmental revenues by their respective saleable areas to estimate per-unit pricing, cross-checking against market benchmarks to ensure competitiveness.

Case Notes

The interviewer urges the candidate to think on:
- Various possible cost heads in developing real estate
- Possible Revenue Streams
- Ignore any other forms of revenue heads (advertisement revenue, services to residents, facilities etc.)



Tips from Expert:

Success metric clarity
- It's not clear what the *developer's goal* is: maximize profit? Achieve a payback target? Beat competitor pricing? Without this, the numbers float without sharp context.

Granularity of costs
- "Land + construction + development = ₹12 cr" is too aggregated. Could test candidate on breaking down **land, construction, approvals, financing** separately.

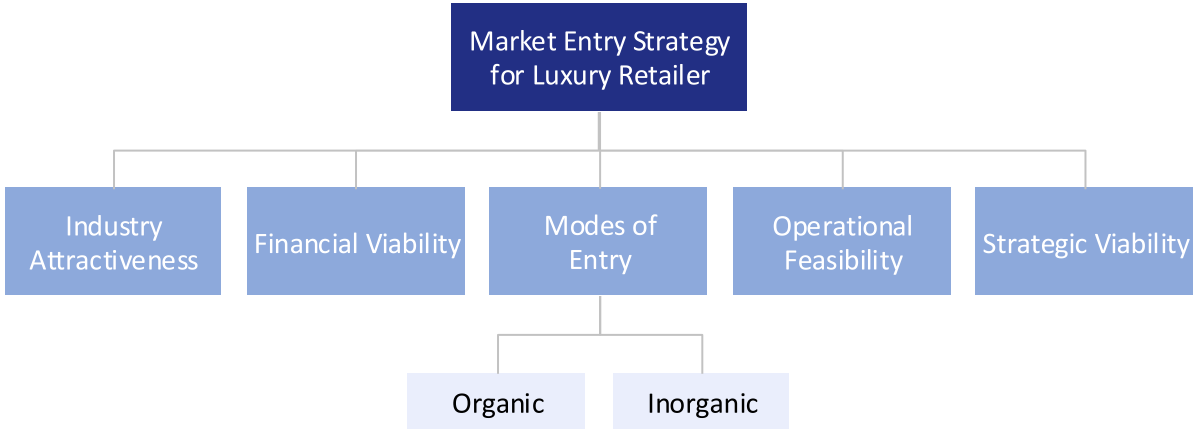
Occupancy assumption
- Using flat 80% and 70% is okay, but candidate could probe: *"Is this year-1 occupancy, or steady state? How does ramp-up look?"*

Risk & sensitivity
- No discussion on risks: what if construction costs overrun? What if demand is weaker than assumed?
- Could add a quick sensitivity test (e.g., 10% drop in occupancy → revenue impact).

Market Entry

(1/1) Your client, a French luxury clothing retailer with strong presence in Europe and America, wants to enter the Indian market. They are evaluating whether to launch via flagship stores, e-commerce, or an omni-channel strategy. Help them design their market entry approach.

Interviewer	Your client is a luxury clothing retailer in Europe. They want to expand into the Indian subcontinent. How would you approach this?
Interviewee	Sure. To begin, I'd like to ask a few scoping questions to better understand their existing operations and products. How are they performing in Europe and the US? Do they primarily sell online or through physical stores? What are their best-selling products? Is their customer base more women-focused or men-focused?
Interviewer	They follow an omni-channel strategy abroad: flagship stores in high-density luxury zones, and e-commerce in other regions. Their top products are women's leather jackets and boots, making up 70% of sales.
Interviewee	Understood. I will structure my approach in four steps: 1. **Market attractiveness** – assess TAM, consumer segments, competition, regulatory context. 2. **Financial feasibility** – evaluate pricing, margins, break-even. 3. **Operational feasibility** – assess supply chain and value chain needs. 4. **Mode of entry** – recommend flagship, e-commerce, or partnership model. Does this sound like a good starting point?
Interviewer	Yes, proceed.
Interviewee	First, for market sizing: India's population is ~1.4 billion. I'll segment it into urban and rural, then focus on high-income urban consumers. Assuming luxury leather jacket pricing between ₹25,000–₹40,000, this market is niche. Based on previous casebook data, I estimate the TAM to be around ₹100–150 crores. Assuming a 10% market share in Year 1, expected revenue would be ₹10–15 crores.
Interviewer	That seems reasonable. What about the costs?
Interviewee	Flagship stores would cost ~₹35–40 lakhs/month per store, with a plan for 3–4 stores = ~₹2 crore/month, ~₹22 crore/year. Too high relative to projected first-year revenue. Marketing cost per customer is estimated at ₹1,000–₹2,000. COGS is ₹8,000–₹9,000/item, shipping adds ₹500–600. That leaves a margin of ~₹3,500–4,000 per item.
Interviewer	So which entry mode would you recommend?
Interviewee	E-commerce first, through high-end marketplaces (Tata Cliq Luxury, Ajio Luxe, etc.) to minimize fixed costs and leverage their brand network. Avoid flagship initially. Explore JV/partnership with Reliance/Tata later once the brand is established.
Interviewer	Any operational challenges?
Interviewee	Products will be exported from Vietnam/Indonesia. No immediate need for domestic manufacturing. Operationally, e-commerce is feasible and less capital intensive.
Interviewer	Good. Any final recommendations?
Interviewee	Launch e-commerce first with targeted marketing in metros (Delhi, Mumbai, Bangalore). Avoid flagship in the first phase. Monitor customer acquisition cost and retention over 12–18 months. Reassess flagship stores post 2 years if revenue crosses ₹50 crore run-rate.



(1 / 1) Your client is a leading private post-secondary education provider with universities across Europe, predominantly offering Arts & Design degree programs. They are evaluating entering the Mexican market and require our analysis to estimate the total addressable market in terms of potential student enrolments.

Interviewee	Absolutely. To better understand the market potential, some additional details would be helpful. Could you share more on the client's target customer segments in terms of their geographical spread, affordability levels, and existing education levels?
Interviewer	The client targets premium undergraduate and postgraduate students primarily from western Europe through their in-person degree offerings, which tend to be on the higher side in terms of costs.
Interviewee	I see. Does the client also offer online or e-learning certification programs alongside the in-person degrees?
Interviewer	Yes, they do offer both formats, but their core focus remains on-campus, in-person degree programs.
Interviewee	Sure, before jumping into the market sizing, I would want to understand more about the Mexican market. Basis my preliminary understanding, I believe the focus is still on more traditional education such as engineering, commerce, medical, etc., hence, the Art & Design market might be relatively untapped and nascent. Is that a fair assessment? Also, I would want to understand if our client plans to penetrate Mexican markets with a similar strategy as the current one.
Interviewer	Yes, you are correct. The Art & Design market segment is highly fragmented at the moment with mostly budget schools. We plan to target undergrad students who fall in the premium segment for our course, and we will only offer in-person degree to begin with. With this context, how would you approach estimating the potential market size in Mexico?
Interviewee	Certainly, let me take a moment to structure my approach on the same. To start with, I would estimate Mexico's population to be roughly half of that of USA since its barely 20% the size of USA but at least 2.5X as dense, hence I would take it to be 150M roughly. Since we are offering our program to undergrad students specifically, it should be to people within 18-24 age bracket. Basis my understanding, Mexico is a developing country with demographic dividend skewed towards a younger population, hence, 30% would roughly fall within this age bracket. Of these, only middle- and high-income groups would represent roughly 40% of the population. I would also want to apply a student enrolment filter on this and assume it to be 70% since it would ideally be close to the Indian enrolment rate. Finally, I would put a % interested filter of 5%. Does this approach make sense, or should I do a sense check on any of the numbers?
Interviewer	Yes, this is a well-thought-out approach. Could you share the final figure for estimated student enrolments? Also, please elaborate on the rationale behind assuming only 5% interest in the client's offering.
Interviewee	Certainly. The estimated number of students likely to enrol comes out to be approximately 630,000. Regarding the 5% assumption, my rationale is based on two metrics: accessibility and willingness to pay. There may be a general inclination towards more traditional programs, along with potential cultural stigma and preference to pursue such niche fields outside Mexico.
Interviewer	That's a comprehensive explanation. Now, let's assume the client enrols 500 new students yearly for their 3-year degree program, with a fixed annual tuition fee of $1,500 per student. What would be the projected cumulative revenue over the first 5 years of operations in Mexico?
Interviewee	To calculate the cumulative revenue, I'll consider the rolling enrolments each year: Year 1: 500 students Year 2: 1,000 students (500 new + 500 continuing) Years 3-5: 1,500 students annually (500 new + 1,000 continuing) So, over 5 years, the total student enrolments would be 6,000. With a fee of 1,500 per student per year, the projected 5–year cumulative revenue would be 6,000x1,500 = $9 million.
Interviewer	No, that's a comprehensive analysis. Thank you for your time and efforts. Best wishes for the subsequent rounds.

(1 / 2) Our client is a Turkish LPG manufacturer, and they are considering entering the Indian market. They need our help to assess if this is a good fit for them.

Interviewee	Thank you. Let me take a moment to gather my thoughts. To start, I would like to ask a few scoping questions about their current business—things like size, ownership of the value chain, and customer base. Then, I'd like to understand why they are looking to enter the Indian market specifically. Do they have any data on the Indian LPG market, and are there any objective metrics they aim to achieve, such as revenue, market share, or profits? Plus, it would be helpful to know if they have any experience in entering new markets in the past.
Interviewer	They are the largest player in Turkey, essentially holding a monopoly, which means their revenue growth has plateaued. They're exploring new geographies to expand their revenue. As for their value chain, they purchase gas from extraction companies, process and cylinder it in-house, and handle the distribution and sales themselves. They find India attractive due to its size. In India, 80% of the LPG market is dominated by a three-player oligopoly, with the remainder being highly fragmented. Their objective is to achieve an additional revenue of 30,000 crores by entering the Indian market within two years.
Interviewee	Understood. The first step should be to determine if the Indian market is large enough to support this scale of entry. If it is, we can then explore the operational feasibility and entry strategies for the Indian market.
Interviewer	Sure. Let's move ahead!
Interviewee	To estimate the market size for LPG cylinders in India, we'll break down the population into households and categorize them as rural or urban. Using assumptions about the penetration of gas cylinders—based on factors like income, alternative sources such as piped gas, biogas, electricity, etc.—we can estimate the number of households using gas cylinders in India.

Interviewee	Multiplying this by the number of cylinders required annually per household and the price per cylinder should give us the market's value. Does this approach sound reasonable to you?
Interviewer	Yes, that's a solid approach. For your calculations, assume that urban households have an 80% penetration rate for cylinders and rural households have a 50% rate.
Interviewee	Based on India's population of 140 crores, this gives us 35 crore households, with 30% urban and 70% rural. This equates to approximately 10 crore urban households and 25 crore rural households. Applying the penetration rates, we have 8 crore urban and about 12.5 crore rural households using gas cylinders. Assuming each household needs one cylinder per month and each cylinder costs around Rs. 1000 without subsidies, we're looking at a market size of approximately 240,000 crores. Our client aims to capture 30,000 crores of this, which is about 12.5% of the market, within two years.
Interviewer	Excellent analysis. Now, let's discuss the challenges the company might face from a customer standpoint and explore potential strategies.
Interviewee	The main challenges from the customer's perspective revolve around four areas: Awareness, Access, Acceptability, and Affordability. Could we delve deeper into any of these aspects?
Interviewer	Good breakdown. Could you elaborate on what you mean by Acceptability?
Interviewee	Since LPG is a commoditized product, customers tend to stick with their current suppliers for years. There's no incentive to switch unless the new product offers higher quality or lower prices, which is difficult given the price regulation in this market.

(2 / 2) Our client is a Turkish LPG manufacturer, and they are considering entering the Indian market. They need our help to assess if this is a good fit for them.

Interviewer	That's a keen observation. Price regulation does mean there's little product differentiation. Additionally, the oligopoly players have patented gas stove connections that are compatible only with their cylinders, further discouraging customers from switching. Any thoughts on how we might address these issues?
Interviewee	The high switching costs and lack of incentive to change are significant hurdles. However, we could introduce incentives for switching. For example, enhancing our distribution network with a digital-first approach, such as app-based ordering and improved customer service, could differentiate us. Additionally, offering new stoves to customers who switch could overcome the compatibility issue. By analyzing the cost of acquiring a customer (CAC) against the lifetime value (LTV), we could assess the financial viability of this strategy. It could also serve as a marketing tool to promote our brand and attract customers by offering a modern, free item for their kitchens.
Interviewer	Those are innovative strategies. Let's conclude with your final recommendations for the company.
Interviewee	After considering all factors, my recommendation is for the LPG player to not enter the Indian market. This is due to three primary reasons: achieving a 30,000 crore revenue target, which is 12.5% of the market, seems very ambitious given that 80% is controlled by an oligopoly; the exclusive cylinder-to-stove connection acts as a significant barrier to customer switching; and the established trust and market understanding of the incumbent players, which our client lacks, would likely hinder our success in this new market.

(1 / 2) Your client, a renowned magazine publisher, is considering tapping into the lifestyle segment targeting wealthy males. They believe this move could diversify their portfolio. What's your initial take on this strategy?

Interviewee	Thank you for the overview. I would like to begin by clarifying a few points about our client's goals and current market understanding. What exactly is the objective behind entering this new segment? Are we looking at diversification for brand extension or aiming for immediate high returns? Also, what timeline are we considering for market entry, and what are the expected financial returns, specifically the bottom line, in terms of profit?
Interviewer	The primary objective is indeed diversification, with an expected timeframe to start seeing returns within the next five years. They aim for a bottom line of $10M or more in profits.
Interviewee	Additionally, understanding the distribution frequency and if there's a specific subset within the male demographic, we're targeting would be crucial. Finally, what's the competitive landscape, and how does our client envisage entering this market?
Interviewer	The magazine would be distributed monthly, focusing broadly on the wealthy male segment without zeroing in on any specific age group for now. The market is competitive but not saturated. The client is open to various modes of entry but leans towards starting a new brand within their existing structure.
Interviewee	With this information, we can begin by estimating the market size to assess the industry's attractiveness. Considering India's population of 1.4 billion, with a 70:30 rural to urban split and 1:1 male to female split, we focus on the urban male population, which gives us approximately 200 million males. Segmenting further by income, targeting the upper-class segment, which is about 20% of this population, we have a base of 40 million. Assuming 30-40% of them are inclined towards magazine readership, we're looking at a market size of around 15 million potential customers.

Interviewee	Further, considering an average new entrant could aim to capture about 5% market share, that translates to around 750,000 customers.
Interviewer	That's a good start. How would you proceed with this market size in evaluating the opportunity?
Interviewee	I would like to assess the financial feasibility of this market entry opportunity. Do we have any information on the price and costs of the magazines we distribute?
Interviewer	Our given cost structure is as follows — $2 variable cost per copy, $4 price per copy, and negligible fixed costs.
Interviewee	Assuming monthly distribution, the profits would be 750,000 customers times $2 profit per copy times 12 months, equaling $18M annual profit (negligible fixed costs) in the first year. This exceeds the client's $10M profit objective, indicating financial attractiveness.
Interviewer	That seems promising. Could you outline the benefits and risks associated with this market entry?
Interviewee	Certainly. The benefits include tapping into a growing market buoyed by the premiumization wave, ensuring no cannibalization with existing businesses, and bolstering the publisher's presence in a lucrative segment. It offers an opportunity for greater push and visibility for their range of products. However, the risks involve significant competition, including the challenge of digital media overshadowing traditional magazines, the niche nature of the targeted segment which might limit scale, and potential societal shifts away from magazine readership. Overcoming these risks requires innovative strategies, such as digital integration and unique content creation, to ensure the venture's success and sustainability.

(2/ 2) Your client, a renowned magazine publisher, is considering tapping into the lifestyle segment targeting wealthy males. They believe this move could diversify their portfolio. What's your initial take on this strategy?

Interviewer	Those are comprehensive insights. Considering both the benefits and the risks, what would be your final recommendation for the client regarding this market entry?
Interviewee	Given the financial attractiveness and the strategic alignment with the client's diversification goal, entering the wealthy male lifestyle segment seems like a promising opportunity. However, it's imperative to proceed with a detailed market analysis, including consumer behavior studies and pilot launches, to mitigate the identified risks. Additionally, partnerships or acquisitions could be explored as potential entry modes to quickly gain market share and brand recognition.
Interviewer	Thank you for your insights. Great, that concludes our session.

Go in-depth in the case:

1. Distribution Strategy: Explicitly address frequency (weekly vs. monthly) and channels (bookstores, lounges, direct mail, digital) to show practical go-to-market thinking and validate low fixed-cost assumptions.

2. Competitor Analysis: Go beyond generic statements; name key players (luxury magazines, digital-native publications) to demonstrate grounded competitive awareness.

Growth

1/2 | Your client is in the dairy business and wants to explore significant growth opportunities. How would you advise them?

That's a very broad and interesting challenge. To provide a structured recommendation, I first need to understand the client's current situation. May I ask a few scoping questions?

Sure. Go ahead

First, could you tell me more about the client's current operations? Are they a producer, a processor, or a retailer? And where are they currently located?

They are a well-established dairy processor in Tamil Nadu. They have a strong brand and distribution network within the state.

Understood. A strong regional player. And what does their current product mix look like? Are they focused on basic products like milk, or do they also have value-added products?

Their portfolio is diverse, including liquid milk, yogurt, paneer, and ghee. However, the market in Tamil Nadu is becoming saturated, and they're facing intense price competition, especially on liquid milk.

That's a critical piece of information. The saturation in their home market suggests that purely organic growth there might be difficult. This leads me to structure my approach around two broad pillars for growth: 1) Maximizing the Core Market (Tamil Nadu) and 2) Expanding into New Markets. Given the saturation you mentioned, expansion seems like a promising avenue. Would you agree that's a good place to focus?

Yes, that seems logical. The leadership is very interested in expansion.

Great. In that case, the problem effectively pivots from a general growth strategy to a market entry strategy. To assess this, I'd want to analyze potential new markets based on a few key criteria: 1) Market Attractiveness (size, growth, consumer habits), 2) Competitive Landscape, and 3) Synergies with our client's current capabilities. A logical adjacent market might be a neighboring state like Karnataka. Do we have any information on the dairy market there?

That's a good thought. Let's assume the Karnataka market is large, growing, and has a similar consumer preference for dairy products. However, there are already two established local players.

Okay, so we won't be the first mover, which means our entry strategy needs to be smart. Given the presence of established competitors, a full-scale, capital-intensive entry by building our own processing plants might be too risky and slow. Instead, I would recommend a phased, asset-light entry approach.

What would that look like?

My recommendation would be to initially enter the Karnataka market by focusing only on our high-margin, value-added products like branded yogurt and paneer, where our brand can act as a differentiator. We would leverage a partnership model, using third-party logistics and co-packing facilities already present in Karnataka. This minimizes upfront investment and allows us to test the market, build brand recognition, and establish a beachhead before considering a full-scale investment.

2/2 | Your client is in the dairy business and wants to explore significant growth opportunities. How would you advise them?

Interviewee Notes

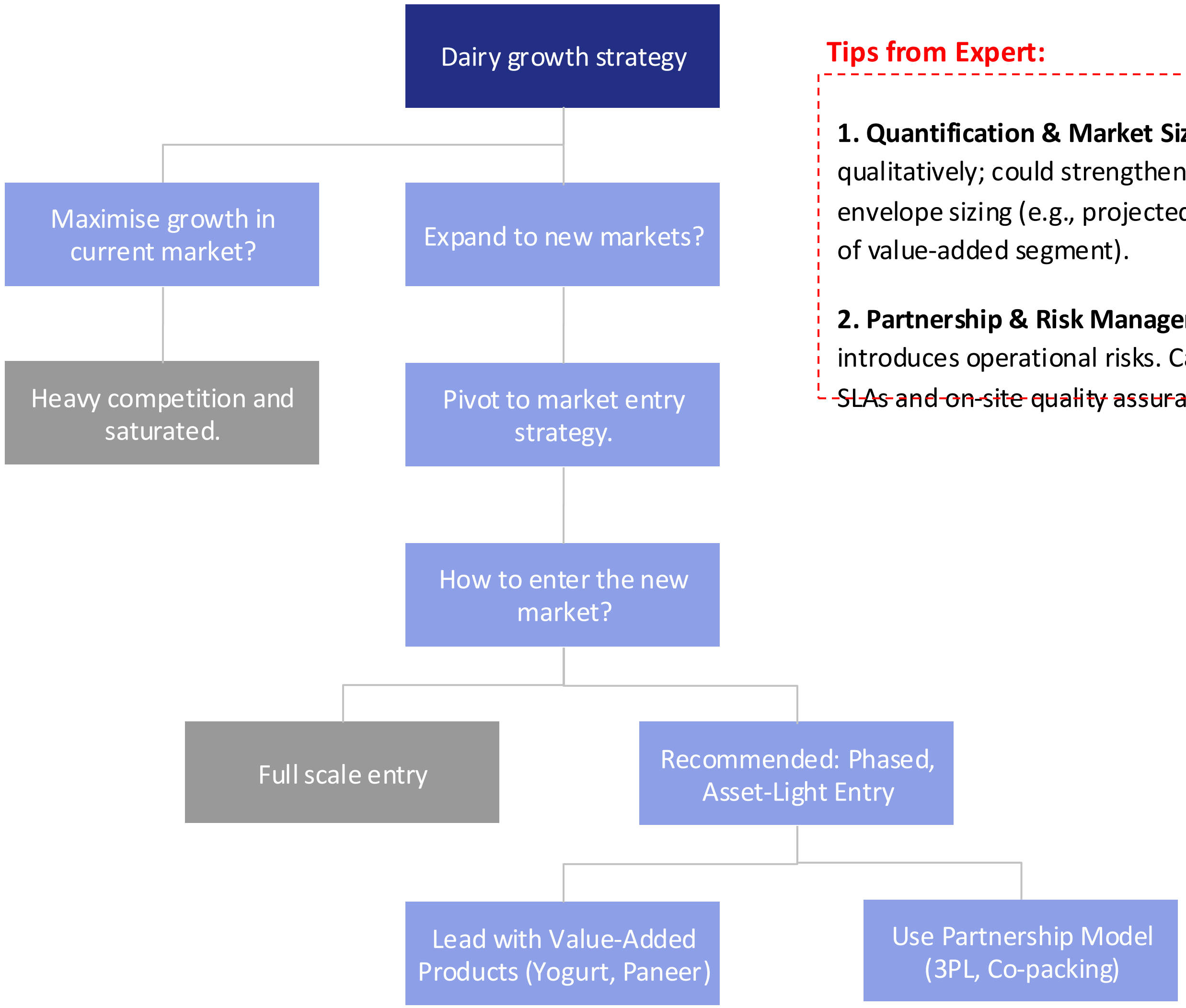
- Client is a dairy processor with a strong brand and distribution in Tamil Nadu.
- Product mix includes both liquid milk and value-added products (yogurt, paneer).
- Key Insight: Their core market (Tamil Nadu) is saturated with intense price competition.
- A potential new market (Karnataka) is attractive but has 2 established local competitors.

Case Notes

- Candidate started with Core Market vs. New Markets framework
- Used the "saturation" insight to correctly pivot the case from a general growth strategy to a specific market entry strategy.
- Hypothesis: A full-scale, capital-intensive market entry would be too risky and slow given the existing competition.
- Proposed an "asset-light" entry model to test the market and minimize upfront investment.

Recommendations

- Phased Entry: Enter the new market in a phased, low-risk manner instead of a full launch.
- Product Focus: Lead the entry with high-margin, value-added products (e.g., branded yogurt, paneer) where the brand can be a key differentiator, avoiding the commoditized liquid milk segment initially.
- Operational Model: Adopt a partnership model by using third-party logistics (3PL) and co-packing facilities to minimize initial capital expenditure and increase speed to market.



Tips from Expert:

1. Quantification & Market Sizing: Candidate justified Karnataka entry qualitatively; could strengthen recommendation with back-of-the-envelope sizing (e.g., projected customers, revenue, 1–2% market share of value-added segment).

2. Partnership & Risk Management: Reliance on 3PL/co-packing introduces operational risks. Candidate could highlight mitigation via SLAs and on-site quality assurance before scaling.

(1/1) Your client is a telecom company in India that wants to double its revenues. How would you approach this problem?

To start, I would like to clarify a few things. Is the company serving only Indian customers? Do they operate in both prepaid and postpaid segments, and what is their relative share? What is their market share, and who are the key competitors?

The company operates only in India. For this case, focus only on the prepaid segment. Their market share is around 20–25%.

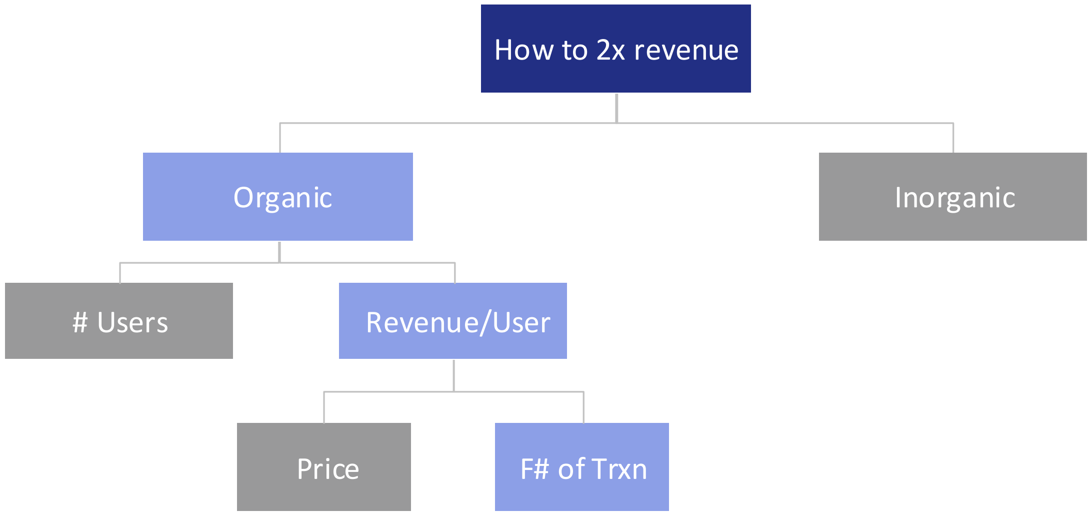
Since the objective is to double revenue, I would begin by sizing the market and understanding the addressable market. India's population is about 1.4 billion. Mobile penetration is around 80%, giving roughly 1.1 billion mobile users. Of these, about 90% are on prepaid plans, so around 1 billion prepaid users overall. With a 20–25% share, our client has about 200–250 million prepaid customers.

Good. Let's take a simpler approach with some numbers. Assume the company currently has 100 million customers, each paying an average of ₹300 per month. The customer base is growing at 10% every month. At the end of 10 months, will we be able to double revenue?

If growth is linear at 10 million new customers each month, then after 10 months the base grows from 100 million to 200 million customers. On average, over the 10-month period, the customer base will be about 150 million. That means revenue increases by 1.5×, not 2×. So the company cannot double revenue simply through this customer addition.

Correct. Now imagine you are advising the CEO on how to grow revenues further in an organic manner. Pricing & increasing the marketing spend aside, what strategies would you suggest?

To grow revenue, the company can focus on increasing customer base and driving higher spending per customer. For new customers, accessibility and awareness are key. Since accessibility was taken off the table, I would focus on awareness and incentives. To boost average revenue per user, I would suggest three quick ideas: first, cross-selling through the platform, such as offering data bundles with subscriptions to streaming services; second, family or group plans that encourage bulk recharges and loyalty; third, a rewards program that incentivizes early or frequent recharges, for example discounts for recharging before expiry. These could drive both customer acquisition and higher average spend.



- Cross Selling
- Group Plans / Bulk Discounts
- Reward Points

Tips from Expert:

Quantification matters – test numbers (e.g., savings, ARPU in telecom) instead of staying theoretical

Industry-specific metrics – use relevant KPIs (e.g., ARPU, not just user count for telecom)

Cover risks and trade-offs – show why certain options (inorganic, infrastructure-led, etc.) are eliminated

1/2 | Your client is is Accenture and they want to expand into a new Country. Devise a GTM for this

Accenture has different service divisions (Consulting, Tech, Operations etc;), for which services the entry is planned?
The entry is planned for Consulting services division
To clarify, Is there any specific country being evaluated by Accenture?
No specific country is decided. We are evaluating countries in European region
Could you elaborate on the reason/ rationale for expansion?
We would like to grow our revenue and tap high growth countries. How will you go about sizing the market and revenue for Accenture
I would broadly size the market and revenue as follows (# of Total Corporates in the country * % in Target sectors * Target scale * % willing to hire a consulting firm * % share that we can capture) * frequency of contracts * fees per contract
Who will be the various competitors for Accenture
I would divide the competitors to Core and Non-Core for consulting services. Core competitors include MBB, EY Parthenon etc; Non-core in operations and tech usually include Wipro, Infosys, Genpact etc;
What do you think could be potential risks of this entry?
Risks can be broken down to PESTEL/ macro risks, sector specific risks from clients, competition and company specific risks (hiring talent etc)
Would you recommend us to enter into Europe region as now?
Assuming basis the market research done if Europe expansion helps in growing our revenue before giving final recommendation, I'll evaluate 1) revenue growth that can be achieved by investing in Europe vs growth that would be achieved re-investing in existing geographies 2) incremental cost that would add to our business due to entry 3) Alignment with our overall objectives/policy incl. macro stability of Europe.

Tips from Expert:

1. Starting / Context: Clearly scoped to Consulting services in Europe; rationale focused on revenue growth and high-potential markets.

2. Approach / Framework: Three-step framework – scoping → country evaluation (market sizing, competitor analysis, PESTEL+ risk) → Go/No-Go decision. Competitor segmentation (core vs. non-core) adds clarity.

3. Aim / Objective: Clear, measurable: choose the optimal European country for expansion; considered ROI, incremental cost, and strategic fit.

2/2 | Your client is is Accenture and they want to expand into a new Country. Devise a GTM for this

Interviewee Notes

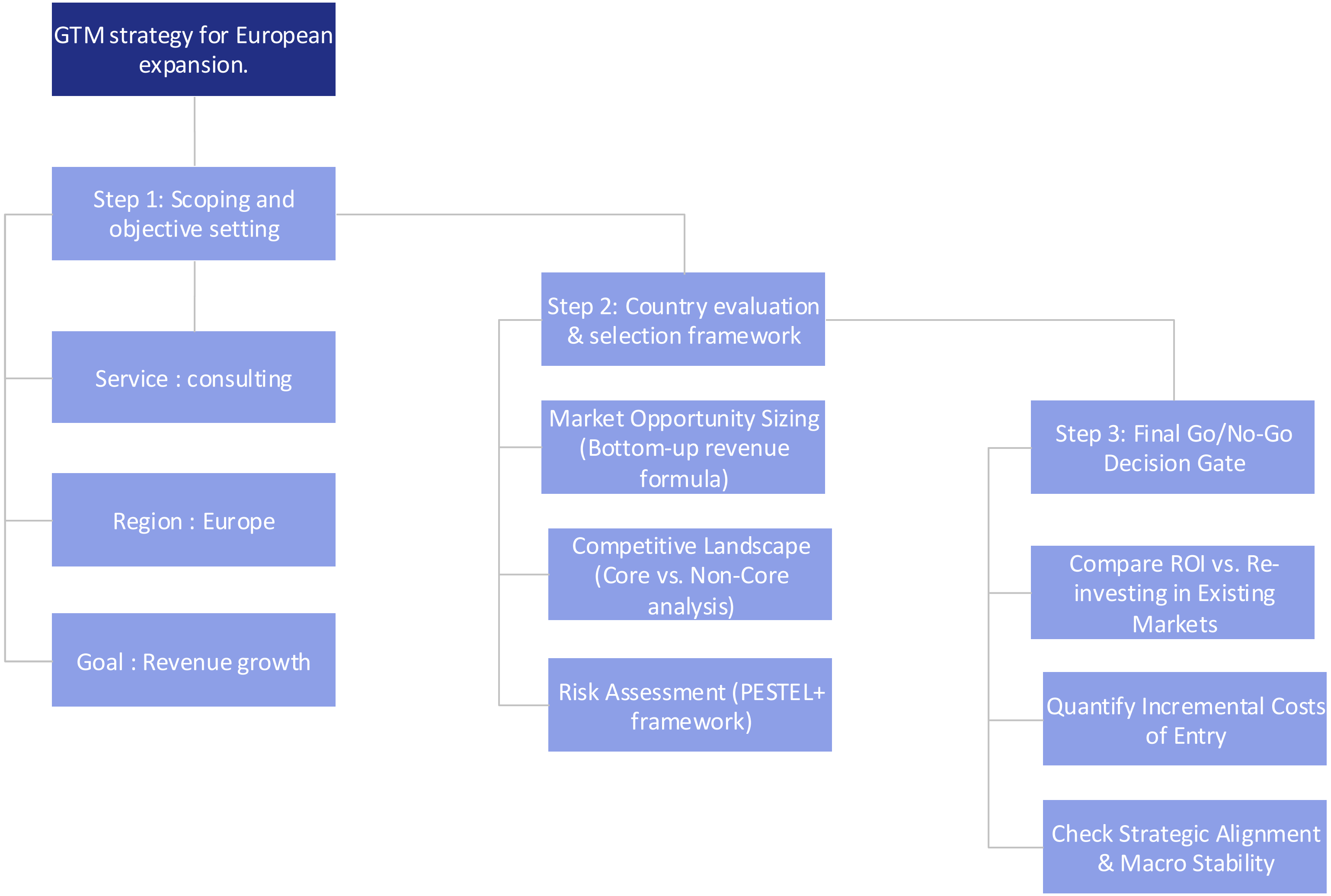
- Scope: The expansion is specifically for the Consulting services division.
- Geography: The client is evaluating potential high-growth countries within European region.
- Primary Rationale: The core business objective is to drive revenue growth by tapping into new, high-growth markets.

Case Notes

- Candidate used targeted scoping questions to narrow the problem from a generic "expansion" to a specific "Consulting GTM in Europe." Proposed a comprehensive, multi-faceted framework for evaluating and selecting a target country. Key Frameworks Used: - Market Sizing: A detailed, bottom-up formula was created to estimate potential revenue. - Competitive Analysis: Competitors were logically segmented into "Core" (MBB, Strategy Arms) and "Non-Core" (Tech/Ops firms). - Risk Assessment: A structured approach (PESTEL+) was used to identify macro and micro risks.

Recommendations

Overall Recommendation: Adopt a structured, three-step framework to first select the optimal European country before committing to a full GTM strategy. Analyze potential countries based on three key pillars: Quantify the addressable consulting revenue. Assess the strength of core consulting rivals. Evaluate macro and execution risks. Before committing, Compare the projected ROI of expansion vs. reinvesting in existing markets. Quantify the full incremental cost of entry. - Ensure alignment with corporate objectives and macro-stability.



(1 / 1) Our client is a paint manufacturing company looking to increase sales in the Indian market, How would you go about it?

Interviewee	To ensure we're aligned, our objective is to increase sales of the current product line. Is that correct?
Interviewer	Yes, that's correct. The client is looking for strategies to sell more of the existing product.
Interviewee	I see. Let's begin by understanding the client's business better and then moving on to recommendations for the client to increase sales. Could you help me understand our product's competitive positioning in terms of color variety, quality, and how it compares to our competitors. Can you tell me more about our product's strengths and weaknesses in these areas?
Interviewer	Our products are at par with competitors in terms of color and variety, but there's always room for improvement. Our quality is also competitive. We play in the premium paint range.
Interviewee	Understood. And how does our supply chain look like? Do we sell through distributors or D2C?
Interviewer	You are right. They currently sell through 7500 retail shops across India.
Interviewee	Super clear. Given this, I'd like to explore three main avenues to improve sales: product, promotion, and place. Starting with the product, we should investigate if we can introduce new variants that cater to unmet consumer preferences or trends in the premium segment. Moving on to promotion, we need to analyze if there's scope for promotional activities targeting both retailers and end consumers. For instance, we could enhance displays, use interactive or AI-driven displays, or even distribute free samples to increase visibility and trial.
Interviewer	Those are interesting points. Can you elaborate on the promotional activities and incentives for retailers?
Interviewee	Certainly. We could implement a tiered incentive program for retailers based on sales volume to encourage them to push our products. On top of that, marketing efforts should be amped up to raise brand awareness and product visibility at the point of sale.
Interviewer	And what about the third avenue, place? How can we expand our reach?
Interviewee	I would like to understand how many total retail shops are there in india. And what % of Indian paint market is covered by the 7500 shops?
Interviewer	Good question, There are about 25000 retailers in India and our 7500 shops account for 95% of market sales
Interviewee	Given that the existing retailers account for 95% of sales, opening new shops might not be the most effective strategy. However, improving the distribution efficiency (sales/ shops) and ensuring the product is available whenever and wherever the consumer demands it, could help us grow sales. This might involve direct-to-consumer delivery options, which could be a game-changer.
Interviewer	Interesting approach. Could you discuss how we might leverage digital tools to boost sales?
Interviewee	Absolutely. We could develop an app that allows consumers to visualize different paint colors in their homes virtually. This could be complemented with an online ordering system that sends paint samples directly to the consumer's home, increasing engagement and potentially leading to higher conversion rates.
Interviewer	That seems like a comprehensive strategy. One final question: how would you ensure the execution of this strategy is effective?
Interviewee	It's essential to have clear KPIs and monitor them closely. For product improvements, tracking sales of the new variants will be crucial. For promotional strategies, we should measure the uplift in sales linked to specific promotional activities. And for distribution improvements, timely fulfilment rates would be a key metric. Regular reviews and adjustments based on data will be critical for success.
Interviewer	Excellent. Thank you for your insights. That concludes our case interview

(1 / 1) Our client is a US-based apparel manufacturer. They're looking to increase their revenue and want our help in doing so.

Interviewee	Understood. To form a clear strategy, I'll need to delve into the company's specifics, their product range, customer base, and the competitive landscape. Could you clarify the size and scale of the business, how they manage the value chain (design, manufacture, selling), and the products they specialize in? Additionally, do they have any unique selling points (USPs)? Is their business model retail, online, or a mix? Regarding their customer base, are they targeting males or females, focusing on mass or premium segments, and are they serving the US market exclusively or globally? Lastly, what's the competitive environment like, including their market share, and is there a particular growth metric in terms of revenue that the client is targeting?
Interviewer	The brand specializes in Female Jeans, targeting the mass market with an affordable price point. They operate through retail stores across the country, handling design, manufacturing, and sales in-house. The market share is relatively small due to the fragmented nature of the market.
Interviewee	That’s useful information. Before we proceed, does the client prefer organic growth, or are they considering inorganic options as well?
Interviewer	They're interested in organic growth for now.
Interviewee	Excellent. Organic growth can be tackled in two main ways: expanding the existing business and exploring new business opportunities to drive top-line growth. Focusing on the existing business, revenue generation can be simplified into price multiplied by quantity. Given it's a mass brand, a price increase might not be viable due to potential profitability pressures. Thus, exploring ways to increase units sold seems like the right direction. Does that align with our thought process?
Interviewer	Yes, that approach makes sense. How do you propose we increase the volume of sales?
Interviewee	The volume of sales essentially boils down to two key factors: the number of customers and the number of purchases per customer. To boost the number of customers, we should look at enhancing our marketing efforts and expanding our distribution channels. This could involve amplifying our online presence and establishing tie-ups with other retailers or e-commerce platforms.

Interviewee	*(Cont.)* Regarding increasing the number of purchases, this could be achieved by broadening the product's usage and use cases. For example, by marketing our jeans as multi-purpose or suitable for various occasions, we could appeal to a wider audience. Additionally, introducing loyalty programs, bulk purchase discounts, or other incentives might encourage more frequent purchases.
Interviewer	That's an interesting breakdown. Can you elaborate on how these strategies could be implemented?
Interviewee	Sure. For marketing and distribution, creating a more robust online sales platform can significantly widen our reach. Partnering with major online retail platforms can also provide access to new customer segments. On the marketing front, running targeted campaigns that highlight the versatility and affordability of our jeans could resonate well with our audience. As for increasing purchases, developing a line of jeans that cater to different lifestyle needs or occasions can create new use cases, making our product a staple in consumers' wardrobes. Implementing a loyalty program that rewards repeat customers with discounts or special offers could enhance customer retention and encourage more frequent purchases.
Interviewer	Ok, this is great. Now let's talk about expanding into new product opportunities. What can be done there?
Interviewee	Here, we can consider three main strategies – expanding into new geographies, launching new product lines within the same category, or diversifying into a completely new line of service or products. Is there a particular area we'd like to focus on?
Interviewer	When you talk about expanding into a new geography, what would be the factors you would like to assess before entering?
Interviewee	There are 4 factors I would like to check for before entering a new geography - Market Size and Growth, Regulatory Environment, Competitive Environment Cultural & Consumer Behaviour
Interviewer	Great, that's all for now. Have a good day.

M&A/ PE/ VC

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1/1 | What factors do you consider when you are trying to setup a GCC - PESTEL framework? Which city do you prefer when setting up of R&D GCC (talent/ courses, cost of living, rental cost)? What type of cost heads you will look into for offshoring to a GCC?

Could you tell me a little more about the shop? Is it a specialized shop, like for luxury cars or transmissions, or a general-purpose repair shop?

It's a general repair shop that handles a wide variety of cars and services.

Okay but when we say revenues are declining, do we know if this is because the shop is servicing fewer cars, or if the average spend per car has gone down?

Our initial look at the numbers suggests the primary driver of the decline is the total number of cars being serviced. The average ticket size per repair has remained relatively stable.

That's very helpful. So, the core problem is a drop in customer volume. To diagnose the root cause, I'd like to structure my analysis by looking at two main areas: External Factors and Internal Factors.

External factors would be things outside the shop's direct control, like new competitors entering the area, changes in the neighborhood, or broader trends in car ownership or reliability. Internal factors would be things specific to the client's operations, such as their pricing, service quality, marketing effectiveness, or customer experience. Does this structure seem reasonable to you?

Yes, that's a very logical way to break it down. Where would you like to start?

Let's begin with External Factors, as they could be affecting the entire market. My first thought is competition. Have any new repair shops, particularly large chain stores or dealership service centers, opened in the vicinity in the last year or two?

The competitive environment has been stable. No new major players have opened up nearby.

Okay, that makes a broad market issue less likely. It points me more towards factors specific to our client. So let's move to the Internal bucket. Given that the number of cars is down, I'd want to understand if we are failing to attract new customers or if we are failing to retain existing customers. Do we have any information on the mix of new versus repeat customers?

That's a sharp question. We've noticed that the number of repeat customers has seen a significant drop over the past year.

That's a critical insight. A decline in repeat business is a strong signal that the issue isn't about marketing or brand awareness, but rather about the core customer experience. Loyal customers don't just stop coming back without a reason. This leads me to hypothesize that the root cause lies in either a decline in service quality, uncompetitive pricing, or a poor customer experience.

That seems plausible. How would you investigate that hypothesis?

To test this hypothesis, I would focus on gathering customer feedback through three key actions: Analyze Online Reviews: To identify recurring negative themes in public feedback. Implement Post-Service Surveys: To collect direct, real-time data from recent customers. Review Internal Operational Data: To correlate any changes, such as key staff turnover, with the decline in service quality. This approach should quickly help us pinpoint whether the problem is with the quality of the repairs themselves, the customer service at the front desk, or how pricing is communicated.

1/1 | You are a consultant to the CM of Goa who has asked you to revive the falling GDP of Goa.

Interviewee Notes

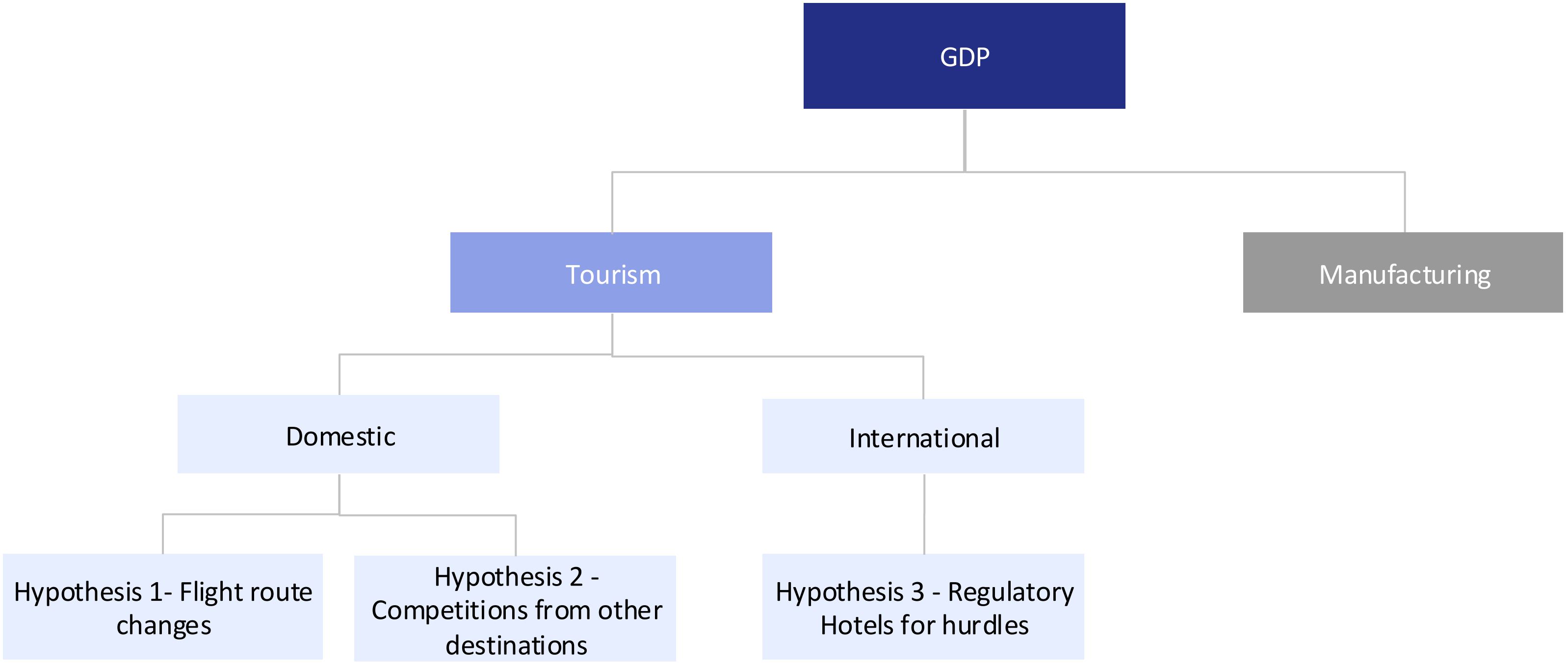
Key takeaways were to validate assumptions confidently, think in a data-driven manner, use real-world insights creatively and focus on structured problem-solving rather than numerical precision.

Case Notes

Within tourism, I segmented domestic and international inflows, identified spending categories such as connectivity, accommodation, leisure, wellness, and local experiences, and hypothesized potential causes for decline, including flight route changes, competition from other destinations, and regulatory hurdles for hotels. Despite a new airport opening, I explored counterintuitive factors like operational shifts and overcrowding in tourist-preferred areas.

Recommendations

Recommendations included improving international connectivity, creating premium wellness and cultural packages, fast-tracking high-end accommodation development, and benchmarking practices from Thailand and Bali to rebrand Goa globally.



1/1 | Our client is a VC firm. They are currently valuing a group of semiconductor start-ups for home IOT devices. How will you value these start-ups?

Interviewee	Can you please help me in laying down the process of valuing startups?
Interviewer	Okay, so let's go to the basics. How would you value a company in very basic terms.
Interviewee	Mainly by it's financial health and operational health.
Interviewer	Right. These are early phase startups, so assume they don't have significant operations or significant revenue. What now?
Interviewee	We can look at how existing companies in the industries are valued.
Interviewer	Right. What else?
Interviewee	1) We can also look at how much the different part of the company, like production, development etc would cost. 2) We can do a discounted cash flow calculation for the projected revenue in future maybe.
Interviewer	Right. So, the first approach is called market multiple. Essentially we valuate existing companies as Value = MM x revenue. MM is determined by other companies in the industry. But again these are non revenue generating companies. So what do we do now?.
Interviewee	We can go for other 2 approaches or adjust the valuation by 1) adjusting MM – based on historical data for other companies and projected revenue value 2) an absolute adjustment in the valuation based on which stage the company is and how much they usually raise in seed fund.
Interviewer	Right. The second method is called cost-to-duplicate. But let's focus on MM now. The industry MM is 15x. The 3 companies have requested valuations at J- 10x, K- 20x and L- 25x of their revenues. How will you choose among them? (J,K,L are company names)
Interviewee	Do we have their projected revenue numbers and which funding stage they are in?
Interviewer	Yes. I have both. J – 1M in 1 yr (series A), K – 3M in 5 yrs (series C), L – 10M in 4 yrs (series B). Just tell me which company you would pick amongst these and why?
Interviewee	I would go with K. Given that this is it's 3rd round of funding, I took there revenue projections as the most reasonable baseline. So company L is obviously inflating the revenue numbers. Also, it seems unrealistic for company J to be able to start generating such a high revenue from the first round itself.
Interviewer	But K has a very high MM compared to J.
Interviewee	Right, I am assuming that would be because they assumed their would negotiation on that and that's why went with a higher start point. Moreover, J looking for a valuation of 10M in 1 yr and K of 30M over 5 yrs, which spreads to 6M per year. This allows us the spread the investments over 5 years based on their performance. The 1yr time period of J makes that investment riskier,
Interviewer	Right. I think we will wrap it up. All the best

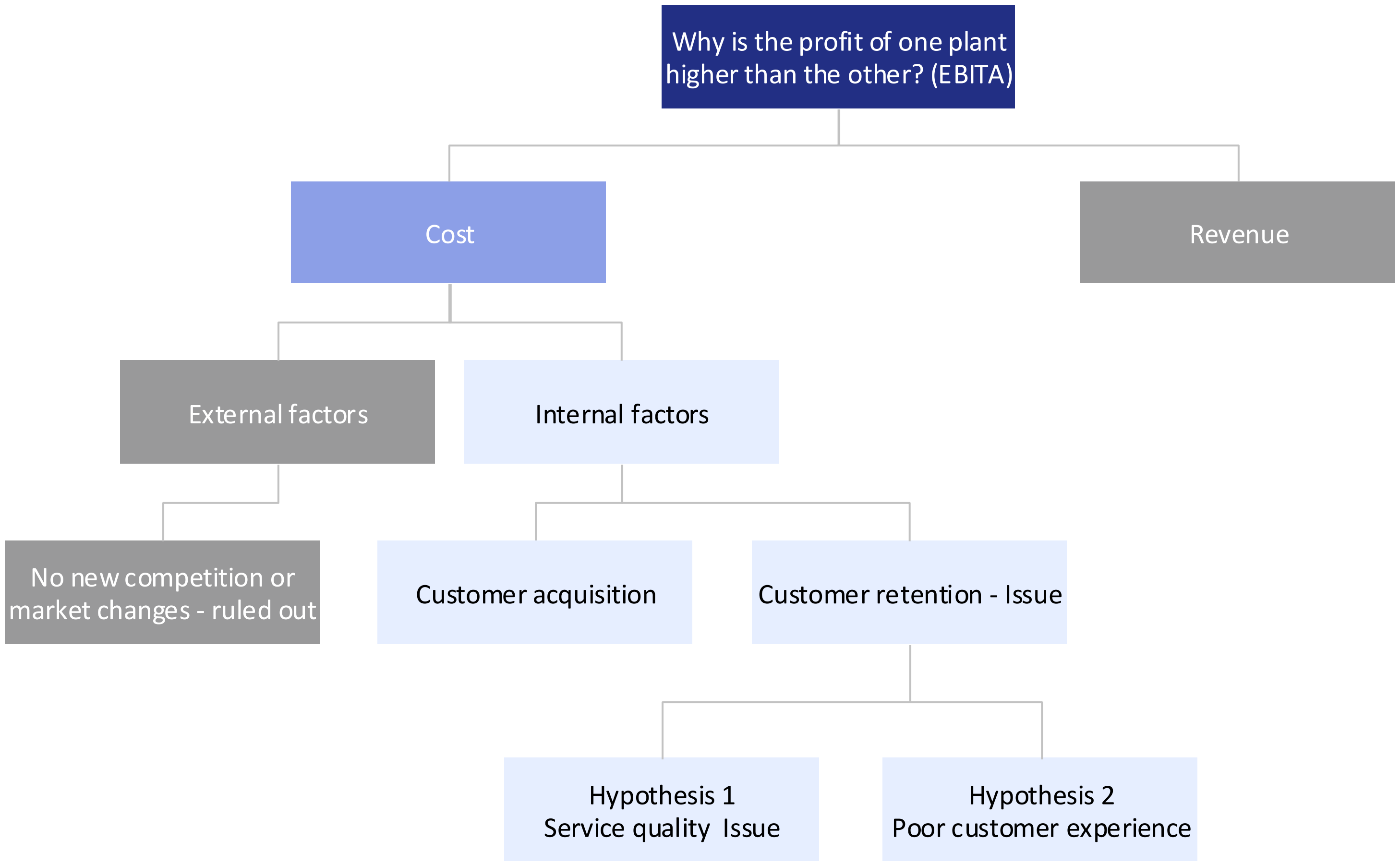
1/1 | A company has 2 manufacturing plants and the profit of one plant was 700 basis points higher than the other. Investigate the reason for this.

Interviewee Scoping questions to the interviewer

- What are the plants manufacturing?
- Where are the 2 plants located?
- How are the different functions- procurement, finance, distribution structured for both the plants? Are they centralized or decentralized?
- Since when is the profit higher for one plant or is it a one time scenario?

Conclusion as per interviewer's answers:

The plants are manufacturing plastic and one is located in Bangalore, while other in bhiwandi, Navi Mumbai, hence location could be a cause of different profits. However, all the other functions and management is very similar.



Abstract

1/2 | Your client is a large insurance company. They currently operate two large, privately-owned data centers to run their business. The CIO has asked us to help them develop a strategy to move their data centers to the cloud and understand the associated costs and benefits. How would you approach this?

Thank you. This is a classic but critical infrastructure decision. My approach would be to first understand the strategic drivers behind this move, then build a comprehensive business case by analyzing the costs and benefits, and finally, use that analysis to inform a high-level migration strategy.To start, may I ask why the client is considering this now? Is there a compelling event, like a hardware refresh cycle?

Exactly. Their primary data center hardware is approaching end-of-life, requiring a multi-million dollar capital refresh within the next 18 months. The board is questioning if they should reinvest in physical assets.

That's a powerful catalyst. It gives us a clear timeline and a capex number to compare against. To build the business case, I'd like to structure my analysis by breaking down both the benefits and the costs of moving to the cloud. Does that work?

Yes, that's the core of the question. Let's start with the benefits.

Great. I'd split the benefits into two categories: quantitative (hard savings) and qualitative (strategic advantages). For quantitative benefits, the most obvious is avoiding the upcoming hardware refresh capex. What other major operational costs are associated with the current data centers? I'm thinking of power, cooling, real estate, and maintenance staff.

Their all-in operational cost for the data centers, excluding the hardware refresh, is about $5 million per year.

Okay. So a key benefit is the potential to significantly reduce that $5M opex and avoid the large capex. Now, for the qualitative benefits, I'd hypothesize they would gain significant business agility, better security, and the ability to scale resources up or down on demand. Is the business currently constrained by IT's speed?

Yes. Launching a new insurance product currently takes the IT team six months just to provision the required server environment.

That's a perfect example of a strategic benefit. Reducing that time-to-market from months to weeks has significant value, even if it's hard to put an exact dollar figure on it initially.

Agreed. Now, let's talk about the other side of the ledger. What are the costs?

The costs are also two-fold. There are the one-time migration costs and the ongoing operational costs in the cloud. For the one-time costs, we'd need to account for planning the migration, the actual labor to move applications, potentially hiring third-party specialists, and training our existing staff on cloud technologies.

That's a good list. What about the ongoing costs? Many clients worry the cloud ends up being more expensive.

That's a valid concern. The primary ongoing cost is the cloud consumption bill itself—for compute, storage, and data transfer. A critical, and often overlooked, cost is the need for a robust Cloud Center of Excellence (CCoE). This is a team dedicated to governance, cost management, and security in the cloud to ensure expenses don't spiral out of control.

Excellent point. So, you've laid out the costs and benefits. How does this analysis inform your strategic recommendation for the migration itself?

The analysis shows that a "big bang" migration of both data centers at once would likely have prohibitively high one-time costs and risk. Therefore, my recommended strategy is a phased migration, starting with a pilot.

How would you select the applications for that pilot?

I'd start with a set of non-critical but meaningful applications, like their internal HR system or a development and testing environment. This allows the team to learn the process, build a repeatable migration "factory," and accurately measure the real-world costs and benefits in a controlled environment. The success of this pilot will provide a data-driven business case to the board and build the momentum needed for migrating the more complex, core insurance platforms.

2/2 | Your client is a large insurance company. They currently operate two large, privately-owned data centers to run their business. The CIO has asked us to help them develop a strategy to move their data centers to the cloud and understand the associated costs and benefits. How would you approach this?

Interviewee Notes

- Compelling Event: A multi-million dollar hardware refresh is required for their primary data center within 18 months.
- Current Costs: The data centers have a ~$5M annual operational cost (opex), separate from the upcoming capital cost (capex).
- Key Business Pain Point: Lack of agility; it takes IT six months just to provision servers for a new product launch.

Case Notes

- Candidate established a clear approach: 1) Understand strategic drivers, 2) Build a comprehensive business case (Costs -Benefits), 3) Formulate a migration strategy.
- Benefits Framework: Correctly segmented benefits into Quantitative (capex avoidance, opex reduction) and Qualitative (agility, scalability, security).
- Costs Framework: Correctly segmented costs into One-Time Migration Costs and Ongoing Cloud Costs.
- Key Hypothesis: A "big bang" migration would be too risky and costly upfront; a phased approach is necessary to manage risk and build momentum.

Recommendations

- Overall Strategy: Adopt a phased migration to de-risk the transformation and manage upfront costs.
- Immediate Action: Launch a pilot program as the first..
- Pilot Scope: Select non-critical but meaningful workloads (e.g., development/testing environments, internal HR systems) for the initial migration.
- Pilot Goal: Use the pilot to build a repeatable migration "factory," accurately measure real-world cloud costs, and create a data-driven business case to secure board approval for the full-scale migration.

Develop data center to cloud strategy

- Step 1: What are the drivers?
  - Hardware refresh deadline
  - Cost reduction
  - Innovation / agility
- Step 2: What's the business case?
  - Migration :Benefit analysis
    - Qualitative
      - Time to market
Scalability/security
    - Quantitative
      - Capex avoidance
Opex reduction
  - Migration : Cost analysis
    - One Time migration cost
-Planning, labor and training costs
    - Ongoing migration costs
-Cloud consumption costs
- Step 3: Formulate migration roadmap
  - Recommended phased migration
  - Start with pilot program
    - Derisk project, Identify full scale business case
    - Identify repeatable migration factory

Tips from Expert:

Clarify success metric: Strategic drivers explain *why* we are doing it, but success criteria should define the *end goal* (e.g., cost savings, agility, risk mitigation). Currently implied, not explicit.

Quantitative depth: Strong to note $5M opex / capex refresh, but push further—ask for 3–5 year financial impact of cloud vs. on-prem.

Pilot creativity: Instead of pre-selecting HR, test candidate by asking *what criteria* they'd use to pick pilot applications.

Qualitative benefits: Present as a structured list (e.g., 1. Business agility, 2. Better security, 3. Scalable resources). Add automated software updates as another benefit.

Missing questions: Go deeper on migration roadmap. Beyond piloting, probe whether some products/screens can be retired—avoids costly migration of unused systems.

Structure tweak: Avoid labeling "Step 1" as structure. In Step 2, add *feasibility* and *risk* alongside cost and benefit.

2/2 | Your client has a significant on-premise IT solution that runs their core business applications. The leadership team has mandated a significant cost reduction in IT operations. They've come to us to understand what solutions they should consider and what approach they should take. How would you begin to advise them?

That's an interesting problem. Before proposing an approach, I'd want to start with asking a few scoping questions to understand the problem better. First would be to know more on what kind of applications are we talking about?

The core is a 10-year-old custom ERP, along with a more modern on-premise CRM.

And beyond cost savings, are there other key objectives? Is agility, for instance, a priority?

Yes. Agility is a major priority for the engineering team. They find the ERP very difficult to update.

Finally, on constraints. How open is the leadership to a major shift, like moving to the cloud?

That's the key issue. The CTO is a proponent, but the CFO is highly skeptical of the upfront cost and long-term financial risk.

Thank you. So the central challenge is balancing the CFO's need for predictable cost savings with the CTO's goal of agility, likely through modernization. Based on this, my hypothesis is that a phased, hybrid-cloud strategy would be the best approach, allowing us to treat different applications differently.

Okay, that seems reasonable. How would you structure that approach?

I'd recommend a two-phase approach to build momentum and manage risk. First, we'd migrate the lower-risk, modern CRM to the cloud. This should generate quick cost wins from decommissioning hardware and serve as a successful proof-of-concept for the CFO. Second, for the high-risk, custom ERP, I would avoid a 'big bang' migration and instead recommend a longer-term, iterative modernization.

Let's focus on that. You mentioned an 'iterative' approach for the ERP. That sounds complex. What specific process would you actually follow to manage that change without disrupting the business?

Absolutely. For that, I would use a process known as the "Strangler Fig Pattern." It's a proven, low-risk method. Let's say we're rebuilding the invoicing module. The process has three main stages.

Go ahead

First, Intercept and Shadow: First, we place a router in front of the old module. Then, we deploy our new cloud service in "shadow mode." The router sends requests to both the old and new systems, but only the old system's response is used. This lets us compare outputs and fix bugs with zero business risk.

Second, Phased Rollout: Once we're confident the new service is accurate, we adjust the router to send a small fraction of live traffic, say, 1% to the new service for the actual processing. We monitor it closely, and if stable, we gradually increase that percentage over time.

Third, Decommission: Only when 100% of the traffic is successfully handled by the new service do we finally decommission the old ERP module. This methodical process ensures we deliver value incrementally and manage the high risk associated with changing a core legacy system.

2/2 | Your client has a significant on-premise IT solution that runs their core business applications. The leadership team has mandated a significant cost reduction in IT operations. They've come to us to understand what solutions they should consider and what approach they should take. How would you begin to advise them?

Interviewee Notes

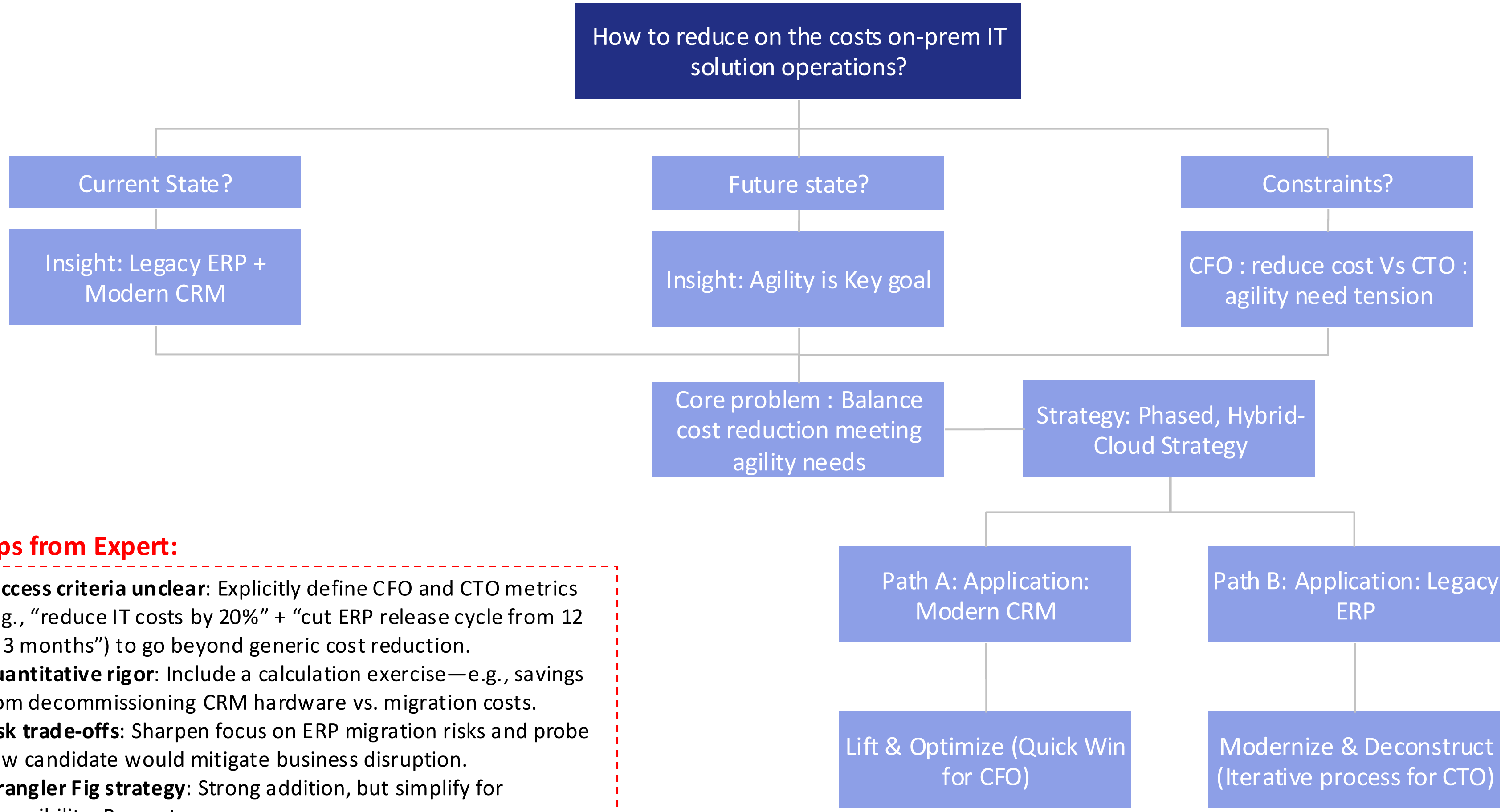
- **Client Assets**: A 10-year-old custom ERP and a more modern on-premise CRM.
- **Primary Goal**: Reduce IT operational costs.
- Secondary Goal: Increase agility and speed of development, a key priority for engineering.
- **Key Constraint**: A central conflict between the CTO (pro-cloud for agility) and the CFO (skeptical of cloud's upfront cost and risk).

Case Notes

- Used a structured scoping framework: Current State, Future State, and Constraints.
- Quickly identified the core business challenge: balancing the competing priorities of the CTO and CFO.
- Hypothesis: A phased, hybrid-cloud strategy is the optimal approach to manage risk, deliver early value, and gain organizational buy-in.

Recommendations

- Phase 1: Lift and Optimize the modern CRM to a public cloud provider. This will generate immediate cost savings from decommissioned hardware and serve as a low-risk POC to build the CFO's confidence.
- Phase 2: Long-Term Modernization (ERP). For the high-risk ERP, implement an iterative "Strangler Fig" approach to avoid failure: - Systematically rebuild ERP modules as cloud-native microservices. Use a low-risk deployment process to ensure no disruption.



Tips from Expert:

Success criteria unclear: Explicitly define CFO and CTO metrics (e.g., "reduce IT costs by 20%" + "cut ERP release cycle from 12 to 3 months") to go beyond generic cost reduction.
Quantitative rigor: Include a calculation exercise—e.g., savings from decommissioning CRM hardware vs. migration costs.
Risk trade-offs: Sharpen focus on ERP migration risks and probe how candidate would mitigate business disruption.
Strangler Fig strategy: Strong addition, but simplify for accessibility. Present as:

1. Run old and new systems in parallel
2. Gradually migrate a small share of users
3. Fully switch over once stable
   → This rewards candidates who know the technical term while keeping the case easy to follow.

1/2 | Your client is a large healthcare company. Their technology infrastructure includes around 100 different applications, all currently on-premise. They are considering a move to the cloud and have asked for our help in assessing the situation. How would you approach this?

Understood. A 100-application portfolio is complex, so a structured approach is key. I'd recommend a two-step process: First, we need to assess if moving to the cloud makes broad business sense for them at all. Second, if it does, we need to classify the applications to create a strategic roadmap, because a "one-size-fits-all" approach will likely fail. Does that sound like a reasonable path?

Yes, that's a logical way to structure it. Let's start with your first point: does it make business sense for them to move to the cloud?

To answer that, I'd need to understand their primary objectives. What are the key drivers behind this consideration? Are they looking for cost savings, better security, or perhaps more agility for future innovation?

The main drivers are their aging on-premise infrastructure, which is becoming very expensive to maintain, and a desire from the business to leverage newer technologies like AI for medical research, which their current systems can't support.

Okay, so it's a dual objective: reduce current operational costs and enable future innovation. Given those goals, the cloud's pay-as-you-go model and its native support for advanced analytics make it a very strong strategic fit. So, I'm confident the move makes business sense.

I agree. So, let's move to your second point. How would you approach the portfolio of 100 applications?

We need a framework to classify them. I would suggest a 2x2 matrix, plotting each application based on two axes: Business Criticality on the Y-axis and Technical Complexity to Migrate on the X-axis. This will help us prioritize effectively.

That's a very structured approach. Let's use that framework. How would you use the four quadrants to create a roadmap?

Each quadrant would have a different strategic recommendation. For the High Business Criticality / Low Technical Complexity apps, these are our "Quick Wins." I'd recommend migrating these first to build momentum and show early value.

Makes sense. What about the highly critical but also highly complex applications?

Those in the High Criticality / High Complexity quadrant are the "Crown Jewels" – think of their core Electronic Health Record (EHR) system. These shouldn't be simply "lifted-and-shifted." They require a long-term strategy focused on re-architecting or modernizing them for the cloud. This would be a multi-year effort.

Okay, two quadrants down. What about the applications with low business criticality?

For the Low Criticality / Low Complexity apps, we should challenge their existence. The best strategy is often to retire them or replace them with a modern, off-the-shelf SaaS solution. There's little value in spending resources migrating them. And for the final quadrant, Low Criticality / High Complexity, the recommendation is simple: deprioritize and avoid. We should actively seek to decommission these applications, not migrate them.

Excellent. So, what is your final recommendation in a nutshell?

My final recommendation is a phased, portfolio-driven cloud migration. We should start by migrating the "quick wins" to build momentum and fund the journey. In parallel, we begin the long-term strategic modernization of the "crown jewel" applications, while actively retiring or replacing low-value applications to simplify the overall tech landscape and reduce long-term costs.

2/2 | Your client is a large healthcare company. Their technology infrastructure includes around 100 different applications, all currently on-premise. They are considering a move to the cloud and have asked for our help in assessing the situation. How would you approach this?

Interviewee Notes

- Portfolio Size: ~100 on-premise applications.
- Client Drivers: - Reduce high maintenance costs of aging on-premise infrastructure. - Enable future innovation (e.g., AI for medical research) that current systems cannot support.

Case Notes

- Candidate established a clear, two-step approach: 1) Validate the business case for cloud, 2) Classify the application portfolio to create a roadmap.
- Quickly confirmed the business case by linking the cloud's core benefits (cost model, advanced services) directly to the client's stated drivers.
- Key Framework: Proposed a 2x2 matrix to classify all 100 applications, plotting them by Business Criticality vs. Technical Complexity to Migrate.
- This classification framework allowed for a nuanced, portfolio-driven strategy instead of a monolithic "one-size-fits-all" approach.

Recommendations

- Overall Strategy: Execute a phased, portfolio-driven migration roadmap with four distinct strategies: • Q1 (Quick Wins): Migrate First. Prioritize these low-complexity applications to build momentum and demonstrate early value. • Q2 (Crown Jewels): Re-architect for Cloud. Plan a long-term modernization for these critical, complex apps; avoid a simple "lift-and-shift." • Q3 (Replaceable): Retire or Replace. Decommission or substitute with modern SaaS solutions to simplify the portfolio. • Q4 (Avoid): Deprioritize & Decommission. Freeze investment in these high-cost, low-value apps and do not migrate.

Access cloud migration problem

Two step approach

- Does it make business sense?
  - Yes. Driven by Cost & Innovation needs
- How to approach 100+ apps migration - Roadmap?
  - Classify all Apps using a 2x2 Matrix
    - Q1: Migrate first: prioritise these apps
    - Q2: Modernize apps: Re architect for cloud
    - Q3: Retire these apps
    - Q4: Deprioritise these apps

Tips from Expert:

Candidate's role clarity: Frame upfront — "Is the client asking for cost reduction, innovation enablement, or portfolio simplification?" Multiple objectives currently float without prioritization.
Quantitative test: Add sizing/efficiency math for ~100 apps (e.g., "If 30% are Quick Wins with $X savings/app, what's the total?").
Risk depth: Avoid overly theoretical 2x2 answers. Probe: "Within a quadrant, how do you prioritize? Which app goes first and why?"
Flow refinement: Sequence should be: (1) Does moving to the cloud make sense? → (2) How to handle 100-app portfolio? → (3) Classification.
Healthcare nuance: Highlight data security and compliance as critical considerations when shifting from on-prem to cloud.

(1 / 1) Your client is a U.S.-based clean energy producer generating electricity from wood pellets (residues from furniture and timber industries). Rising demand for wood residues in construction, plywood, and furniture has caused a supply shortage and increased costs. McKinsey is engaged to devise a strategy to ensure stable supply over the next 3–5 years.

Interviewer	Your client is a biopower company in the U.S. They generate electricity from wood pellets, but their input costs are rising due to shortages. How would you approach this?
Interviewee	Thanks for the context. I'd like to clarify a few points: ● How many power plants do they operate? ● Who are their main customers? ● Do they have any alternate energy sources?
Interviewer	They have 20 power plants across the U.S., serving wholesale markets and corporate clients on fixed-price contracts. They primarily rely on wood pellets. Shortages are driven by increased demand in construction and furniture sectors.
Interviewee	Understood. I will structure my approach in three steps: **1. Identify current risks and drivers of supply shortage.** **2. Break down cost structure to understand levers.** **3. Devise a strategy for stable supply.** Does this sound reasonable?
Interviewer	Yes, proceed.
Interviewee	Starting with risks, I'd categorize them as: ● **Supplier risk:** supply chain stability, quality issues, trust, new entrants. ● **Operational risk:** transportation delays, lack of alternate sourcing routes. ● **Financial risk:** rising input costs impacting margins. ● **Reputational risk:** inability to fulfill green energy commitments. Do we have data on the magnitude of cost increase?
Interviewer	No specific figures available, but costs have risen substantially.
Interviewee	Then I'd look at supply chain levers: ● **Expand current sources:** negotiate with existing North American suppliers, explore untapped domestic regions. ● **Develop new supplier bases:** Asia Pacific, Europe, Australia—though importing may add transport costs. ● **Evaluate alternative raw materials:** non-wood biomass or hybrid renewable inputs. However, if our costs are already high, we cannot raise supplier prices further. That leaves us with better negotiations or strategic partnerships.

Interviewer	What factors would you consider to ensure stable supply?
Interviewee	Three factors: **1. Expansion of supply base** – additional contracts within North America and internationally. **2. Logistics optimization** – minimize transport costs and lead times. **3. Risk diversification** – avoid overdependence on any single supplier or region.
Interviewer	What about your cost breakdown approach?
Interviewee	I'd break cost per unit into: ● **Residue availability per supplier** × ● **Residue per log of wood** × ● **Quality factor** × ● **Transportation cost** × ● **Supplier contractual terms** This would help identify which suppliers are cost-effective per unit of energy generated.

Interviewer	Assume you have a graph showing increasing competition and falling average profits. How would that inform your strategy?
Interviewee	That suggests the market is in a competitive squeeze—initially high profits attracted entrants, now profits are falling. Our approach: ● Prioritize suppliers with lower switching costs and better long-term contracts. ● Avoid overpaying in a market where average margins are shrinking. ● Explore vertical integration or exclusive tie-ups where possible.
Interviewer	Summarize your recommended actions.
Interviewee	Renegotiate and diversify supplier contracts within North America. Evaluate sourcing opportunities in Asia-Pacific despite transport costs, if supply reliability improves. Invest in alternate biomass energy sources to reduce dependency on wood pellets. Establish risk monitoring for supplier market dynamics.

(1 / 1) Your client is the UP Police Commissioner, and they need your help in assessing how to make UP a safer place for women

Interviewee	Thanks a lot for the problem statement. To craft an effective strategy, I would like to ask some clarifying questions around the current situation and objectives. Could you provide details on the types of crimes against women we're focusing on, the geographical areas most affected, the current measures in place for women's safety, and whether there's a particular segment of the female population we're targeting? Additionally, what are the benchmarks for success in this initiative?
Interviewer	The primary objective is to reduce the frequency of crimes against women in UP by 50%. We're focusing on domestic, public, and workplace crimes, with a particular emphasis on curbing public crimes like eve-teasing and harassment. The client wants to implement measures across the state, regardless of the specific segment of women, aiming for a broad impact.
Interviewee	That provides a clear picture. What are the current strategies employed by the UP Police to address these issues? Are there any particular areas or initiatives where the client feels improvements could be made or new strategies could be introduced?
Interviewer	Currently, the focus has been on reactive measures with police intervention after incidents are reported. The Commissioner is interested in exploring more proactive and preventive strategies.
Interviewee	Certainly, I appreciate the information provided. If you could give me just 20 seconds to organize my thoughts and strategy, we can then proceed with our discussion.
Interviewer	Sure
Interviewee	Given this context, focusing on a comprehensive strategy that addresses the before, during, and after phases of crime seems pivotal. For prevention, educational programs and public awareness campaigns about the legal and social consequences of such crimes could be instrumental. Can we consider integrating technology for real-time assistance during incidents?
Interviewer	Yes, integrating technology for immediate assistance and creating a safer environment through proactive measures are key interests for the Commissioner
Interviewee	For immediate assistance during crimes, enhancing emergency response systems and creating safe zones in high-risk areas could be effective. Post-crime, streamlining the reporting process and ensuring victims receive necessary support and justice swiftly could also prevent future incidents. Does this approach align with the Commissioner's vision?
Interviewer	It does. The Commissioner is looking for innovative yet practical solutions to make significant progress in women's safety across UP. Your suggestions seem to align well with our objectives. How do you propose we implement these strategies effectively?
Interviewee	Implementation could start with pilot programs in areas with the highest incidence rates. Collaborating with community organizations, leveraging technology for safety apps, and training law enforcement to respond empathetically to victims are critical steps. For the post-crime phase, establishing fast-track courts for swift justice could be a game-changer. Monitoring and evaluation will be crucial to understanding impact and scaling successful initiatives across the state.
Interviewer	These recommendations provide a solid foundation to enhance women's safety in UP. We'll need to work closely with various stakeholders to turn this vision into reality. Thank you for your insights.
Interviewee	It's imperative that we approach the objective of improving women's safety in UP by focusing on prevention, immediate assistance, and post-crime support as proposed. Additionally, we can implement pilot programs in high-risk areas, collaborating with community organizations and technology partners, and training law enforcement in empathetic responses, ensuring every woman in UP feels safe and supported.
Interviewer	Great, that's all for now. Thank you!

(1 / 1) We want you to design an influencer management system for an electrical goods company, suggest us a method for the same.

Interviewee	Thank you. Can you clarify our major objective?
Interviewer	Our main goal is revenue generation.
Interviewee	Great, what all does the firm sell and who are our customers?
Interviewer	We sell cables, wires, and other electrical goods. It's a commoditized and fragmented market. Our consumers are retailers.
Interviewee	Alright. To tackle this, I thought about the process from identifying influencers to helping them sell, since revenue generation is key.
Interviewer	Can you break down the building blocks of your strategy?
Interviewee	Certainly. First, I focused on identifying influencers for electrical goods: For new house constructions: Architects, Interior Designers, Contractors Repairing existing electricals: Self, Electricians, Urban Company House renovations: Architects, Interior Designers, Contractors We narrowed down to three main influencers: Electricians, Interior Designers, and Contractors.
Interviewer	Good breakdown. What about scouting these influencers?
Interviewee	To reach these cohorts, I thought about their gathering points: For new house constructions: Architects, Interior Designers, Contractors Repairing existing electricals: Self, Electricians, Urban Company House renovations: Architects, Interior Designers, Contractors We narrowed down to three main influencers: Electricians, Interior Designers, and Contractors.
Interviewer	Good breakdown. What about scouting these influencers?

Interviewee	To reach these cohorts, I thought about their gathering points: Electricians: Urban Company, My Gate, No Broker Interior Designers: Trade Fairs Contractors: Worker Unions I also mentioned that retailers themselves are influencers and can be reached through their worker unions.
Interviewer	Interesting approach. Any recommendations on retaining these influencers?
Interviewee	We can deep use the following methods: Creating WhatsApp groups for immediate issue resolution or installation help. Implementing a gamified leaderboard for influencer sales, with prizes for top performers.
Interviewer	Great insights. Thank you for sharing your approach and reflections on this case.
Interviewee	Thank you for the opportunity to discuss the abstract case, have a good day

Practice Case Examples

- *Profitability*
- *Market Entry*
- *Growth*
- *Abstract*

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Profitability

(1 / 1) Your client is a ceiling fan manufacturer based in India. Over the past year, they have been facing a decline in profitability. You have been hired to diagnose the root cause and provide recommendations.

Before diving into the problem, I'd like to clarify a few things. Since when has profitability been declining and by what quantum? Is this issue specific to our client, or is it an industry-wide trend? What geographies does our client operate in? What types of fans are we considering here—ceiling, table, exhaust? Does the client only manufacture, or are they also involved in sales and distribution?

The decline has been for the past one year; quantum is not relevant. This issue is specific to our client, not industry-wide. You can assume India as the market. Let's focus only on ceiling fans. The client manufactures and sells via traditional retail stores as well as online platforms such as Amazon.

Understood. To structure this, I'd like to break down profitability into revenue minus cost. Has the decline been due to falling revenues or rising costs?

Revenues have been stable. The problem lies on the cost side.

Alright. To explore costs, I'll take a value-chain approach. Costs could come from raw material sourcing such as steel and copper, from production like plant maintenance and wastage, from logistics and distribution including warehousing and transport, or from post-sales services such as warranty and repairs. Do we know which stage is driving the increase?

Focus on the post-production stage.

Got it. That likely points to logistics, distribution, or post-sales. Let me check channel-wise—Is the issue happening with traditional retail sales or Amazon sales?

The problem is specific to Amazon sales.

Before diving into the problem, I'd like to clarify a few things. Since when has profitability been declining and by what quantum? Is this issue specific to our client, or is it an industry-wide trend? What geographies does our client operate in? What types of fans are we considering here—ceiling, table, exhaust? Does the client only manufacture, or are they also involved in sales and distribution?

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The problem is specific to Amazon sales.

1/2 | Your client is a large Hospital in a metro city and they're recently facing lower profits

What is the location of the hospital? Whether it is a hospital chain? If it is a hospital chain do other hospitals too are facing slowdown or this particular hospital?
That's the right question to start with. The problem is with this particular hospital only
Understood. Now I would like to understand if the lower profitability is due to lower revenue or higher costs?
The costs are centrally managed and they are not an issue. The problem is with the revenue
I would now like to breakdown the revenue into # of patients x average fee from patient
Neither are the reasons and can you think of another reason why the revenue is slowing
The reason could be change in the mix of patients.
Could you elaborate on what kind of mix of patients
There could be multiple reasons - mix of Govt sponsored patients vs Privately funded patients would have changed or Inpatient vs Outpatient mix etc;
That's correct. The mix of Govt vs Private patients has changed. Now the Hospital observed that the time spent by doctors in administration and documentation work has increased reducing the time spent by them in treatments. They are evaluating an app to automate these admin and documentation task, how would you advice the hospital on this
I would evaluate by undertaking 1) Addressable pool for the app 2) Financial feasibility and 3) Potential adoption of the technology (the new app) by the doctors
Could you elaborate on how would you undertake financial feasibility
First, I would estimate the average amount of time spent by doctor in admin and documentation work. I'm assuming roughly 30% of 12 hr shift is spent on this work and taking salary estimate converting per hour salary, extrapolate for month and by total number of doctors

Interviewee Notes

- The profitability issue is specific to this one hospital, not the entire chain.
- The problem is driven by a Revenue decline, not an increase in Costs.
- Root Cause: A change in the patient mix, specifically an increase in lower-revenue Govt-sponsored patients vs. privately funded patients.
- New Problem: Doctors' administrative workload has increased, reducing time for treatments. The client is evaluating an app to automate these tasks.

Case Notes

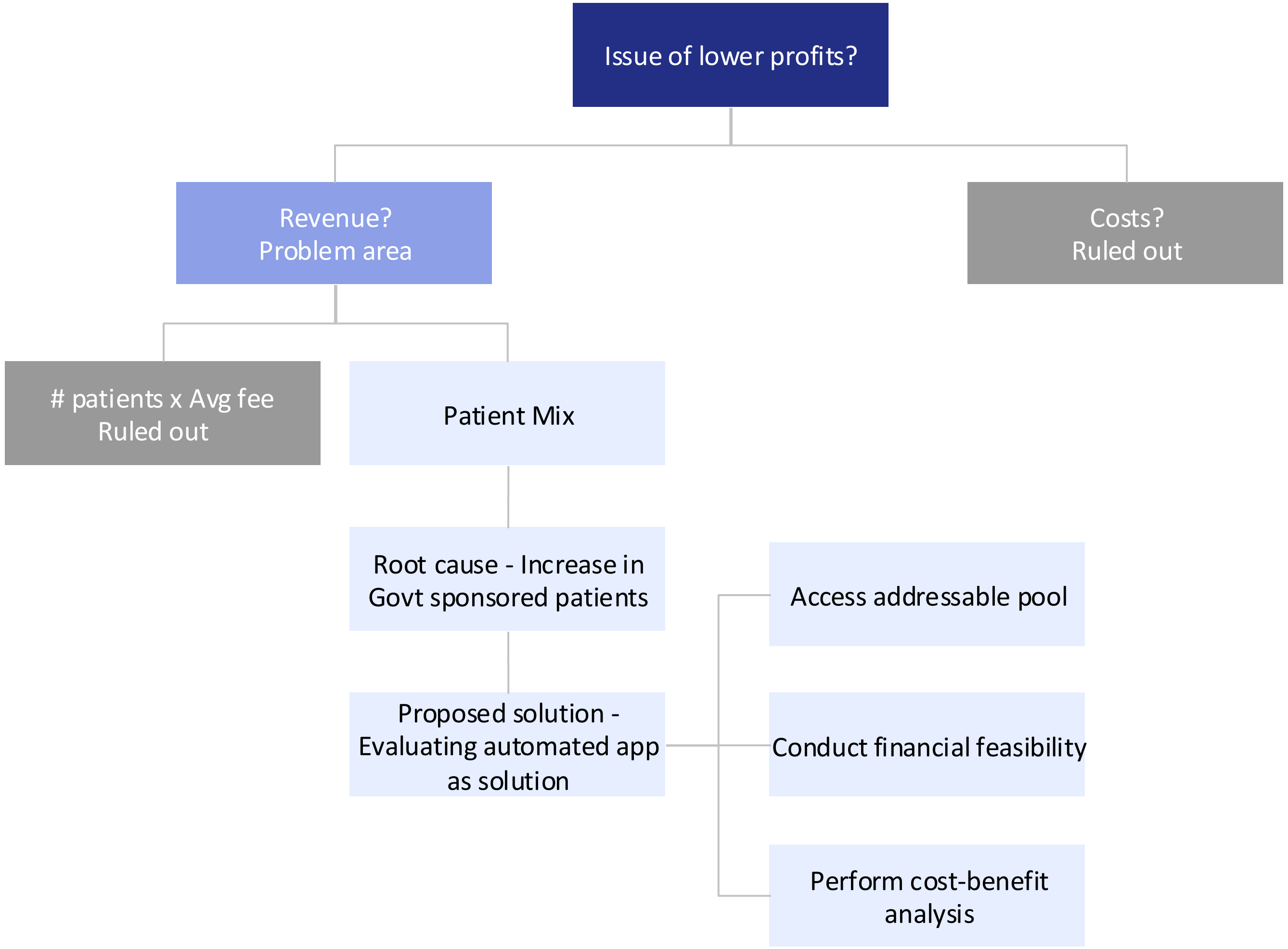
Candidate correctly used a Profitability Framework (P=R-C) to isolate the problem to Revenue. When the standard revenue formula (Patients x Fee) was ruled out, the candidate successfully identified "Patient Mix" as the next logical driver. The case pivoted from a diagnostic "why" problem to a solution-oriented "how to evaluate" problem. Candidate proposed a clear, structured three-part framework for evaluating the new app: 1) Addressable Pool, 2) Financial Feasibility, and 3) Adoption.

2/2 | Your client is a large Hospital in a metro city and they're recently facing lower profits

Recommendations

Proceed with a structured evaluation of the proposed automation app.
Evaluation Framework:

1. Assess Addressable Pool: Quantify the number of doctors affected and the specific admin/documentation tasks that the app can realistically automate.
2. Conduct Financial Feasibility: Perform a Cost-Benefit Analysis.



1/1 | You are the Head of Growth at a cab aggregator in India. For the past three years, profits have been declining despite improved operating margins. Help identify the reasons for the decline and propose strategies to improve growth and profitability over the next 1–2 years.

Thank you. I would start by clarifying the scope. Is this decline observed only in India or globally? What is our market share? What is the business model? How long have we been operating in India? Who are our key competitors?

The problem is limited to India. We are profitable in other countries. Our model is primarily four-wheelers, including rentals and outstations, but the decline is in the cab segment. **Competition** has increased, leading to reduced revenues despite improved operating margins.

Understood. Since costs are under control, the decline seems to stem from revenue loss due to competition. I will structure my analysis in three steps:

1. **Market dynamics** – Customer behavior shifts and competitive landscape.
2. **Revenue streams** – Fare structures and ride volumes.
3. **Growth opportunities** – Short- and long-term strategies.

Does that sound reasonable?

Yes, proceed.

What are the key reasons for customer attrition? Are customers switching to competitors or to alternate transportation modes?

Both. 30% switched to another cab company due to pricing; 70% moved to alternate modes—two-wheelers, EVs, or autos—for short to medium trips (2–8 km).

Got it. So, two distinct challenges: price competition and substitution by other modes. What is the average price and profit per four-wheeler ride?

Average price is ₹200 with ₹100 profit. Competitors earn ₹150 revenue and spend ₹70, making it cheaper for customers.

Understood. One lever is pricing: reduce fares to ₹150 while maintaining a ₹50 margin, attracting riders back from two- and three-wheelers.

The client wasn't satisfied with that alone. They want more options.

Okay. For the competitor attracting 30% of customers with scheduled rides, what differentiates them?

They allow pre-scheduling, giving reliability and zero cancellations. Their fares are 10% higher, but parents, office commuters, and airport travelers prefer them for time certainty.

Short-term, we can:

1. **Pilot a subscription-based driver model** – Similar to Rapido, reducing cancellations by offering drivers predictable earnings (e.g., ₹100 per 10 rides instead of a 20% commission).
2. **Revise pricing for short-distance rides** – Match or undercut two/three-wheeler fares to regain volume.

Long-term, we can:

1. Explore infrastructure to support scheduling models.
2. Partner with specialized tech providers to build a pre-booking system.

Good. What about long-term investments?

This would involve significant infrastructure and technical investment. We should run a financial feasibility study before scaling.

1/1 | Your client, a leading chocolate manufacturer in India (think Cadbury), wants to reduce product costs to maximize profits. They have ~600 SKUs and distribute via retail, modern trade, and online channels.

Your client is a chocolate manufacturer in India. They want your help to reduce product costs. How would you approach this?

Thank you. First, I'd like to clarify the objective. Is it profit maximization or cost reduction for a specific product line?

Profit maximization, primarily through reducing production costs.

Got it. Are there any constraints or specific KPIs we should keep in mind? Also, which parts of the value chain are we considering—R&D, procurement, manufacturing, distribution, or marketing?

You can define the KPI. Focus on operational costs, particularly processing.

Understood. I'll start with a profitability breakdown:

Profits = Revenues – Costs.

Since revenue is not the concern, let's break down costs: operational and non-operational.

I'll focus on the operational costs, split across:

1. R&D
2. Raw material procurement
3. Processing
4. Warehousing & distribution
5. Sales & marketing

Where exactly is the issue?

Focus on processing costs.

Great. Processing can be broken into four main heads: machines, labor, materials, and infrastructure. Is there any indication which is problematic?

Material costs are high.

Then I'll break materials into two: ingredients (cocoa, milk, sugar) and packaging. Should I analyze both?

Focus on packaging.

Alright. For packaging, I'll look at:

1. **Type of packaging** (plastic, cardboard, tin, premium).
2. **Quantity utilized** (excess layers, oversized boxes).
3. **Quality of packaging** (durability, cost per unit).

Do we have many SKUs with customized packaging?

No, we use two standard box sizes.

In that case, my initial recommendation would be:

- Optimize **box size** to reduce wastage.
- Shift to **recyclable/reusable packaging** to reduce recurring cost.
- Explore **procurement partnerships** to reuse packaging (e.g., incentivized returns for customers).

How would you implement reusable packaging?

We could incentivize customers to return boxes (e.g., cashback, free chocolates) at retail stores. The saved cost on producing new boxes would eventually offset the collection cost, though we'd need a break-even analysis before scaling.

In parallel, we can explore lightweight, eco-friendly materials and negotiate supplier contracts for bulk procurement.

1/1 | Our client is a Meal Coupon company facing a 10% decline in profitability. We need to understand the reasons behind this decline and identify strategies to improve the situation.

First, I'd like to understand more about the client's business model. Could you provide an overview of how the company operates, especially how it generates revenue and the process involving restaurants?

Sure. Our client operates in Bombay, catering primarily to corporate customers by issuing meal coupons. Employees use these coupons at various restaurants, which then redeem these coupons with our client for payment.

To clarify, are all operations confined to Bombay? And, has this profitability issue been a sudden occurrence or a gradual trend? Additionally, how does the client handle the coupons' cash value before redemption?

Yes, the operations are currently limited to Bombay. The decline in profitability has been gradual over the past year. Regarding your last question, the cash from sold coupons is typically held until redemption, during which time it is invested to earn interest income.

I see. To address the profitability issue, I propose analyzing both revenues and costs, starting with revenues which can be broken down into revenue per coupon and the number of coupons. Where do we see the issue particularly?

Both metrics have shown robust figures, and there are no concerns with either.

Then, it seems there's an issue with other non-core revenue streams. Should I look in this direction?

You're on the right track but missing a critical piece of the puzzle. Consider looking at the value chain, especially how the cash flow from the sale of coupons until their redemption impacts profitability.

Reflecting on the value chain, it appears that the cash lying idle until coupon redemption—which is then invested—generates interest income. Has there been a change in the amount of interest income?

Exactly, the interest income has decreased.

So has the client seen a decline in the principal amount or the time the cash is invested or the interest rate?

The root cause is not the interest rate or the principal amount but the time period the cash is invested. Competition from food aggregator platforms has pressured restaurants to demand faster payments, reducing the investment period.

Understanding the shortened investment period, my recommendations include exploring short-term, higher-yield investment opportunities to maximize interest income. Additionally, exploiting quick wins and low-hanging income streams such as enhanced advertising strategies could further augment revenues for the client.

Excellent analysis and recommendations. Great, that's all for now. Thank you!

1/1 | Our client is a leading FMCG player in India which manufactures and distributes soap. They are experiencing a decline in profitability. We need to diagnose why and suggest ways to improve the situation.

I see. Before starting with the problem identification, I would first want to understand a bit more about the client. What is the type of products that the client offers?

Their product lineup includes bathing soaps geared towards both mass market and premium segment. The mass market soaps, in particular, are targeted at the rural market in India due to their affordability.

Interesting. I would also want to delve deeper into the geographic presence of the client – as you mentioned, the small soaps are targeted towards rural markets in India. Could you also tell me which all regions do the other products cater to? Are the sales limited to India or does the company export soaps as well?

The company caters to metro cities and rural areas both, however, only the sales to rural areas have been impacted. Their exports are negligible.

Ah got it. Is it fair to assume in that case that the mass market soaps have been impacted? Also, could you tell me the quantum of decline in profits?

Yes, correct. The profits have declined by 15% but that's irrelevant for the case.

Sure, I would just like to ask one final question on the competitive landscape – are our competitors facing this issue as well or is it specific to us?

It is an industry wide problem.

Considering this is an industry wide problem, it is possible this is a revenue-side issue. Is that fair to assume or should I explore the cost side as well?

That's a good deduction. Please focus on the revenue side only.

Great, then I would like to break down the revenue formula to explore potential areas—focusing on the number of customers, number of units sold, and the price per unit. Would we have information on what has been impacted the most?

The number of customers itself have gone down.

This could be driven by a decrease in demand due to internal or external factors or a supply side issue wherein we are unable to meet the demand due to issues in the procurement of raw material, production roadblocks or distribution issues. Could you tell me what's driving the decline?

It's predominantly a demand-side issue.

Given this, should we consider if its from internal challenges or external market pressures?

The issue is external, linked closely to economic factors affecting rural demographics.

Since the issue seems to be external, it could be an economic challenge the rural people are facing which is diminishing rural disposable incomes and thus affecting our client's small soap sales. Since rural regions depend heavily on agriculture income to sustain themselves, it could be something to do with the same. Is that fair to assume or should I other options?

No, you are heading down the right track. A severe drought has drastically affected the rural economy, heavily dependent on agriculture, leading to a steep decline in disposable income and hence, a reduced demand for non-essential goods, including our client's products.

This analysis clarifies the root cause. For a short-term strategy, we could consider targeted discounts or smaller, more affordable packaging to maintain demand among price sensitive consumers. Additionally, creating a direct aid program or community engagement projects could sustain brand loyalty and presence in these hard-hit areas.

Those are insightful recommendations. And for the long term?

Long-term strategies should focus on diversification—both in product offerings and market presence. Exploring alternative, less drought-sensitive markets and expanding the product line to include essential goods might mitigate future economic impacts. Investing in sustainable practices and supporting agricultural advancements in these regions could also prove beneficial, aligning the company's interests with community well-being.

1/1 | The profits of a museum have gone down. Analyze and suggest ways to improve it.

Thanks, let me see if I've gotten it right. The profits at a museum have gone down and we need to figure out why and think of solutions. Can I take a minute to think about it? When did the profit start to come down?

Since last 2 Years.

It can be divided into Revenue and Cost. First, I will look at the revenue side. Okay. Ticket selling for visitors, tickets for the camera, revenue from the food shops, revenue from shops selling items related to museum. Is there any other revenue stream present?

No.

First, has there been any change in the number of visitors? Or any new museum or other tourist spots have opened in the city? Or any other major construction like metro/road repair near the museum that creates hindrance for tourists?

No, Number of visitors remains the same.

I've analyzed all the possible external factors. I'm now moving to internal factors. Has there been any change in the ticket price?

No, the ticket price remains the same.

Since revenue from tickets and camera remains the same, is there any change from the food stalls revenue.

No.

Has there been any decline in the shops selling items related to the museum?

Yes

Now, I'll try to find out the reason for the change. Are some on-sale items removed or added such that the buying behavior changed?

No

Where is the shop located? Has there been any change in the location of the shop?

The shop is located at the back side of the museum. Yes, the location has been changed recently.

Is it possible that the museum was located along the path the visitors used to take before, and now it is not along this path so the visitors do not know about the shop?

Yes. What are some of your recommendations?

Change the shop location back to the same location if possible, or display the hoarding regarding the shop at the ticket counter.

What else?

Attach the shop items in the tickets themselves, as an advertisement.

What are the changes that can be made in the shop to increase the revenue other than this?

Sell more variants of Paintings like oil paintings, mini canvas paintings in photo frames, etc.

Anything else?

That's it

Okay. I was looking for an additional recommendation like start selling T-Shirts and other memorabilia that were not present earlier. Thank you!

1/1 | Our client is a luxury hotel chain in India, experiencing a decline in profitability. We need to diagnose why and suggest ways to improve the situation.

I'd like to understand more about three things: our business, our customers, and the competition. First, where are these hotels located? How many are there? Is the issue limited to a specific hotel or across all hotels? What's the extent of the decline, and how long has it been ongoing? Second, who are our customers? Are we focusing on luxury business hotels or leisure chains? Third, what's the competitive landscape like? Are our competitors also facing similar challenges?

We have three luxury hotels, all located in Goa. All of them are facing profitability issues. Our customers are primarily high-income leisure travelers. The competition is facing a similar problem, but to a lesser extent. The fall in profitability is recent, with a quarter-on-quarter decline of 25%.

Given that profitability is a function of costs and revenues, do we know where the problem lies?

Yes, the revenues for the chain have been declining.

Let's break this down. The primary revenue stream for a hotel is linked to their rooms and ancillary services such as events, restaurants, etc. Should we explore rooms first or delve into other revenue sources?

Let's focus on rooms.

Essentially, revenue from rooms will be the number of rooms X occupancy rate X average revenue per room. Has there been a significant change in any of these factors affecting our revenue?

Great breakdown. Yes, our occupancy rate has gone down. What could be the reason?

This could be due to internal factors like Awareness, Access, Affordability, or Customer Experience of our hotels. Or external factors such as Competitive Change, Political Scenario, or Regulatory Changes might be affecting us.

The government has stopped the Visa on Arrival policy, which has disrupted a large flow of international travelers coming to Goa.

This explains why this issue has arisen recently and why other competitors are also losing profitability. But it doesn't answer why we are suffering more than our competitors.

Good observation. Consider reasons that play a role when a customer chooses a hotel.

Based on my own experience of booking a hotel in a tourist location, let's break down the factors a customer evaluates before making a booking: Price, Location, Reviews, Services and Amenities, and Hotel Policies.

Exactly. After the policy change, other hotels made their cancellation policies more flexible, while ours remained the same. As a result, international tourists waiting for Visas are choosing them over us. Can you summarize the case and give a few recommendations?

Our client's decline in profitability is due to the change in the Visa on Arrival policy affecting overall tourism. Additionally, we've been hit harder since our competitors have adjusted their cancellation policies to be more flexible, making them more attractive to tourists. In the short term, we can match or improve our cancellation policy through a cost-benefit analysis and partner with agents for Visa assistance. For long-term solutions: 1. Focus on increasing domestic tourism to our hotels, and 2. Leverage hotel consortiums to lobby for the Visa on Arrival option for international tourists again.

1/1 | Our client, a premier fertilizer company, has observed a downturn in their profits. Could we delve into the reasons behind this trend and suggest some strategies for improvement?

Certainly, want to ask a few questions to gain a better understanding of the situation. In which regions does the client operate?

Their operations are confined to Chhattisgarh.

Got it. Regarding the value chain, am I correct in assuming that they source raw materials, manufacture in-house, and distribute their products to a market predominantly comprising farmers, through partnerships with distributors? Also, do their sales extend beyond Chhattisgarh?

Yes, your understanding of their value chain is accurate. Their market reach extends across India.

Could you provide insights into the competitive environment and how the client's competitors are faring? Are they also experiencing a decline in profits, or is this issue specific to our client?

The client has three major competitors. Last fiscal year, one competitor saw an increase in profits, while the other two experienced declines.

This suggests the issue may not be unique to our client. I'll factor this into our analysis. Could you tell me more about the client's product offerings, the profit contribution from each, and whether the market is commoditized?

Indeed, it's a commoditized market. The client offers three SKUs : 5kg, 10kg, and 15kg packages, each contributing equally to profits.

Noted. Lastly, could you specify the extent of the profit decline and the timeframe over which it occurred?

Profits have plummeted by around 20% in the last 9 to 10 months.

Given that profits depend on both revenues and costs, have there been changes in either or both over this period?

Costs have remained stable; it is the revenues that have seen a decline.

All right, let's focus on the revenues. The client's revenue per month can be broken down as: (Number of customers/distributors) x (Average number of orders per customer/distributor per month) x (Average price per order). Do we know which factor has adversely affected?

Yes, it's the number of orders that has diminished.

This reduction could stem from supply constraints or a dip in demand. Have there been any supply chain issues in the last 9-10 months?

The supply chain is robust, with ample spare capacity, so let's focus on understanding the demand shortfall.

Got it. Firstly, do we know if it's the end consumers or the distributors who have reduced their orders? This is crucial to know, especially since one competitors outperforming market.

That's a great point.

It's the distributors who have reduced their orders. When considering distributors, two main factors could affect their demand: (i) incentives, both monetary and non-monetary, and (ii) costs incurred by the distributors, such as costs associated with inbound logistics. We have can examine the distributor's order-to-receipt journey. The distributor's journey involves five steps: (i) placing an order (which may be automated), (ii) order confirmation by the client, (iii) order preparation and dispatch, (iv) logistics and receipt by the distributor, and (v) payment within the credit cycle.

Precisely, and it is the credit cycle that has recently been shortened from 60 to 30 days. The client felt that it would ease their burden on working capital and did not anticipate such backlash from distributors. Could you share your recommendations based this information?

My recommendations are twofold: Perform a Cost-Benefit Analysis to evaluate the impact and trade-offs of the shortened credit cycle. Based on the results, decide whether to revert to the 60-day cycle or maintain the 30-day cycle. If the analysis supports the 30-day cycle, then I suggest enhancing non-monetary benefits for distributors, such as reducing lead times, to support a just-in-time inventory system.

1/1 | Our Client is an International Hospital chain in India and one of its hospitals is India is experiencing lower than expected profitability. Analyse

Certainly, may I ask a few questions to gain a better understanding of the situation? Where is the Hospital Chain Located? Haryana How long has this decline been seen? What kind of hospital is this?

2 years . Private Multi speciality hospital

What kind of customers / patients visit the hospital?

It is positioned as an affordable health care provider

Is this an industry wide problem ?

No, specific to this hospital.

Since the profit is Revenue – Cost. I would like to start my analysis by understanding if this is a revenue side issue or a cost side issue or both

It is a revenue side issue

Thanks, now I would like to proceed by listing down the various sources of revenue for a hospital and then look if there is an issue with any one of these areas. Revenue sources are 1) Consultation (OPD) 2) Admits (IPD) 3) Bed/ Room Charges 4) F&B and Canteen services 5) Medicines (Pharmacy)

There has been a decline in the number of admissions

The number of admit in a hospital is a function of the Footfall * % getting admitted. Do we know which one of this has declined?

The % getting admitted has declined

Understood. As per my understanding there can 4 major reasons for this to happen. Need : The requirement to get admitted once you arrive at the hospital Availability : The availability of enough bed/rooms/ staff for the required admissions Accessibility : Some infrastructure changes in the hospital because of which people prefer not to get admitted once they arrive at the hospital Experience : There is some sort of issue that is hindering their experience that deters them from getting admitted

There is an issue with the experience

Thanks , now I would like to draw a customer journey showing the various touch points for the patient and this can help us narrow down where their experience is being compromised Customer Journey: Enter the Hospital -> Reception -> Registration and other processes -> Payment (if needed) -> Admission

The patients are facing an issue at the Registration step

Thanks, this can be either an issue of quantity in terms of the amount of information being asked is too much which deters the patient from completing the process or an issue of quality in terms of the type of forms etc being asked to fill which the patient might not understand or information they are not able to provide etc.

So, there is no issue with the quantity. In terms of quality, it is a handwritten form and the patients are having some issue with filling the same.

In terms of the handwritten form there could be an issue with the 1) language 2) font size / print 3) Paper quality . Is it any of these?

Yes, the issue is with the language

My hypothesis is that since this is an International hospital chain they have standardized forms in English and since this hospital is located in Haryana therefore the crowd is having an issue interpreting and filling these forms

Absolutely Right. Please give your recommendation

I have 3 recommendations Hire People who can help the people with the form filling procedures Change the language of the forms into the local language Look to use technology to install some devices/ ipad at the receptions that show a tutorial in the local language as to how to fill the forms

Thanks. That would be it.

1/1 | Our client is an NGO which provides disease management services to palliative care patients with cancer. They have been in operations for 5 years and need our help in reducing their costs per visit.

I see. When we say palliative care, do we mean the NGO provides relief from cancer related symptoms and pain associated with both physical and emotional pain? Also, could you share how the NGO goes about choosing which patients to provide these services to?

Correct. Cancer patients and those in remission often suffer from issues like indigestion, weight loss, hair loss, emotional stress, etc. We have teams that visit patients at their homes to provide treatment for the same. We have 30 centers around Delhi from where these teams are dispatched.

I understand. Does the NGO solely provide at-home visit services, or are there any center-based or mobile clinic services as well?

Our NGO only offers at-home visit services as of now which is why it takes on patients who are in close proximity to Delhi.

Got it. You mentioned teams are dispatched from the 30 centers. Could you elaborate on the team composition and how they are allocated to home visits - centralized or decentralized?

Good question, so we have 4-member team in each center which comprises of a doctor, 2 nurses and 1 counsellor. While central allocation would be more efficient, currently it's decentralized - patients enroll at any of our centers, and the respective center's team is assigned.

This is super helpful to know. This can lead to inefficiencies and cost increase, but I will circle back to it later in the case if required. For now, I would want to break down the cost per visit into a mathematical formula which should be total costs divided by number of visits. Do we want to drill down on either of these metrics or should I focus on optimization of both?

Let’s focus on increasing the number of visits for now. Most of our costs are financed through donations and hence, that’s not our key concern at the moment.

Sure, let me take a moment to structure my thoughts on this. The number of visits depends on operational hours and visits per hour. Could you share the NGO's daily operational hours and the typical duration of a visit?

We operate for 10 hours daily, from 9 AM. The first 1-1.5 hours are spent deciding on home visits, after which teams are dispatched. We have 2 volunteers per centers for walk-in appointments throughout the day. A typical visit lasts 1 hour.

I would break down my recommendations into Pre-treatment -> Treatment -> After treatment structure. To increase the number of trips in the pre-treatment phase, we should centralize home allocation to nearest teams to optimize travel time, templatize the allocation process to save 1.5-hours in the morning, leverage tools for route optimization and allow online/phone appointments to reduce volunteer effort. In the treatment phase, we should analyze productive vs. non-productive time per visit to optimize the time per visit better and provide refresher training to teams on efficiency best practices. Post-treatment, we can consider developing an online platform for follow-ups, counselling, reducing in-person needs and explore tele-medicine options for virtual consultations where feasible. Let me know if you want me to further deep dive into any particular step for more recommendations.

These are very relevant and well-thought-out recommendations. Thank you for the comprehensive analysis and suggestions. We can conclude the case here.

1/1 | Our client in the cement industry has experienced a noticeable decline in market share over the last two years in Sri Lanka. They are looking to understand the reasons behind this and what actions to take?

Thank you. I would start by clarifying a few points. Do we have information on market share distribution among various players over the past two years, especially focusing on independent home builders since they appear to be a key segment?

Yes, we do. While our client has seen a reduction from 35% to 33%, importers have increased their market share predominantly with independent home builders.

I see. We need to explore the value chain and identify where exactly the client is losing out. Could you provide more detail on the value chain from packaging to customer delivery?

Certainly. The value chain is quite straightforward after packaging: from wholesalers to distributors and then to customers. We've identified the issue seems to be occurring at the wholesaler level.

Understood. Let's consider different levers such as price, quality, and promotion, though I believe these might not be the differentiators given the commoditized nature of cement. Do we have insights into the types of wholesalers we're dealing with?

Yes, there are both exclusive and non-exclusive wholesalers. The market share loss is primarily happening with non-exclusive wholesalers.

That's quite telling. Could you tell me more about the sales mix between exclusive and non-exclusive wholesalers and how distributor margins vary between them?

We don't have exact figures, but we know that non-exclusive wholesalers have been increasing in number, particularly along the coastal areas of Colombo

That geographic insight is crucial. Given the proximity to the coast, it's plausible that the rise of non-exclusive wholesalers in Colombo has made it logistically and financially more viable for importers to distribute their cement there, directly impacting our client's market share.

That's a key observation. Given this information, what would be your preliminary recommendation?

My recommendation would be to focus on strengthening relationships with non-exclusive wholesalers, especially in coastal regions like Colombo. We could explore logistic advantages or loyalty programs that could make our client's offering more attractive compared to importers. It's also essential to assess the full impact of these non-exclusive wholesalers on our client's distribution network and customer reach.

Excellent analysis. How would you validate this strategy?

I would propose conducting a distributor margin analysis comparing exclusive vs. non-exclusive wholesalers and identifying any potential geographical pricing strategies that could be implemented. Additionally, gathering direct feedback from both wholesalers and independent home builders could provide further insights into the decision-making criteria for choosing between our client's product and imported cement.

Great approach. This level of analysis could provide us with actionable insights. Thank you for your thoughtful breakdown of the problem and the potential steps forward.

Thank you for the opportunity to discuss this case. I look forward to any further questions or discussions on the strategies for market recovery and growth.

Market Entry

1/2 | Your client is a large retail chain. They're thinking about launching a new co-branded credit card specifically for their existing retail customer base. How would you think about advising them on this?

That's an interesting and broad challenge. Since this is about creating something new outside their core, I'd want to approach it in a very structured, customer-centric way. My first question would be to understand what is the bank's primary goal with this new card? Are they trying to drive store loyalty, increase the average purchase size, or create a new revenue stream?

That's the right question to start with. Their main goal is to deepen their relationship with existing customers and increase loyalty. They see it as a tool to encourage customers to consolidate their shopping with them and visit more frequently.

Understood. The goal is primarily loyalty and increasing customer lifetime value within their core retail business. That helps frame the rest of the discussion. My next question would be to understand if the client has a particular segment in mind?

Let's assume they want to target young professionals, people in their late 20s and early 30s who are digitally savvy and are members of their existing free loyalty program.

Perfect, that gives us a clear target. The next step would be designing the product and the GTM plan. The value proposition must be compelling for this segment and tightly integrated with their shopping experience. I would think about the key features in a few categories: Rewards: This is the most critical part. The rewards must be exceptional when shopping with our client. We could also offer exclusive cardholder-only sale events or free shipping on online orders. This directly ties the card to the core business goal. Fees & Rates: This segment is often sensitive to annual fees. A no-annual-fee card would likely be the best fit. Digital Experience: The entire experience, from application to payment, must be seamlessly integrated into the retail chain's existing mobile app. Partnership: Critically, the retail chain will need to partner with a bank to handle the underwriting and financial backend. Our recommendation must include a plan for selecting this partner.

That makes sense. It's a product designed specifically to enhance their shopping experience. So once you've designed the card, how do you launch it?

That's a sharp question. We've noticed that the number of repeat customers has seen a significant drop over the past year.

For the GTM, our biggest advantage is the direct access to customers in the shopping environment. I would recommend a targeted, omnichannel launch campaign: Targeted Digital Outreach: Use loyalty program data and purchase history to send personalized, pre-approval offers to eligible young professionals via email and push notifications in the retailer's app. In-Store Promotion: This is our most powerful channel. We should have a compelling sign-up offer at the point-of-sale, like "Save 15% on your entire purchase today when you're approved for the card." This creates a strong incentive. Leverage In-house Channels: Promote the card heavily on the company website, in marketing emails, and through in-store signage. Staff, especially cashiers, should be trained to promote the card's benefits.

My approach would be to clearly tie the card's objective to the core retail business, focus on a specific shopper segment, build a product with rewards that drive in-store spending, and then leverage the retailer's powerful in-person and digital channels for a targeted launch.

2/2 | Your client is a large retail chain. They're thinking about launching a new co-branded credit card specifically for their existing retail customer base. How would you think about advising them on this?

Interviewee Notes

- The product is a new, co-branded credit card for their existing customers.
- Primary Goal: Increase customer loyalty and "share of wallet," not to become a financial services provider.
- Target Segment: Young Professionals who are digitally savvy and already part of the store's loyalty program.

Case Notes

- A three-part strategic framework is used defining Strategic Objective, Target Customer, Product & GTM Design.
- Key Hypothesis: The card's value proposition must be deeply integrated with the shopping experience to drive loyalty, featuring rewards that incentivize spending at the client's stores.

Recommendations

- Product Design: Launch zero fee card with a tiered rewards structure that heavily favors in-house spending
- Integrate card management seamlessly into the retailer's existing mobile app. Offer exclusive perks like special sales events and free shipping.
- GTM Strategy: Execute a targeted, omni channel launch leveraging the retailer's assets: Aggressive point-of-sale promotions & Digital outreach to existing loyalty members with pre-approval offers.

- Recommend GTM for credit card
  - Strategic objective?
    - Increase loyalty and share of wallet
  - Target customer
    - Young professionals or existing loyalty members
  - Design product and GTM
    - Product design
      - Tiered rewards
      - No annual fee
      - Seamless app integration
    - GTM
      - In-store / Point-of-sale offers (Instant discounts)
      - Targeted digital outreach

1/1 | Your client, a French luxury clothing retailer with strong presence in Europe and America, wants to enter the Indian market. They are evaluating whether to launch via flagship stores, e-commerce, or an omni-channel strategy. Help them design their market entry approach.

Sure. To begin, I'd like to ask a few scoping questions to better understand their existing operations and products. How are they performing in Europe and the US? Do they primarily sell online or through physical stores? What are their best-selling products? Is their customer base more women-focused or men-focused?

They follow an omni-channel strategy abroad: flagship stores in high-density luxury zones, and e-commerce in other regions. Their top products are women's leather jackets and boots, making up 70% of sales.

Understood. I will structure my approach in four steps:

1. **Market attractiveness** – assess TAM, consumer segments, competition, regulatory context.
2. **Financial feasibility** – evaluate pricing, margins, break-even.
3. **Operational feasibility** – assess supply chain and value chain needs.
4. **Mode of entry** – recommend flagship, e-commerce, or partnership model.

Does this sound like a good starting point?

Yes, proceed.

First, for market sizing: India's population is ~1.4 billion. I'll segment it into urban and rural, then focus on high-income urban consumers. Assuming luxury leather jacket pricing between ₹25,000–₹40,000, this market is niche. Based on previous casebook data, I estimate the TAM to be around ₹100–150 crores. Assuming a 10% market share in Year 1, expected revenue would be ₹10–15 crores.

That seems reasonable. What about the costs?

Flagship stores would cost ~₹35–40 lakhs/month per store, with a plan for 3–4 stores = ~₹2 crore/month, ~₹22 crore/year. Too high relative to projected first-year revenue. Marketing cost per customer is estimated at ₹1,000–₹2,000. COGS is ₹8,000–₹9,000/item, shipping adds ₹500–600. That leaves a margin of ~₹3,500–4,000 per item.

So which entry mode would you recommend?

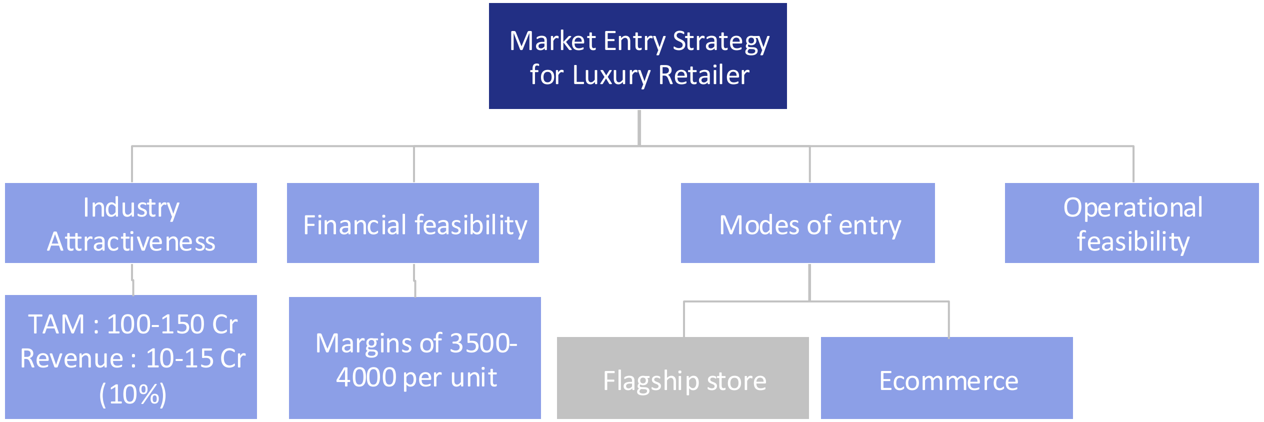
E-commerce first, through high-end marketplaces (Tata Cliq Luxury, Ajio Luxe, etc.) to minimize fixed costs and leverage their brand network. Avoid flagship initially. Explore JV/partnership with Reliance/Tata later once the brand is established.

Any operational challenges?

Products will be exported from Vietnam/Indonesia. No immediate need for domestic manufacturing. Operationally, e-commerce is feasible and less capital intensive.

Good. Any final recommendations?

Launch e-commerce first with targeted marketing in metros (Delhi, Mumbai, Bangalore). Avoid flagship in the first phase. Monitor customer acquisition cost and retention over 12–18 months. Reassess flagship stores post 2 years if revenue crosses ₹50 crore run-rate.



1/1 | Your client is a mall chain operator in Asia and want to launch a new loyalty program, so how should they go about it?

Interviewee Scoping questions to the interviewer

- What is the objective of developing this program?
- Is there a specific metric you are trying to achieve through this program in a particular period?
- What is the time period to develop this?
- What particular market in Asia?
- Has this been done before?
- What kind of stores are there in this mall?
- What kind of customers come in to this mall?
- What does of benefits this loyalty program entail?
- Will this be a digital or a physical card?

Conclusion as per Interviewer's reply to the above questions:

This was an open-ended case and interviewer wanted the candidate to set up the scope and determine the specifics for the GTM of the loyalty program.

How to launch a new loyalty program?

- Financial Feasibility
  - Revenue
    - Charge the participating brands a fee for promoting their brands through the loyalty program.
  - Cost
    - Fixed cost: a. One time technology/software set-up cost. b. Infrastructure cost
    - Variable cost: a. Training cost. b. Marketing expenses. c. cashbacks for the brand partners..
- Operational Feasibility
  - Define the Value proposition basis: **Experience-** card, digital or omnichannel **Benefits-** What brands would be the partners? **Eligibility-** What kind of customers would be eligible and would there be different tiers such as Gold, Platinum and Silver?
  - Right marketing of the program to the intended customers and partnering with the brands that would support this program.

How to tackle potential risks: 1. Market study and survey to understand what kind of features other malls that have rolled out this program have given to the customers? 2. Pilot study to understand customer's expectations.

(1 / 2) Your client, a renowned magazine publisher, is considering tapping into the lifestyle segment targeting wealthy males. They believe this move could diversify their portfolio. What's your initial take on this strategy?

Interviewee	Thank you for the overview. I would like to begin by clarifying a few points about our client's goals and current market understanding. What exactly is the objective behind entering this new segment? Are we looking at diversification for brand extension or aiming for immediate high returns? Also, what timeline are we considering for market entry, and what are the expected financial returns, specifically the bottom line, in terms of profit?
Interviewer	The primary objective is indeed diversification, with an expected timeframe to start seeing returns within the next five years. They aim for a bottom line of $10M or more in profits.
Interviewee	Additionally, understanding the distribution frequency and if there's a specific subset within the male demographic, we're targeting would be crucial. Finally, what's the competitive landscape, and how does our client envisage entering this market?
Interviewer	The magazine would be distributed monthly, focusing broadly on the wealthy male segment without zeroing in on any specific age group for now. The market is competitive but not saturated. The client is open to various modes of entry but leans towards starting a new brand within their existing structure.
Interviewee	With this information, we can begin by estimating the market size to assess the industry's attractiveness. Considering India's population of 1.4 billion, with a 70:30 rural to urban split and 1:1 male to female split, we focus on the urban male population, which gives us approximately 200 million males. Segmenting further by income, targeting the upper-class segment, which is about 20% of this population, we have a base of 40 million. Assuming 30-40% of them are inclined towards magazine readership, we're looking at a market size of around 15 million potential customers.

Interviewee	Further, considering an average new entrant could aim to capture about 5% market share, that translates to around 750,000 customers.
Interviewer	That's a good start. How would you proceed with this market size in evaluating the opportunity?
Interviewee	I would like to assess the financial feasibility of this market entry opportunity. Do we have any information on the price and costs of the magazines we distribute?
Interviewer	Our given cost structure is as follows — $2 variable cost per copy, $4 price per copy, and negligible fixed costs.
Interviewee	Assuming monthly distribution, the profits would be 750,000 customers times $2 profit per copy times 12 months, equaling $18M annual profit (negligible fixed costs) in the first year. This exceeds the client's $10M profit objective, indicating financial attractiveness.
Interviewer	That seems promising. Could you outline the benefits and risks associated with this market entry?
Interviewee	Certainly. The benefits include tapping into a growing market buoyed by the premiumization wave, ensuring no cannibalization with existing businesses, and bolstering the publisher's presence in a lucrative segment. It offers an opportunity for greater push and visibility for their range of products. However, the risks involve significant competition, including the challenge of digital media overshadowing traditional magazines, the niche nature of the targeted segment which might limit scale, and potential societal shifts away from magazine readership. Overcoming these risks requires innovative strategies, such as digital integration and unique content creation, to ensure the venture's success and sustainability.

(2/ 2) Your client, a renowned magazine publisher, is considering tapping into the lifestyle segment targeting wealthy males. They believe this move could diversify their portfolio. What's your initial take on this strategy?

Interviewer	Those are comprehensive insights. Considering both the benefits and the risks, what would be your final recommendation for the client regarding this market entry?
Interviewee	Given the financial attractiveness and the strategic alignment with the client's diversification goal, entering the wealthy male lifestyle segment seems like a promising opportunity. However, it's imperative to proceed with a detailed market analysis, including consumer behavior studies and pilot launches, to mitigate the identified risks. Additionally, partnerships or acquisitions could be explored as potential entry modes to quickly gain market share and brand recognition.
Interviewer	Thank you for your insights. Great, that concludes our session.

(1 / 2) Our client is a Turkish LPG manufacturer, and they are considering entering the Indian market. They need our help to assess if this is a good fit for them.

Interviewee	Thank you. Let me take a moment to gather my thoughts. To start, I would like to ask a few scoping questions about their current business—things like size, ownership of the value chain, and customer base. Then, I'd like to understand why they are looking to enter the Indian market specifically. Do they have any data on the Indian LPG market, and are there any objective metrics they aim to achieve, such as revenue, market share, or profits? Plus, it would be helpful to know if they have any experience in entering new markets in the past.
Interviewer	They are the largest player in Turkey, essentially holding a monopoly, which means their revenue growth has plateaued. They're exploring new geographies to expand their revenue. As for their value chain, they purchase gas from extraction companies, process and cylinder it in-house, and handle the distribution and sales themselves. They find India attractive due to its size. In India, 80% of the LPG market is dominated by a three-player oligopoly, with the remainder being highly fragmented. Their objective is to achieve an additional revenue of 30,000 crores by entering the Indian market within two years.
Interviewee	Understood. The first step should be to determine if the Indian market is large enough to support this scale of entry. If it is, we can then explore the operational feasibility and entry strategies for the Indian market.
Interviewer	Sure. Let's move ahead!
Interviewee	To estimate the market size for LPG cylinders in India, we'll break down the population into households and categorize them as rural or urban. Using assumptions about the penetration of gas cylinders—based on factors like income, alternative sources such as piped gas, biogas, electricity, etc.—we can estimate the number of households using gas cylinders in India.

Interviewee	Multiplying this by the number of cylinders required annually per household and the price per cylinder should give us the market's value. Does this approach sound reasonable to you?
Interviewer	Yes, that's a solid approach. For your calculations, assume that urban households have an 80% penetration rate for cylinders and rural households have a 50% rate.
Interviewee	Based on India's population of 140 crores, this gives us 35 crore households, with 30% urban and 70% rural. This equates to approximately 10 crore urban households and 25 crore rural households. Applying the penetration rates, we have 8 crore urban and about 12.5 crore rural households using gas cylinders. Assuming each household needs one cylinder per month and each cylinder costs around Rs. 1000 without subsidies, we're looking at a market size of approximately 240,000 crores. Our client aims to capture 30,000 crores of this, which is about 12.5% of the market, within two years.
Interviewer	Excellent analysis. Now, let's discuss the challenges the company might face from a customer standpoint and explore potential strategies.
Interviewee	The main challenges from the customer's perspective revolve around four areas: Awareness, Access, Acceptability, and Affordability. Could we delve deeper into any of these aspects?
Interviewer	Good breakdown. Could you elaborate on what you mean by Acceptability?
Interviewee	Since LPG is a commoditized product, customers tend to stick with their current suppliers for years. There's no incentive to switch unless the new product offers higher quality or lower prices, which is difficult given the price regulation in this market.

(2 / 2) Our client is a Turkish LPG manufacturer, and they are considering entering the Indian market. They need our help to assess if this is a good fit for them.

Interviewer	That's a keen observation. Price regulation does mean there's little product differentiation. Additionally, the oligopoly players have patented gas stove connections that are compatible only with their cylinders, further discouraging customers from switching. Any thoughts on how we might address these issues?
Interviewee	The high switching costs and lack of incentive to change are significant hurdles. However, we could introduce incentives for switching. For example, enhancing our distribution network with a digital-first approach, such as app-based ordering and improved customer service, could differentiate us. Additionally, offering new stoves to customers who switch could overcome the compatibility issue. By analyzing the cost of acquiring a customer (CAC) against the lifetime value (LTV), we could assess the financial viability of this strategy. It could also serve as a marketing tool to promote our brand and attract customers by offering a modern, free item for their kitchens.
Interviewer	Those are innovative strategies. Let's conclude with your final recommendations for the company.
Interviewee	After considering all factors, my recommendation is for the LPG player to not enter the Indian market. This is due to three primary reasons: achieving a 30,000 crore revenue target, which is 12.5% of the market, seems very ambitious given that 80% is controlled by an oligopoly; the exclusive cylinder-to-stove connection acts as a significant barrier to customer switching; and the established trust and market understanding of the incumbent players, which our client lacks, would likely hinder our success in this new market.

(1 / 1) Our Client is a global pharma organization and is thinking of launching a new blockbuster drug through the Indian arm. Evaluate this.

Interviewee	Certainly, may I ask a few questions to gain a better understanding of the situation? What is the objective?
Interviewer	They want to earn profits
Interviewee	Why India?
Interviewer	Because of its growing population
Interviewee	What kind of drug is this?
Interviewer	FDA approved drug to treat arthritis
Interviewee	Any competitive advantage?
Interviewer	Only 2 other drugs are available, and this one has a higher efficiency and can be self administered
Interviewee	In order to analyse this market entry opportunity, I would like to start by assessing the market attractiveness , then analysing the financial and operational feasibility and then the possible mode of entry
Interviewer	Sure
Interviewee	Starting with market attractiveness, I would like to go ahead and calculate the market size: Market Size = Population * Incidence Rate * Diagnosis Rate * Treatment Rate * Frequency Rate. Do we have information about these metrics ?
Interviewer	Incidence rate is 1%, Every 3 out of 4 person gets diagnosed, assume everyone gets treated. Need to take one tablet once every week
Interviewee	Thanks using this information. I can calculate the market size as 1400 Mn * 1% * 75% *100% * 52 = ~ 540 Mn.
Interviewer	That seems like a reasonable number

Interviewee	Now moving on to the market share. Since there are 2 players but we have a competitive advantage over them I assume we should reasonably be able to capture 25-30% of the market in the first year itself.
Interviewer	That is fair, You can assume 25%.
Interviewee	Therefore, our addressable customers would be 540 Mn *25% = ~ 130 Mn Now moving on to the financial feasibility. Do we know what the price of the tablet is or the competitor pricing?
Interviewer	Price for Comp A and B is Rs 2k per tablet pack which has 20 tablets.
Interviewee	Given we are 2 significant competitive advantage over and above our competitors. Can we price our products at a 25% premium at Rs 2.5k per table pack.
Interviewer	Sounds fair
Interviewee	Do we have any information on the variable costs and fixed costs like patents?
Interviewer	The margin per pack is 50% and the patents costed Rs 8000 Mn
Interviewee	Therefore, the profit would be 2500 * 130 Mn / 20 *50% - 8000 = 125 Mn. Therefore, this seems like a profitable venture to go ahead with.
Interviewer	Okay. Now can you list down some other challenges that the client might face while entering India.
Interviewee	Sure. There could be various issues with the operational feasibility such as Licensing costs, Government subsidy, Hiring a Sales Force, Various Regulatory Approvals, Transfer Pricing rules.
Interviewer	Okay Thanks. That would be it.

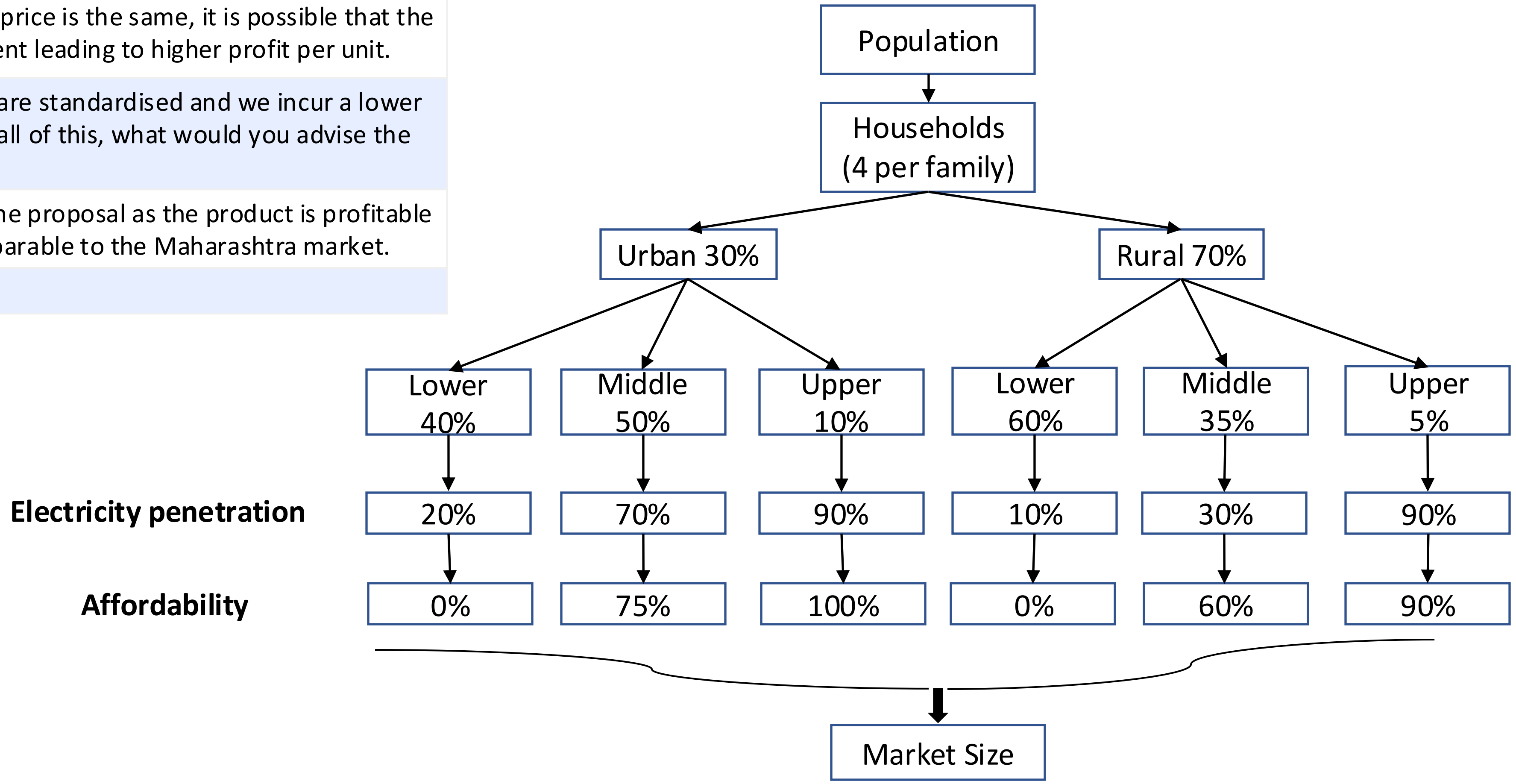
(1 / 2) Your client is a dish washer manufacturer who wants to enter the Karnataka market. They want your advice about the proposal.

Interviewee	Does the client have a specific metric in mind to decide whether to enter the market or not?
Interviewer	The client wants to benchmark the estimated profits from this market to its profits in Maharashtra, where they currently operate.
Interviewee	May I know what USP the client's product has?
Interviewer	This is a dishwasher built with the latest technology & can be operated remotely as well. It is one of a kind in the market and is patented. There are no other direct competitors.
Interviewee	Thanks, I wish to proceed with the overall strategy. I will first assess the opportunity and calculate the market size, expected market share and profit margin. Next, I will evaluate the operational feasibility, assess potential barriers to entry and evaluate entry strategies.
Interviewer	Let's assume that the implementation bit can be taken care of. Let's begin with the market sizing.
Interviewee	Sure, before proceeding with market size, may I know the price of the dishwasher? I want to understand who will be able to afford it.
Interviewer	The price is Rs. 20,000, same as Maharashtra and it can be afforded by most middle-income families onwards
Interviewee	Noted. I'll start with the overall Karnataka population and apply appropriate filters to arrive at the market size.

Interviewer	Your assumptions seem fair. We have done a similar calculation and estimated a sale of 30 lakh units.
Interviewee	Next, I'll calculate the market share. To do this, may I know how the product compares to others in the market? I can think of a few features such as price, quality of the product, ease of use, durability and size.
Interviewer	The product is better than industry standard.
Interviewee	Noted. What was the market share of the client's product when it first launched in Maharashtra? Can we expect similar market share here?
Interviewer	Sure, the market conditions were similar during launch and we can estimate the market share to be 10%
Interviewee	May I have the cost structure for this product?
Interviewer	Assume no fixed cost. The client's manufacturing cost is Rs. 15,000 and distribution cost of Rs. 3000.
Interviewee	Based on my calculation, the profits should be Rs. 60 crores. May I know the profits of the Maharashtra outlets for benchmarking?
Interviewer	The Maharashtra outlet currently has a profit of Rs. 200 crores. Can you list out few reasons for this discrepancy?
Interviewee	I would like to explore the differences in three different aspects: i) w.r.t. market size: Maharashtra is more populous than Karnataka, hence the market size is larger.

(2 / 2) Your client is a dish washer manufacturer who wants to enter the Karnataka market. They want your advice about the proposal.

Interviewee	ii) w.r.t. market share: Since we have been in the market for longer, the Maharashtra outlets enjoy a higher market share. ii) w.r.t profit margin: Since the selling price is the same, it is possible that the cost structure in Maharashtra is different leading to higher profit per unit.
Interviewer	That's right. The distribution channels are standardised and we incur a lower distribution cost per unit. Considering all of this, what would you advise the client?
Interviewee	I'll advise the client to go ahead with the proposal as the product is profitable and over time the profits may be comparable to the Maharashtra market.
Interviewer	Thanks for the recommendation.



Growth

1/2 | Your client is an electric vehicle manufacturer. They want you to devise a growth strategy for their business. How would you proceed?

Understood. To begin, I'd like to ask a few clarifying questions to understand the client's profile. For instance, are they a new startup or an established automotive player? What market segment are they targeting, mass-market cars, luxury vehicles, or commercial trucks?

You can make some reasonable assumptions for this case. Just be sure to state them clearly as you proceed.

Okay, thank you. In that case, I will make the following key assumptions: Client Profile: The client is a new, well-funded EV startup based in India. Target Market: They are focused on the urban, mass-market passenger car segment. Core Challenge: Their primary challenge is differentiating in a crowded market. Given these assumptions, my recommended growth strategy would be technology-led differentiation. Instead of competing on price or design alone, they should focus on creating a superior and proprietary technology stack.

Interesting. That's a high-level concept. What does "technology-led differentiation" actually mean in the context of a mass-market EV? Where would you focus?

Specifically, I would recommend they focus on developing their own systems at the semiconductor level, rather than using off-the-shelf components. The two most critical areas to invest in would be a proprietary Battery Management System (BMS) and an advanced driver-assistance system (ADAS). These are the core "brains" of the vehicle and offer the greatest potential for a competitive advantage.

That sounds expensive and time-consuming, especially for a startup. Why is developing a proprietary BMS a better growth strategy than, for example, aggressive pricing to capture market share quickly?

That's a fair challenge. While aggressive pricing can win initial sales, it's not a sustainable long-term advantage—it leads to price wars and erodes margins. A proprietary BMS, on the other hand, creates a defensible "moat." A superior, in-house system can deliver tangible benefits that customers value and competitors can't easily replicate, such as demonstrably longer range, faster charging speeds, and better long-term battery health. These are powerful differentiators that justify a premium and build brand loyalty.

That makes sense from an engineering perspective. But how does that technical advantage translate into a successful go-to-market strategy? How do you sell that to an average customer?

The go-to-market strategy would be built entirely around communicating these tangible benefits. Instead of vague marketing, we can make specific, defensible claims. Our marketing headlines would be things like: "The Longest Range in its Class" or "Go from 10% to 80% charge in under 20 minutes." For ADAS, it would be about best-in-class safety features. This technology-first approach allows our marketing to be driven by clear, provable product superiority, which builds immense trust and brand value.

2/2 | Your client is an electric vehicle manufacturer. They want you to devise a growth strategy for their business. How would you proceed?

Interviewee Notes

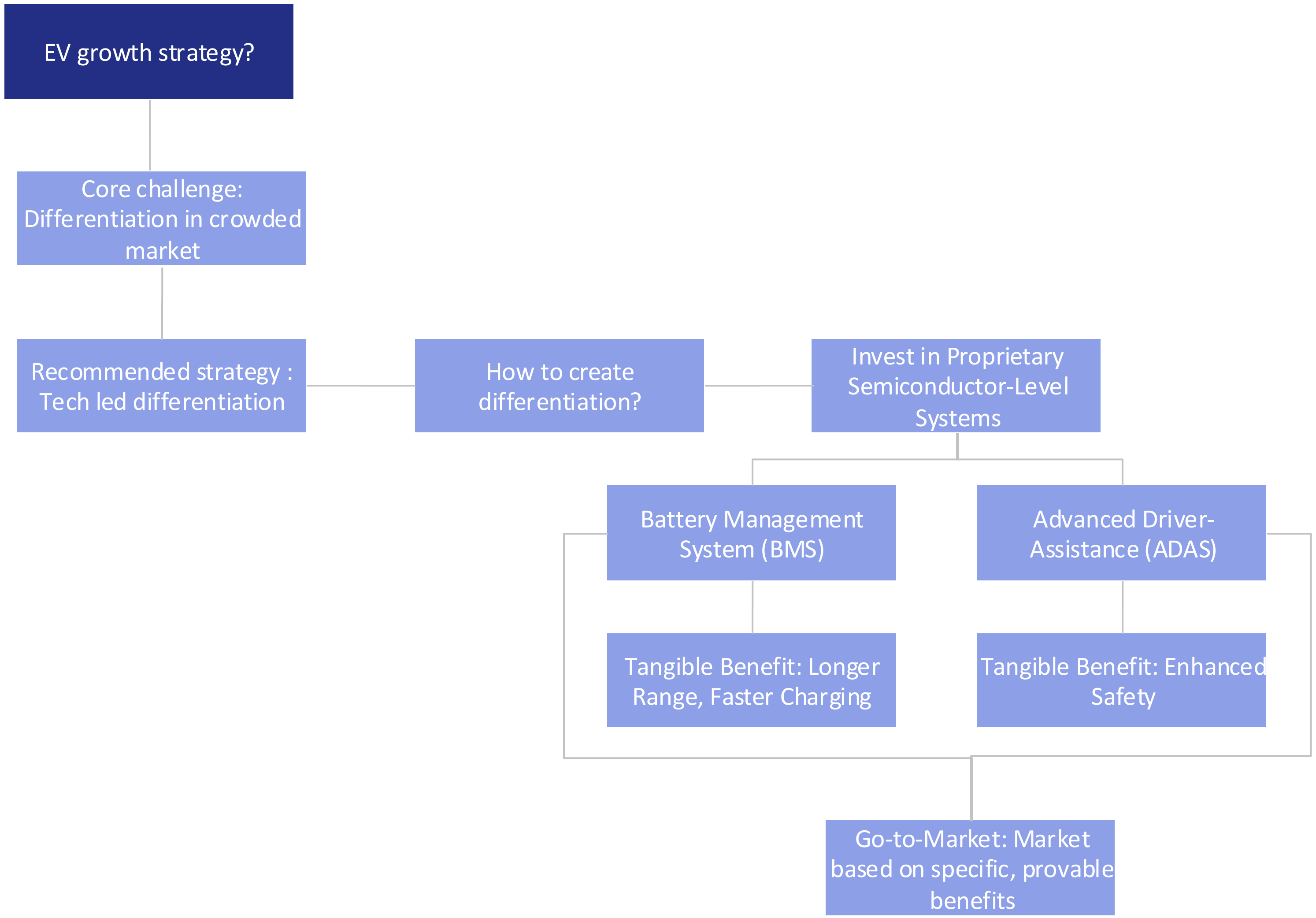
- Case Style: Assumption-based. Interviewer provided minimal data.
- Candidate's Assumptions: Client is a new, well-funded EV startup in India targeting the urban, mass-market segment.
- Key Insight (Candidate-Framed): The core strategic challenge is differentiation in a crowded market.

Case Notes

- Candidate established a clear strategic pillar: Technology-Led Differentiation.
- Pinpointed the source of this differentiation: proprietary systems at the semiconductor level.
- Hypothesis: A defensible technology "moat" built around core systems is a more sustainable growth strategy than competing on price or superficial features.
- Successfully connected deep technical recommendations (proprietary BMS/ADAS) to tangible business outcomes and a clear go-to-market message.

Recommendations

- Strategic Focus: Invest in developing proprietary, in-house systems, specifically the BMS and ADAS.
- Competitive Advantage: Use this technology to create a defensible "moat" by delivering provably superior product performance (e.g., longer range, faster charging, enhanced safety).
- GTM Strategy: Build the marketing campaign around these specific, tangible benefits translating complex engineering into a clear and compelling value proposition for the customer.



(1 / 1) Our client is an Agrochemicals manufacturer. They produce 3 types of chemicals – pesticides, fungicides and herbicides. Currently ranked third in India, their goal is to become the leader in the next four years. Can we provide some recommendations?

Interviewee	I'd like to ask a few questions to better understand the context. Could you provide more information about our client's standing, as compared to the top 2 players in the industry?
Interviewer	The top two players are both MNCs, with market shares of 16% and 12% respectively. Our client holds an 8% share.
Interviewee	Understood. I imagine the client is dealing in commoditized goods, with the primary end customer being farmers. I presume their distribution network extends through partnerships with distributors and retailers. Is that accurate?
Interviewer	Yes, that's right. The focus is on organic growth strategies, as the client is not considering mergers or acquisitions at this point.
Interviewee	Great, thank you for the information. Considering organic modes of growth, I would focus on four levers that can be used to boost the client's market share in the next 4 years. These are (i) number of customers, (ii) frequency of purchase, (iii) basket size, and (iv) average price charged per customer.
Interviewer	Sounds good, could you tell me how you would break down (i) number of customers?
Interviewee	The way I look at it, the number of customers can be expressed as (No. of Prospective Customers Made Aware) x (% with Intent to Purchase) x (% who are Successfully Able to Purchase). No. of Prospective Customers Made Aware would majorly be driven by awareness-related campaigns, % with Intent to Purchase would be driven by the product offerings, price, and quality of education regarding the product, and % who are Successfully Able to Purchase would broadly depend on ensuring product availability through effective distribution channels. Is there any aspect you would like more information on?
Interviewer	No, that's good, thanks. Let's move on. How would you calculate the full potential market size for agrochemicals in any one district in Rural Punjab? We need not get into specifics regarding the district itself.
Interviewee	Sure. The way I would arrive at the market size is through the following equation: Full Potential Market Size = (Area of the district) x (% Farmland) x (% Farmland that requires use of agrochemicals, depending on crop type) x (Average price of agrochemicals per unit area)

Interviewer	Good. Let me provide you with some data, so that you can proceed with calculations. The district has 700,000 hectares needing agrochemicals, with wheat, rice, and cotton being the primary crops. The respective costs to farmers for these crops are ₹1200, ₹1800, and ₹2100 per hectare, and the area covered by each of these crops is 7, 3.5 and 3.5 lakh hectares respectively.
Interviewee	Noted, thank you. Just to clarify, the total area for all three crops exceeds the total farmland area. Is this due to crop rotation owing to seasonality or another factor?
Interviewer	Good catch, you're right - it is attributed to seasonality.
Interviewee	Understood, thank you. I've run the numbers, and the market size comes to around 220.5 crores.
Interviewer	Great. Now, if we find that the actual market size falls short of its full potential, what might account for this gap? Can you identify any factors that could explain the discrepancy?
Interviewee	Yes, I can think of two factors – (i) an overestimation of the farmland requiring agrochemicals, possibly due to farmers opting for alternative farming practices, or (ii) an overestimation of the average cost per hectare, possibly due to farmers using less than the recommended quantity of agrochemicals.
Interviewer	Right, that makes sense. Could you quickly provide me with just 1 or 2 recommendations on what can be done to promote the use of agrochemicals in the district?
Interviewee	Sure. Given that the target customers are farmers, they would need to be persuaded as to the long-term benefits of using agrochemicals. Therefore, I recommend first organizing workshops to educate farmers on the benefits of using agrochemicals. Secondly, distributing free product samples would allow farmers to directly and tangibly experience the benefits of agrochemicals, potentially leading to their adoption of the product.
Interviewer	Great, that will be all. All the best!

(1/1) Your client is a 2 and 3-wheeler manufacturer, selling the product PAN India. They are witnessing a growth of 4-5% while the industry is growing at 9-10%. How can they increase the growth equal or more than the industry?

Interviewee Scoping questions to the interviewer

- Understand what growth means in this context?
- What is the value chain of the product line?
- Compare market growth of industry to product?
- Is there any shift in the product type which led the industry grow faster
- Should company expand via organic or inorganic growth?

Company

Dealers (Bike, scooter, e-rick)

Bike

Company growth = Market growth

Scooter

Company growth < Market growth competitor have improved the design of the scooter

Organic growth

Inorganic growth

Key Metrics: Total customers Avg revenue/customer

Estimate market size

Identify website visitor

Segment: Customer searching scooters with similar specs

Target Segment: Profile by Age, Gender, Region (using data mining tools)

E-rick

Company growth > Market growth

Identify target market: Areas with rickshaw use + charging infra

Estimate market size:
Total rickshaw users
Filter: charging access
Affordability check

Price comparison
E-rick: ~50 cost of ICE rick

Recommendation: since there are limited charging station, tie-up with govt, expand infra in tier II & III cities

Unconventional Cases

1/1 | Your client is a a legacy power distribution company facing irregular supply and low customer satisfaction. They want to digitize their activities. How will you go about it.

Could you tell me the region in which the Power Distribution company

The distribution company is located in Delhi. I would like to look at the value chain

I shall divide the value chain between upstream and downstream activities. Upstream activities comprise the activities of procuring power from power plants including planning and infra. The downstream activities comprise onboarding, power consumption, billing,

How will you go about digitizing these activities?

For upstream activities (infrastructure) I would apply in the areas of predictive maintenance deploying AI and IoT. For planning activities I would deploy AI to predict seasonal/ peak power demand and how much of power need to be procured from the utilities. For downstream activities I would focus digitizing customer experience through an app driving paperless transaction, real time power consumption and optimization, % power procured from clean energy sources, dynamic pricing and discrimination (basis time of the day)

Interviewee notes: Has power sector background and the interviewer tested the depth of knowledge and how creatively can the interviewee come upwith different ideas for digitization

Demand forecasting → Power procurement planning → Grid Infrastructure O&M → Customer Onboarding → Real-time consumption engagement → Billing and digital payments

Upstream flow digitization

- Forecast seasonal and peak demand using AI to decide how much power to procure.
- Plan procurement volumes from power plants/utilities based on the forecast.
- Operate and maintain network infrastructure with predictive maintenance using AI and IoT

Downstream flow digitization

- Digitally onboard consumers with paperless applications and service activation.
- Provide an app for real-time consumption visibility and optimization guidance.
- Show the percentage of consumption sourced from clean energy within the consumer view.
- Apply dynamic pricing with Time-of-Day differentiation in bills, enabled by smart metering.
- Enable paperless transactions, instant digital receipts for seamless collections

1/1 | The Government of Rajasthan wants to implement a new irrigation system to improve agricultural productivity. However, farmers are reluctant to adopt the system due to high costs and resistance to change. Design a strategy to increase adoption among farmers.

Thank you. I'd like to clarify a few things:

- Why are farmers resisting this system?
- Is the resistance due to cost, lack of awareness, or trust issues?
- Has any adoption happened so far?

Resistance is mainly due to high upfront costs and reluctance to change existing farming practices. A few farmers have adopted it, but the majority have not.

Understood. I will structure my approach into four phases:

1. Envision → Assess → Design → Implement. Envision – Define clear goals (e.g., target number of villages, farmers, and adoption percentage by a specific date).
2. Assess – Understand current adoption levels, cost per farmer, land availability, and farmer demographics.
3. Design – Develop interventions (both cost-based and non-cost-based).
4. Implement – Create a timeline with phased rollout.

Does this structure sound reasonable?

Yes, go ahead.

For the assessment, I would calculate:

- Total agricultural land in target villages.
- Cost per acre for the irrigation system.
- Average landholding per farmer to estimate **cost per farmer**.

Do we have data on cost per acre?

Yes, the government provided indicative costs per acre.

Great. Moving to the design phase, I would propose two categories of interventions:

1. Cost-based measures:
   - Provide subsidies or partial funding for early adopters.
   - Offer low-interest credit schemes for upfront installation costs.
2. Non-cost-based measures:
   - Awareness campaigns and farmer workshops (initially frequent, then tapering).
   - Showcase pilot projects and success stories from other states.
   - Peer-to-peer advocacy by early adopters.

For the cost–benefit analysis, I would evaluate:

- Short-term costs: Government subsidies, workshop expenses, installation grants.
- Long-term benefits: Increased crop yield, water efficiency, and potential reduction in fertilizer use.
- Opportunity cost: Loss in productivity and sustainability if adoption does not happen.

What about the implementation plan?

I would create a phased roadmap:

- **First 3 months:** Intensive awareness campaigns, 3–4 workshops per major village cluster, pilot installations with subsidies.
- **6–9 months:** Gradual reduction in workshops, shift to peer-led promotion, continued subsidies for lagging adopters.
- **12 months+:** Ongoing technical support, gradual withdrawal of subsidies as adoption stabilizes.

Good. Anything else?

We should also segment farmers by **age group, landholding size, and risk appetite**, and tailor interventions accordingly. Younger farmers may adopt faster with demonstration of long-term ROI, while older ones may need more trust-building efforts.

1/1 | XYZ is a firm involved in making rods used in steel plants in the furnace. The raw materials used in producing the rods are sourced from different countries. There has been a blast in one of the factories which provided the raw material, and this has led to a shortage in supply of the raw materials. The company has witnessed a fall in its share prices. What could be the reason for the fall in its share price?

Interviewee	Have the share prices fallen for any other companies in the industry?
Interviewer	No, they have not.
Interviewee	Has there been any fall in demand in the steel industry?
Interviewer	No.
Interviewee	The fall in share prices can be due to financial reasons or market sentiment about the company.
Interviewer	There have not been any negative sentiments about the company's image.
Interviewee	Has there been any change in prices of sourcing raw material from other countries?
Interviewer	Yes, there has been a shortage of supply which has increased the price.
Interviewee	The shortage in supply of raw materials can restrict production. Since raw materials are exclusive and there are no supplementary materials available, it would decrease production and there would be a shortage in meeting the demand.
Interviewer	Okay, go ahead.
Interviewee	Are there other means of meeting the demand for raw materials?
Interviewer	Yes. Other companies have their own mines as well.

Interviewee	Okay, so XYZ is facing difficulty because it is unable to meet its demand due to shortage in raw materials supply whereas other companies meet most of their demand through their own resources. This has caused a negative investor sentiment, and the company is witnessing a fall in its share prices.
Interviewer	Correct, that's all for now. Thank you!

1/1 | The population of Red Pandas in a National Park is declining. We need to identify the root cause and propose solutions to increase their numbers.

Interviewee	I'd like to ask a few questions to better understand the context. Could you provide more information about the National Park, including its location and the diversity of species present?
Interviewer	The National Park is in Assam. It hosts a variety of animal species besides Red Pandas, but our focus is solely on the pandas right now.
Interviewee	To address the issue effectively, could you share data on the Red Panda population, specifically the extent and timeline of the decline?
Interviewer	Over the last three years, the Red Panda population has decreased by 10%, from 20,000 to 18,000.
Interviewee	Understood. Were Red Pandas originally inhabitants of the National Park, and is their habitat adequately suitable for them?
Interviewer	Red Pandas have been part of the National Park since its establishment, and the habitat is well-suited for them.
Interviewee	Given this, we should examine three potential factors affecting their population: birth rate, death rate, and external factors like poaching. Let's start with any changes in birth or death rates, since this data is easier to track – has any change been noted in these figures?
Interviewer	The death rate has been stable, but there's been a decline in birth rate without notable changes in external factors.
Interviewee	In that case, let's dissect the birth rate into two factors - interaction frequency between males and females, and the success rate of these interactions. Has there been a change in either aspect?
Interviewer	Interaction frequency has decreased. Could you investigate why?
Interviewee	This could be influenced by three factors - mating intent and motivation, partner availability, and access to mates. Should we focus on a particular area?
Interviewer	Intent and availability are not concerns, so let's explore issues related to access.
Interviewee	Access would primarily be driven by two aspects – terrain and climate. Has the National Park experienced alterations in these areas recently?
Interviewer	Indeed, the introduction of a water reservoir divided the park, hindering the Red Pandas' movement. What would you recommend?
Interviewee	I suggest three actions - (i) relocating pandas to one area as a temporary measure, (ii) initiating an artificial breeding program, and (iii) constructing a bridge over the reservoir to restore mobility throughout the park.
Interviewer	Those are great recommendations, thank you. That will be all.

1/1 | Accenture has a vast body of knowledge accumulated over 20 years. How can this be transformed into a competitive advantage using data science and enhance client delivery? Can you provide 3-5 recommendations for the CEO?

Interviewee	Okay that's an interesting problem. May I have a few seconds to gather my thoughts?
Interviewer	Hmm, sure.
Interviewee	Alright, so how I'm thinking about this is that first we will see how to bring about this change/ implement this in the company. And then we can look at what exactly needs to be done.
Interviewer	Sure, that sounds good!
Interviewee	Okay, so I think we need to follow a step-by-step approach. First, we should identify the specific type of competitive advantage and insights we aim to achieve. Then, establishing a culture conducive to change within Accenture is crucial. Prioritizing the use-cases of this knowledge and ensuring need-based learning and development are also essential steps. Additionally, allocating data to different departments and teams based on their requirements will streamline the process. Leveraging case-based insights for benchmarks, RFPs, and other purposes can further enhance our competitive edge.
Interviewer	These are good implementable ways, but if you have to give 3-5 recommendations to the CEO, what would those be?
Interviewee	Just to clarify, recommendations should include how data can be transformed into a competitive advantage right? And not how to implement the change?
Interviewer	Correct.
Interviewee	Sure. So I would like to categorize these recommendations for different stakeholders for clarity. For our existing clients, building a benchmarking database would be beneficial. For attracting new clients, utilizing this knowledge for RFPs is essential. For the general public, we should publish insights with credibility to establish Accenture's thought leadership. And internally for Accenture, we can leverage data to consider financial scoping for future projects.

Interviewer	Alright. Now the CEO asks you how do you propose monetizing these initiatives?
Interviewee	For internal use within Accenture, utilizing the insights gained from RFPs can help in securing new clients and making our processes more efficient by learning from past experiences. Externally, while selling data directly might pose confidentiality concerns, we can offer insights such as industry trends, anonymized data studies, benchmarks, etc., which would be valuable to other organizations.
Interviewer	These points sound good! Thank you for your insights.

1/1 | What do you know about the Retail Industry? Can you state some problems currently faced in the retail industry?

Interviewee	Thank you for the question. Before we proceed, may I clarify if the scope of discussion is limited to the Indian market?
Interviewer	Yes, we're focusing on the Indian retail market.
Interviewee	Understood. In the Indian retail industry, some prevalent issues include the scale of unorganized retail sectors, challenges faced by small retailers competing with larger players, and legal hurdles such as regulatory compliance.
Interviewer	Thank you. Now, let's discuss the usage of GenAI in Retail. Can you elaborate on that?
Interviewee	Certainly. GenAI, or Generative AI, holds immense potential in revolutionizing various aspects of retail. It can be used for personalized shopping experiences, demand forecasting, inventory management, and even customer service automation (more on this basis experience).
Interviewer	Great. Could you provide some examples or insights into how GenAI is being utilized in the Indian retail market?
Interviewee	Absolutely. To begin with, let me give you a holistic overview of the retail industry in India (this was based on insights gained from industry deep dive sessions conducted by SEAL at ISB). Then, regarding GenAI, there are several startups in India leveraging this technology. For instance, [Name of Startup 1] utilizes GenAI for personalized product recommendations, while [Name of Startup 2] focuses on optimizing supply chain operations through predictive analytics.
Interviewer	Thank you for the clarification. Now, let's hear your final thoughts on these topics.

Interviewee	Sure. Firstly, I would discuss some legal issues prevalent in the Indian retail sector, highlighted the significant presence of unorganized retail, and propose solutions to address the challenges faced by small retailers. Secondly, I would provide a brief overview of how Hindustan Unilever Limited (HUL) entered the Indian market, showcasing a successful case study. Lastly, I would like to mention a few startups utilizing GenAI in the Indian retail space and explain their business models (this is a structure which I followed in the interview, and explained).
Interviewer	Thank you for your insights and explanations.
Interviewee	For internal use within Accenture, utilizing the insights gained from RFPs can help in securing new clients and making our processes more efficient by learning from past experiences. Externally, while selling data directly might pose confidentiality concerns, we can offer insights such as industry trends, anonymized data studies, benchmarks, etc., which would be valuable to other organizations.
Interviewer	These points sound good! Thank you for your insights.

1/1 | Government of KSA wants to increase tourism to two pilgrimage places – Haj & Umra

Interviewee	So can I safely assume that our objective is to increase the number of visitors only. Is there any secondary objective?
Interviewer	Yeah right, we want to increase the no. of visitors thus increase revenue from tourism
Interviewee	Could you help me clarify about Haj and Umra. What kind of places are those?
Interviewer	These are places of workship in the world. Once in life visit (over the world)
Interviewee	Do we have any timeline in mind and any quantitative target?
Interviewer	We want to increase the influx from 2MM in Haj to 10MM and from 5MM to 15 MM in Umra annually. But I would like you to look at the qualitative aspects of the problem
Interviewee	Is there any constraint as in can anyone enter or is there a process?
Interviewer	The places are accessible. A person can fly to Riyadh and travel by road henceforth. And yes Saudi people with Visa can enter. Moreover Haj is open 2 weeks in a year in September, and Umra is accessible across the year.
Interviewee	Any specific hour of the day? Restriction on mode of transport and how long can people stay?
Interviewer	No restriction on time and transport. People can stay near these religious places for 1-2 days. Could you help figure out bottlenecks that the government could face?
Interviewee	Sure. I will take a few seconds to jot down possibilities and then discuss with you. Is that okay?
Interviewer	No worries.

Interviewee	Okay, so looking at the journey as I would take to visit these places, I have listed down 6 things that I have to consider : 1) Awareness about the places 2) Visa 3) Travelling (flight, road, car) 4) accommodation nearby 5) political issue / environment issue 6) opportunity cost
Interviewer	Okay. Could you explain your thoughts.
Interviewee	Sure. 1) People are not aware about the place especially Islamic population for whom this can be a once in life visit. 2) The process of getting a visa can be a roadblock where one might not be able to get a visa easily 3) Flight tickets are difficult to get due to a) low connectivity b) expensive tickets c) few seats, or the road trip from the airport to the places is a concern a) roads are not good b) no proper availability of transport c) transport not comfortable d) frequency of transport low 4) Accommodation near these places are a) not well built b) are not sustainable c) not appealing to the crowd d) few hotels/ guesthouses available e) facility is bad 5) There is a political tension in the country that's why people might not want to enter the country. Or the weather is too harsh for people to travel during the time or travel or there is a epidemic in the country 6) There are better places to travel (especially during September) and people might prefer that over Haji.
Interviewer	Interesting, please give your recommendations and then we will close.
Interviewee	for each of the above : 1) marketing campaigns – a) in those months by the govt b) festive seasons c) tie up with Islamic countries d) representatives like muslims in mosques (word of mouth) 2) Clear regulations for those travelling to these places 3) Add more transport on the road, On arrival Visa (especially during those months) 4) Subsidies and govt quarters for tourist visiting in those places 5) Change months of access if possible to avoid harsh weather issues or high opportunity costs

Guesstimates

Click here for Main Contents page

What are Guesstimates?

- Process to estimate a number using a rational and structured approach
- Several ways to solve – ***the process/rationale for solution is more important than the number itself***

Key Evaluation Parameters

Critical

- Structured Thought Process
- Logic and Rationale
- Comfort with Basic Math and Numbers (BODMAS, Ratios, %ages)
- Communication Skills

Important

- Articulation of Assumptions (general observations, industry knowledge)
- Presence of Mind
- Asking for Help

Others

- Sanity/Hygiene Checks
- Basic Understanding and Common Sense

Types of Guesstimates

General Estimates

- **Top Down/Start Big:** Use **main equation as the starting point** and split it into sub-parts
- **Bottom Up/Start Small:** Use a **segment or unit to extrapolate the whole** (commonly used when there are constraints on the number to be estimated)
- **Example**: Estimate the # of white cars in Delhi

Data Driven

- Set of data is provided
- Understand and absorb all data before attempting a solution
- **Do not make assumptions** in case data is missing
- Take **hints for segmentation** from the given data
- **Examples**: Amazon ACE quiz, McKinsey PST questions

Market Sizing

- Estimate the **$-value or unit volume of the market**
- Estimate **price and quantity** to get final market size
- Can use **top down and bottom-up approaches simultaneously**
- **Example**: Estimate size of pet insurance market as: # of Pets * Insurance Penetration * Average Premiums

Abstract Estimations

- **Do not follow a particular structure**
- Not frequently asked but good to practice
- **Frame equation(s)** to solve
- **Break the problem into smaller pieces** and solve accordingly
- **Example**: Grains of grass on a cricket field

Approaching Guesstimates

Define the problem	Construct & Deconstruct the Problem	State Assumptions & Solve
1. **Define the problem** as granularly as possible 2. **Confirm understanding** with the interviewer 3. **Make modifications**, if required	4. **Express problem as an equation** or set of equations 5. **Construct the problem** from a larger point of view 6. **Deconstruct the problem** into specific sub-components 7. Make **minor corrections**/ adjustments towards the end	8. **Clearly state assumptions** & proxy information to be used 9. Use **logical justification to substantiate** all assumptions / proxies 10. **Plug information into the main equation** and solve

Example: How many people have you interacted with in the last year?

Assumptions:

- Year under consideration: July'22 – Jun'23
- Assuming interactions to be number of unique people that you have interacted with
- Interactions are limited to verbal form (both face to face and online)

Number of interactions in last year = Number of interactions pre-ISB + Number of interactions post-ISB

Eg: Deconstructing pre ISB people into personal interactions (further divided into family and friends), professional interactions (team colleagues, off sites, work friends etc.), miscellaneous like house help etc.

Based on sub categories defined; estimate the numbers for each sub categories and plug-in

Guesstimate Cheatsheet

Common Filters to Remember: Split by Gender | Urban/ Rural Divide | Split by Age | Split by Income | Internet Penetration | Your City Details

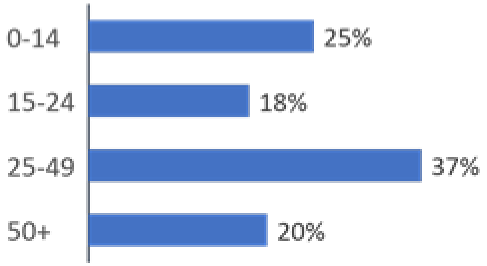
Total Population of India

1.46 bn people = 146 crore

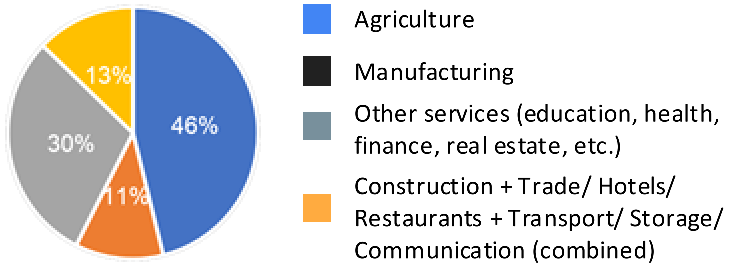
Length of India	3200 kms (North to South)
Breadth of India	3000 kms (West to East)
Number of States	28
Number of UTs	8

Gender Split (M/F)	51/49
Geography Split (U/R)	35/65
Literacy Rate	78% (M = 85%; F = 70%)
Average Household Size	4.38
Average Life Expectancy	72 years

Age Split

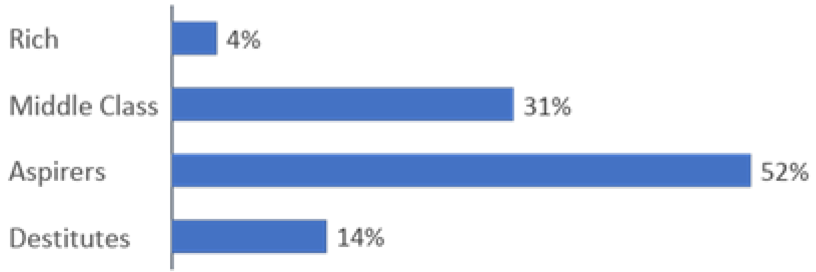


Employment by Sector



Income Split

Note: Indian households who are destitutes earn ≤ ₹1.25 lakh per year, adopters ₹1.25–₹5 lakh per year, middle class ₹5–₹30 lakh per year, and rich > ₹30 lakh per year.



Largest Cities (by Population)

Know population details of your city and other primary cities you have spend your life in

City	Population (Mn)	Area (km²)
Delhi	34.7	1,483
Mumbai	22.1	603
Kolkata	15.33	205
Bangalore	14.4	741
Chennai	12.3	426
Hyderabad	11.3	650

Access to cell phone: 74%
Access to smartphones: 48%
Internet penetration: 66%

Total # of airports in India = 100*

**handling regular commercial passenger flights*

Assumptions:
Price/chimney= Rs. 5,000

Clarifying questions:
- Should the market size be in units sold /year or in INR/yr?
- Should both new sales and replacement be considered?
- What should the average SP/chimney be?

Annual Demand of chimneys- 12.4 Mn units
Market Size- 12.4 Mn x Rs 5000/unit= Rs 62,000 Cr

Population of India (~1.3 Bn)

Urban- 30%
So, 390 Mn/4= 97.5 Mn households

Rural- 70%

High income HH (20%)
19.5 Mn

Mid income HH (40%)
39 Mn

Low income HH (40%)
39 Mn

Not a target as penetration is very difficult.

High Income households would all generally have a chimney, so assuming **95%** penetration

Mid Income households would have a 50%-50% chance of owning a chimney for a safer assumption, going with **60% penetration**

Low income household would rarely have a chimney, so assuming **20% penetration**

18.5 Mn

23.4 Mn

7.8 Mn

Tota- 49.7 Mn households
Annual Demand= 49.7 Mn/4 years= 12.4 Mn units/yr
Market Size- 12.4 Mn x Rs 5,000/unit= Rs 62,000 Cr

Notes from Expert:

1. Enhancing Granularity
- **Chimneys per Household:** The current model assumes one chimney per house. Add a layer for Chimneys per Household (e.g., 1.2 or 1.25), rationalizing it with:
  - High-Income/Tier 2 Cities: Many have more than one kitchen in a large house or bungalow, thus requiring more than one chimney.
  - Calculation Example: Factor in the percentage of the population that has two kitchens (e.g., 1.25 average).
- **Segmentation:** Add **Tier 1, Tier 2, Tier 3 city** split, as an alternative to just Urban/Rural.

2. Addressing Corner Cases and Assumptions
- **Rural Penetration:** Instead of assuming a 0% penetration in the rural segment we can assume a small but non-zero penetration
- **Secondary Market/Replacement:** Clarifying question about the market scope: "Are we looking for only new or secondhand or used as well?"

3. Improving Interview Structure (Key Takeaway)
- **Start with the Formula:** "The first thing should be **write down the formula**."
  Example Formula for Market Size:
  = (Total Households × Average Chimneys per Household / Lifespan) × Average Selling Price
- **Structure Second:** "First write that formula and then build on to how would you get each component on that with the structure." This approach is standard for demonstrating clear, top-down logic in a consulting case.

>> A simple case can be granularly dissected for more comprehensive approach.

Assumptions:

- Population of Delhi = 30 M; assuming only Delhiites
- It is 2 PM of a working weekday; thus, all institutions are open (e.g., schools, colleges, offices, etc)
- It is a summer season; thus, one person is wearing one t-shirt in a day

Final Approach and Estimate:

People wearing WS = #People in Delhi X (% of people wearing shirts) X (% of people wearing white shirts)

Total number of people wearing **white shirts** in Delhi on any particular day = **3.12 M**

Population of Delhi (30 M)

- **0-5 (Toddlers) (10% = 3 M)**
  - Assuming very low % of toddlers wear shirts. Mostly wear diapers, t-shirts. So, 0% wear WS
    - 0 K
- **5-18 (School) (20% = 6 M)**
  - *(Assuming capital will have high school-going proportion)*
  - 90% go to school = 5.4 M
    - School uniforms are generally white, blue, beige, others. So, assuming 25% wear white
      - 1.35 M
  - 10% do not go to school = 600 K
    - Rarely wear a shirt; assume 0% wear WS
      - 0 K
- **18-21 (College) (25% = 7.5 M)**
  - Professional courses such as Law, Hospitality Management,etc. require uniform (5% = 375 K)
    - Assuming uniform to be WS
      - 375 K
  - Other courses do not require uniform (95% = 7.125 M)
    - Assuming very less % will wear shirt; assuming 10% will wear a WS
      - 712 K
- **20-59 (Working) (35% = 10.5 M)**
  - Employed (70% = 7.35 M)
    - Male (70% = 5.145 M)
      - Dressing options: Shirts and T-Shirts; 50% wearing shirts = 2.57 M
        - White, Blue, Black, Grey & Other Colors; 20% WS = 514 K
    - Female (30% = 2.205 M)
      - Dressing options: Dresses, Blouses, Formal T-Shirts, Shirts; 25% wearing shirts = 551 K
        - White, Blue, Black, Grey & Other Colours; 20% WS = 110 K
  - Unemployed (30% = 3.15 M)
    - Rarely wear a shirt; assume 0% wear WS
      - 0 K
- **60+ (Retired) (10% = 3 M)**
  - Female (50% = 1.5 M)
    - Given personal experience of noticing grand-mothers assuming very less % wear WS
      - 0 K
  - Male (50% = 1.5 M)
    - Working (20% = 300 K)
      - Assuming all of them wear shirts with White, Blue, Black, Grey & Others. So, 20% = 60 K
    - Retired (80% = 1.2 M)
      - 0 K

Problem Statement 3: **Identify the number of beers sold in Goa in one day**

Assumptions

- Goan Locals = 1.5 M
- It is a weekend during peak tourist season
- Focusing only on legal sales of the beer

Beers sold = Adult population in Goa X (% of people who drink alcohol in a day) X (% of people who drink beer in a day) X Average quantity of beer consumed per person

Total number of beers sold in Goa in one day = **530.2 K**

Adult population in Goa

Goan Locals (1.5 M)

0-18 (Kids) (30%= 0.45 M)	18-30 (Young Working Class) (20% = 0.3 M)	30-60 (Old Working Class) (40% = 0.6 M)	60+ (Retired) (10% = 0.15 M)
Below legal age	60% consume alcohol = 180 K	60% consume alcohol = 360 K	20% consume alcohol = 30 K
	Assuming 40% prefer beer (out of beer, gin, vodka, whisky, others alcohol options) and beer is pocket-friendly = **72 K**	Assuming 20% prefer beer (out of beer, gin, vodka, whisky, others alcohol options) = 72 K	Assuming 20% prefer beer (out of beer, gin, vodka, whisky, others alcohol options) = 6 K
	~4 pints consumed in a day (2 per meal excl. breakfast)	~2 pints consumed in a day	~2 pints consumed in a day
0 K	**288 K**	**144 K**	**12 K**

(Since Goa is a tourist destination, assuming only 5% business travellers)

Tourists(105 K)**

Business (5% = 5.25 K)	Leisure (95% = 99.75 K): 40% family tourists = 40K (assume average family size of 4)	Leisure (95% = 99.75 K): 60% bachelor tourists = 60K (since top bachelor destination)
Assuming 70% consume alcohol = 3.7 K	50% family Members adult = 20 K	90% adults = 54 K (other 10% - school kids/trips)
Assuming 30% prefer beer = 1.1 K	50% consume alcohol = 10 K	80% consume alcohol = 43 K
~2 pints consumed in a day	30% prefer beer = 3 K	30% prefer beer = 13 K
	~2 pints consumed in a day	~6 pints consumed in a day (B/L/D)
2.2 K	**6 K**	**78 K**

****Travel mode** by tourists: Air (50%) and Non-air such as road, rail, water (50%)

=> ½ x total tourist = tourists travelling by air
=> Total tourist = 2 x tourists travelling by air

Calculating # of tourists travelling by air:

# of flights:
Assume 1 flight arrives in Goa / 2 hours
=> 12 flights arrive at a gate in a day
Assume airport has 20 gates => 10 for arrival
=> 12 x 10 = 120 flights arrive per day

Flight capacity and tourists flying in:
30 rows & 6 seats per row = 180 seats/flight
Assume 90% occupancy = 180 x 90% = 162
Assume 90% on flight are tourists (since peak season)= 162 x 90% = ~145 tourists
tourists flying in per day x # of flights arriving per day = 145 x 120 = 17.4K tourists/day

Total # of tourists:
Total tourists = 2 x tourists flying in = 17.4K x 2 = 34.8 K

Assume average trip duration 3 days => tourists in Goa on a given day = 34.8K x 3 = **~105 K**

Problem Statement 4: How many people have you interacted with in the last year?

Assumptions

- Year under consideration: July'22 – Jun'23
- Assuming interactions to be number of unique people that you have interacted with
- Interactions are limited to verbal form (both face to face and online

Number of interactions in last year = Number of interactions pre-ISB + Number of interactions post-ISB
Sanity Check: Total interactions in last year/365 = 785/365 = ~2 interactions per day

Total number of people you have interacted with in the last year = **785**

Interactions in last year

Pre-ISB Interactions (Jul'22 – Mar'23: 9 months)

Professional

Team Members	Assuming 4-member team	4
Support functions	IT, HR, Finance, Legal, Others	5
Offsites	Smaller groups due to covid protocols	50
Cross Department Interactions	Assuming events,trainings ,etc	15
Colleagues	Random interactions, coffee, etc	3
Work friends	Confidantes	3

Personal

Family Members	Assuming 4-member household size	4
Friends	School and college close-friends' groups; Assuming 4-5 friends per group	10

Miscellaneous

Fixed Interactions	Maid/Cook, Laundry, Newspaper, Security Guard, Grocery	5
Dynamic Online Interactions	**Food** (E.g., Zomato, etc) assuming 2 deliveries/week	72
	Grocery (E.g., Big basket, etc) assuming 1 delivery/week	36
	Other orders (E.g., Amazon, etc) assuming 1 **delivery** in 2 weeks	18
	Commute*	216
Other Interactions	**ISB Mixers**	25
	Alums/Career Counsellors	3
	Leisure Trips	10
	Going out (E.g., Restaurants, Staff, Parking, etc) assuming 2 times/week	72

At-ISB Interactions (Apr'23 – Jun'23: 3 months)

Staff

Sarovar ~ 4
Juju's ~ 3
Laundry ~ 2
Housekeeping ~ 2
Guards ~ 2
SEAL/CAS/IT ~ 2

15

Alums

O-week interactions with alums across events; on avg. = 10

Interaction with alums in club/CAS sessions; on avg. = 4

14

Academic Faculty

Total subjects till term 3 (incl. LEAD) = 15
Avg. # of people interacted with (Prof. + AA) = 2
Total # of interactions = 15 x 2

30

Students

Within section ~ 70 (Interacted with almost everyone in class at least once)

With other sections:
During O-week
Quaddies
Section Wars
Club Events
Assume ~50% students interacted with = ½ x 210

175

*__Commute__ includes going to office, going out on weekends, etc.
Assuming you went out for 20 days in a month X 2 (to-and-fro commute)
⇒ Commuted 40 times in a month

Assuming cabs used (20% time)
- 8 cabs per month
- Assuming new driver per cab, so **8 new interactions**

Assuming other transport (80% time)
= 32 times per month
- Interacted with others (e.g., car pool): (50% time) = **16 new interactions per month**
- Did not interact with others (e.g., metro, busses, etc.): (50% time) ⇒ 16 times per month

Should a power generation company- with the aim of profit maximization- import coal at a much lower price from a new foreign company "Neverland" or continue with the Indian suppliers as they are lobbying the Government to ban imports.

Clarifying questions:
1. Annual coal requirements?
2.Revenue and cost structure with Indian suppliers?
3. Import price of the coal offered by Neverland?
4. If the company partners with Neverland and government bans import then what can happen?
5. What is the probability of the ban?

Final recommendation 1
Company should import coal to maximize its profits as despite the ban and the cost of contract termination, Neverland will maximize its profit by Rs 10 million.

Final recommendation 2
Company should import coal despite 30 % chances of Neverland being able to fulfill the demand as the profit would be Rs 24.5 Mn as opposed to Rs 20 Mn domestically, hence Rs 4.5 Mn surplus.

Annual coal requirement
10 million tonnes

Stay with Indian suppliers

Cost/ tonne= Rs 6 | Revenue/tonne= Rs 8

Annual profit
= 10 million tones x (8-6) = Rs **20** million

Import coal

Cost/tonne= Rs 3 | Revenue/tonne= Rs 8

Annual profit without ban
= 10 million tones x (8-3) = Rs **50** million

Probability of ban- 50% (confirmed by the interviewer) and if the contract is revoked later due to the ban, Neverland must be compensated with Rs 1/tonne agreed i.e. Rs. 10 million

Cost if import ban is executed and contract with Neverland is terminated= Rs 10 million
Net annual profit after ban = 20 million (stay with Indian supplier calculation)- 10 million (Neverland compensation)= 10 Mn profit

Net expected annual profit = 50% of 50 million + 50% of 10 million= Rs 30 million profit

Interviewer- Good recommendation, but is there any way to reduce the risk of paying the penalty if the government bans imports?

We can wait till the Government announces its decision on the ban.

Interviewer- That's reasonable, let's say there is no penalty on contract termination anymore. But there's a catch: if the government doesn't ban imports, there's only a 30% chance that Neverland will have enough supply for us. Otherwise, we'll need to source from Indian suppliers.

If Ban (50% probability): Use Indian Coal= **Rs 20 Mn** profits (No contract termination cost as told above)
If No ban (50% probability):
30 % chances of Neverland fulfilling our demand= **30% of Rs 50 Mn profits**
70% chances of falling back on Indian suppliers= **70% of Rs 20 Mn profits**

So, Net expected profit if coal is imported despite the above challenging situations= 50% of Rs 20 Mn + 50% (30% x 50 Mn + 70% x 20 Mn) = **Rs 24.5 Mn**

Could you estimate revenue a salon generates per day?

Interviewee	That's a great question. To make sure I solve the right problem, I'd like to ask a few clarifying questions first. When you say 'a salon,' are we thinking of a specific type? For instance, a high-end salon in a premium mall, a mid-range chain salon in a suburb, or a small, local neighborhood shop? The revenue would differ significantly.
Interviewer	Good point. Let's assume it's a mid-range salon in a suburban area of a major Indian city like Hyderabad.
Interviewee	Okay, a mid-range suburban salon. And should I focus only on revenue from services, or include other streams like product sales as well?
Interviewer	Please consider all potential revenue streams.
Interviewee	Perfect. Thank you. My approach will be to break down the salon's revenue into its main components. I'll structure it as: Revenue from Hair Services, which I assume is the primary driver. Revenue from Other Services, like beauty treatments (facials, waxing). Revenue from Product Sales. For the main component, Hair Services, I'll calculate it from the bottom up using the formula: Revenue = (Number of Stylist Chairs) × (Hours Open) × (Utilization Rate) × (Average Revenue per Utilized Hour) Does this approach sound logical to you?
Interviewer	Yes, that sounds like a solid framework. Please proceed.
Interviewee	Great. Let's start with Hair Services. Number of Chairs: A mid-range suburban salon would likely be moderately sized. I'll assume it has 10 stylist chairs. Operating Hours: Let's assume it's open from 10 AM to 8 PM, which is 10 hours a day. Total Capacity: This gives us a total capacity of 10 chairs × 10 hours = 100 chair-hours per day. Utilization Rate: Salons aren't full all the time. They're busier in the evenings and on weekends. On an average day, I'll estimate the chairs are occupied 60% of the time. This accounts for empty slots, cleaning time between clients, and stylist breaks. Utilized Hours: So, the total utilized time is 100 chair-hours × 60% = 60 hours of service per day. Average Revenue per Hour: This is a blended rate. A quick men's haircut (~₹400, 30 mins) generates less per hour than a complex hair coloring service (~₹4000, 3 hours). Let's assume an average service takes about 1 hour. Considering a mix of services (women's cuts, men's cuts, blow-drys, coloring), I'll estimate a blended average ticket price per hour of ₹1,000. So, the total daily revenue from Hair Services is 60 utilized hours × ₹1,000/hour = ₹60,000.
Interviewer	Okay, and what else?

Interviewee	Next, let's look at Other Services. I'll assume the salon has 2 dedicated rooms for beauty treatments like facials, waxing, etc. Let's assume these rooms have a slightly lower utilization rate, say 50%, over the same 10-hour day. The average revenue per hour for these services can be higher. Let's estimate it at ₹1,200/hour. So, the revenue is 2 rooms × 10 hours × 50% utilization × ₹1,200/hour = ₹12,000. Finally, let's estimate Product Sales. Not every customer buys a product. Let's assume 1 in 4 customers makes a purchase. From our hair services calculation, we have 60 utilized hours, and we assumed an average service time of 1 hour, which gives us roughly 60 hair clients. Number of product buyers = 60 clients / 4 = 15 customers. Let's assume the average product (shampoo, styling cream) costs ₹800. So, revenue from products is 15 customers × ₹800/product = ₹12,000.
Interviewer	Great, can you summarise and conclude?
Interviewee	Okay, let's sum it all up. Hair Services: ₹60,000 Beauty Services: ₹12,000 Product Sales: ₹12,000 The Total Estimated Daily Revenue is ₹60,000 + ₹12,000 + ₹12,000 = ₹84,000. To quickly sense-check this, a monthly revenue would be approximately ₹84,000 × 30 days ≈ ₹25 Lakhs. For a 10-chair salon with staff and rent in a suburban metro location, this figure seems plausible. It's a profitable business but not an outlier. So, my final estimate for the daily revenue of a mid-range suburban salon is approximately ₹84,000. The key drivers of this estimate are the number of chairs, the chair utilization rate, and the blended average revenue per hour. These could vary based on factors like the day of the week (weekends being higher), seasonality (wedding season vs. off-season), and the specific marketing and reputation of the salon.

Could you estimate number of EV in Hyderabad?

Interviewee	That's a very topical question. To ensure my analysis is focused, I have a couple of clarifying questions. First, when we say 'Hyderabad,' should I consider the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) area, or the larger metropolitan region?
Interviewer	Let's stick to the GHMC area.
Interviewee	Okay. And should my estimate include both privately owned vehicles as well as those used for commercial purposes, like for food delivery and logistics?
Interviewer	Yes, please estimate the total number, including both private and commercial.
Interviewee	Understood. Thank you. My approach will be a top-down, population-based funnel. It will look like this: I'll start with the population of the GHMC area. From there, I'll determine the number of households. I'll segment these households by income level, as this is a key driver for vehicle ownership. Then, I'll estimate the total number of two-wheelers (both petrol and electric) in the city. Finally, I'll apply an EV penetration rate—a crucial assumption—to this total fleet to arrive at the number of electric two-wheelers. Does this structured approach seem reasonable to you?"
Interviewer	It does. It's logical and comprehensive. Please walk me through your assumptions.
Interviewee	Households: With an average household size of 4 people in an urban area, this gives us 10 million / 4 = 2.5 million households. Now, I'll segment these households by income, as their vehicle ownership patterns will differ. Income Segmentation: Let's split them into: Low Income (50%): 1.25 million households Middle Income (40%): 1 million households High Income (10%): 250,000 households Next, let's estimate the total number of two-wheelers. Two-Wheeler Ownership: Low Income: This group might have one older vehicle or share one. I'll assume an average of 0.5 two-wheelers per household. Total: 1.25M × 0.5 = 625,000. Middle Income: This is the primary demographic for two-wheelers, often owning more than one. I'll assume 1.2 two-wheelers per household. Total: 1M × 1.2 = 1,200,000. High Income: This group likely prefers cars but may own a two-wheeler for convenience or leisure. Let's assume 1 two-wheeler per household. Total: 250,000 × 1 = 250,000. Total Two-Wheelers: Summing these up: 625,000 + 1,200,000 + 250,000 = 2,075,000. Let's round this to 2.1 million for easier calculation. Now for the most critical assumption: the EV Penetration Rate. We are estimating the total number of EVs on the road today (the 'stock'), not the rate of new EV sales.

Interviewee	*(cont.)* The total fleet includes vehicles that are many years old. New EV two-wheeler sales now constitute a significant percentage of total sales, but this is a recent trend (from roughly 2022 onwards). Hyderabad, being a major tech hub with a state EV policy, likely has a higher adoption rate than the national average. Considering these factors, I'll estimate that 4% of the total two-wheeler fleet in Hyderabad is electric. This rate is higher than it would have been two years ago but still small relative to the entire historical fleet of petrol vehicles. Final Calculation: Total Two-Wheelers × EV Penetration Rate = Number of EV Two-Wheelers 2,100,000 × 4% = 84,000
Interviewer	Great, can you summarise and conclude?
Interviewee	So, based on this top-down analysis, I estimate there are approximately 84,000 electric two-wheelers in Hyderabad. To perform a quick sanity check, let's think about recent sales. The big push for EVs started about 3 years ago. If, say, 300,000 new two-wheelers are sold in Hyderabad each year, that's 900,000 new vehicles in the last 3 years. If the average EV penetration in sales over that period was around 6-7%, that would be 900,000 * 7% = 63,000 vehicles. Adding commercial fleet sales and early adopters from before this period, a number in the range of 80,000-90,000 feels very plausible. The estimate holds up. To summarize, my estimate of 84,000 is derived from the total two-wheeler fleet of ~2.1 million, with a key assumption of a 4% EV penetration rate. This penetration rate is the most significant variable and is driven by government subsidies (like FAME-II), rising fuel costs, improving charging infrastructure, and increasing consumer awareness.

Could you estimate the number of TV screens across the country that were tuned in to watch the match?

Interviewee	That's a fantastic question. An event like that is practically a national holiday. Before I structure my approach, I'd like to clarify a few points. First, to confirm, we are estimating the number of unique TV screens, not the total number of viewers. So, a family of four watching one TV counts as one screen.
Interviewer	That's correct. Focus on the screens.
Interviewee	Second, I'll assume we're including all types of TV screens, both in private homes and in public or commercial places like restaurants and pubs.My approach will be to segment the viewership into two distinct categories: In-Home Viewership: This will be the largest component, covering all the TVs in private households. I'll use a top-down approach for this, starting from the population of India. Out-of-Home (OOH) Viewership: This will include screens in places like restaurants, bars, offices, retail stores, and community screenings. I'll estimate this using a bottom-up approach. Finally, I'll sum the two numbers to get the total. Does this sound like a reasonable plan?
Interviewer	Yes, that's a very clear and logical structure. Please proceed with your assumptions.
Interviewee	Great. Let's start with the bigger slice of the pie: In-Home Viewership. Population of India: I'll start with the total population, which is approximately 1.4 billion people. Number of Households: Assuming an average household size of 4 people, that gives us 1.4 billion / 4 = 350 million households. Urban/Rural Segmentation: TV penetration and viewing habits differ significantly between urban and rural areas. I'll use a 40% urban and 60% rural split. Urban Households: 40% of 350M = 140 million Rural Households: 60% of 350M = 210 million TV Penetration: In urban India, TV is nearly ubiquitous. I'll assume 90% of urban households have a TV. That's 140M * 90% = 126 million urban TV households. In rural India, penetration has grown massively but is still lower. I'll estimate it at 70%. That's 210M * 70% = 147 million rural TV households. Total Households with a TV: Adding these together, we get 126M + 147M = 273 million. Let's round this to 275 million for simplicity. Viewership Rate: Now for the key assumption. This is an India World Cup final. It's the biggest possible television event. However, not every single household with a TV will tune in due to various reasons (work, travel, lack of interest). I'll assume a very high viewership rate of 80% of all TV-owning households. So, the number of In-Home TV screens is 275 million households * 80% = 220 million.
Interviewer	Okay, what's next?
Interviewee	Next, let's estimate the Out-of-Home (OOH) Viewership. This is more fragmented, so I'll estimate a few key categories. Restaurants, Bars & Cafes: Many establishments across cities and towns will be showing the match to attract customers. I'll estimate there are about 300,000 such venues with TVs showing the match nationwide. Workplaces: Many companies, especially large corporate and IT offices, will arrange screenings for employees as an engagement activity. Let's estimate 100,000 offices do this. Retail & Showrooms: Major electronic stores will be playing the match on all their display TVs. Let's add another 50,000 stores. Other Public Venues: This includes college hostels, dorm common rooms, community centers, and large public screenings in squares. Let's conservatively bundle these and estimate another 150,000 screens. Total OOH screens = 300k + 100k + 50k + 150k = 600,000. Let's round this to 0.6 million screens.
Interviewer	Great, can you summarise and conclude?
Interviewee	Now, I'll combine the two estimates. In-Home Screens: 220 million Out-of-Home Screens: 0.6 million The Total Estimated TV Screens showing the match is 220 + 0.6 = 220.6 million. For a sanity check, the OOH number is a tiny fraction (less than 0.3%) of the In-Home number, which makes intuitive sense. The vast majority of viewing will happen in homes. My final number of ~220 million screens out of ~275 million TV households implies an 80% tune-in rate, which feels entirely appropriate for an event of this magnitude. It's an astronomical number, but the scale of India and its passion for cricket support it. So, to summarize my final estimate, I believe the India World Cup final was viewed on approximately 221 million TV screens across the country. This is overwhelmingly driven by in-home viewership, calculated by applying a high penetration and viewership rate to the total number of Indian households. The key assumption is the 80% viewership rate, which reflects the unparalleled unifying power of cricket in India.

Your client is the Transport Department of Maharashtra. They want to make buses free for all citizens. The government is looking for a sustainable model—ideally, they don't want to make losses. How would you estimate the revenue potential if they rely on advertisements on buses?

Interviewee	Interesting problem! I'd like to clarify a few points first: What is the scale- are we considering all buses in Maharashtra or just a particular city? Who are the beneficiaries? Is this for political reasons, or public welfare? Is the government aiming for profit or just cost recovery?
Interviewer	All buses in Maharashtra. The initiative is primarily to win public goodwill and votes, but they want to sustain it at least partially. No profit motive, just break-even or reduced losses.
Interviewee	Got it. I'll structure my approach: - Estimate the total number of buses running. - Estimate the total advertising inventory (space available per bus). - Estimate average advertising revenue per bus per month. - Scale it to an annual revenue projection. Does this work?
Interviewer	Yes, go ahead.
Interviewee	Let's start. Maharashtra's population is ~12 crore. For a state like this, assuming one bus for every 10,000 people, we'd have around 12,000 buses. Does that sound reasonable?
Interviewer	That's in the ballpark.
Interviewee	Assuming each bus has space for 4 ad panels (sides and rear), and each panel sells for ₹10,000/month (similar to metro ads in tier-1 cities), total monthly ad revenue per bus = 4 × 10,000 = ₹40,000. For 12,000 buses: ₹40,000 × 12,000 = ₹48 crore/month Annually: ₹48 × 12 = **₹576 crore per year**.
Interviewer	Good. Would that sustain free travel?
Interviewee	Let's compare: if the average fare is ₹10 and each bus carries ~1,000 passengers/day, that's ₹10,000/day revenue per bus → ₹3 lakh/month → ₹36 lakh/year per bus. For 12,000 buses: ₹36 lakh × 12,000 = ₹4,320 crore/year lost revenue. Ad revenue (~₹576 crore) covers ~13% of the cost. So, it won't fully sustain it, but it can significantly offset costs. The rest could be subsidized by government budget or public-private partnership.
Interviewer	Ok. Any other monetization ideas?
Interviewee	Wraparound branding on entire buses (premium ads) Partnerships with FMCG and telecom companies for statewide campaigns Leasing digital display panels inside buses for rotating ads

Estimate the number of caps on earth that a satellite can scan from the space.

Scoping Questions

- Bottle caps or headwear? - only disposable plastic bottles like bisleri)
- Do caps still under production count? No
- Do we need to consider caps under the water as well? - only land.
- [Interviewer] Let's restrict the scope to # of caps you'll find in Maharashtra

Approach

- My first split is urban and rural cause the usage pattern would be different.
- Next I would split it by need states of bisleri. I decided how frequently these need states occur, and then assigned what size of bottle would be used by people - for e.g., corporate events have smaller 200 ml bottles and thus used more in number compared to restaurants we find 500ml bottles. This will help calc. for one year
- Another consideration would have to be how long the caps stay on land. They don't decompose and thus we would need to account for the avg life of a cap on earth and add up caps from past years as well.
- Lastly I'll need usage trends of plastic in past years to get the final number

Reflection

This problem wasn't a standard problem that we generally practice. The interviewer also agreed that creating a tree and calculating numbers in that moment would require a lot of effort. Given the partner was from a sustainability background the guesstimate pivoted towards just the considerations that need to be made while calculating this number. For e.g., I needed to consider the time it takes a cap to decompose to account for caps that have been buried. Additionally, to any questions I asked, the partner asked me to answer my own question. Finally, he restricted the scope to calculating number of caps used by 1 person.

An example on how the primary scoping could shape as the case/ guesstimate proceeds.

Could you estimate the number of tractors sold annually in India?

Interviewee	To start with, I'm assuming that tractors are predominantly required in rural areas, given that urban regions wouldn't have much use for them. Would you agree that the demand for tractors is closely related to the size of agricultural land holdings?
Interviewer	Yes, that's a fair assumption. How do you proceed with these considerations?
Interviewee	Considering the rural population of India, which I'm assuming is around 100 crore, and an average household size of 5, we can estimate about 20 crore households in rural India. Would it be reasonable to assume that around 70% of these households are engaged in agriculture?
Interviewer	That sounds reasonable for this exercise. Please continue.
Interviewee	With 14 crore agricultural households, I further segmented them based on income. I assumed 60% fall under the poor category who might not afford a tractor, 30% are middle-income who could afford one tractor for every two families, and the remaining 10% are wealthy enough to own a tractor individually. This leads to an estimated 1.8 crore tractors in use.
Interviewer	How do you translate that into annual sales?
Interviewee	I factored in the average lifespan of a tractor, which I'm assuming is about 10 years. Does that sound like a plausible average to you?
Interviewer	Yes, let's go with that for now.
Interviewee	Based on a 10-year average lifespan, and with 1.8 crore tractors currently in use, I estimated an annual sales figure of approximately 18 lakh tractors. This accounts for the replacement market due to wear and tear over a decade.
Interviewer	Thank you for sharing.

How many people are in Indian airspace at 11 AM today?

Interviewer	Can you estimate how many people are in Indian airspace at 11 AM today?
Interviewee	By "Indian airspace," do we mean all people currently on board aircraft flying within, arriving, departing, or passing through India?
Interviewer	Yes
Interviewee	I'll exclude helicopters, private jets, and high-rise buildings, and focus only on commercial flights. I'll add military separately later.
Interviewer	Sounds good. Walk me through your approach
Interviewee	I'll break it into three buckets: Domestic flights (between Indian cities), International flights (arrivals/departures from Indian airports), Overflights (planes just passing over India)Finally, I'll consider military flights. India has ~3,500 domestic flights daily. Spread over ~16 hours gives ~220 flights/hour. Average domestic flight time is ~1.5 hrs, so at any point 220 × 1.5 ≈ 330 flights are in the air. Assuming 160 seats/flight, 85% load factor = 136 passengers. So, 330 × 136 ≈ 44,900 people on domestic flights.
Interviewer	Nice. What about international?
Interviewee	I'll split into arrivals and departures. Departures: Most long-hauls leave late at night ("red-eyes"), so by 11 AM I'll assume close to zero major departures. Arrivals: Assume ~25 flights arriving per hour into India, each in Indian airspace for ~1 hr. Average 250 seats/flight, 85% load = ~212 passengers. So, 25 × 212 = 5,300 people. Two main routes: Europe/Middle East → SE Asia/Australia: ~300/day → ~12.5/hr; 2.5 hrs in Indian FIR = ~31 planes at any point.; Each with ~230 passengers → 31 × 230 = 7,200 people. China/East Asia → Africa/Middle East: ~200/day → ~8/hr; 2 hrs in FIR = ~16 planes aloft.; Each with ~170 passengers → 16 × 170 = 2,800 people.; So, overflights total ≈ 10,000 people. Now, including military: assume ~30 sorties/hr across the country, avg 1.5 hrs duration, ~3 crew each. So 30 × 1.5 × 3 ≈ 135 people. Adding it all: Domestic = 44,900; International arrivals = 5,300; Overflights = 10,000; Military = 135 Total ≈ 60,000 people in Indian airspace at 11 AM.
Interviewer	Thank you for sharing.

Could you estimate the number of red cars sold in Delhi annually?

Interviewee	Absolutely, I'd be happy to tackle that. First, I'd like to clarify a few assumptions to set the groundwork for my calculations. I'm assuming the population of Delhi is around 30 million. For the average household size, I'm going with 4 members. Regarding the income segmentation of the population, I'm considering 30% to be poor, 40% to fall under the lower middle class, 20% under the upper middle class, and the remaining 10% to be rich.
Interviewer	That sounds like a solid starting point. How do you proceed from there?
Interviewee	Based on these assumptions, I started by dividing the total population of Delhi by the average household size to estimate the number of households. Then, I assumed car ownership rates as follows: 2 cars per household for the rich and upper middle class, 1 car per household for the lower middle class, and no car ownership for the poor segment.
Interviewer	Interesting approach. How did you factor in the frequency of car purchases across different income segments?
Interviewee	I factored in the purchase frequency by assuming that the rich segment tends to buy a new car every 3 years, the upper middle class every 5 years, and the lower middle class every 10 years. This helped me estimate the annual demand for new cars across different segments.
Interviewer	And how did you estimate the proportion of red cars among all the cars sold?
Interviewee	For the color distribution, I relied on general market observations, where white, black, and silver are the most common car colors. I assumed 40% of the cars are white, 20% black, 15% silver, and between 5-10% of the cars are red. This range for red cars is based on it being a less common but still popular choice among car buyers.
Interviewer	Thank you for walking me through your thought process and calculations.

Can you estimate the number of shoes in a Nike store in Bangalore?

Interviewee	To approach this question, I'd like to start by making a few clarifications. Firstly, I'll consider a Nike store rather than a Nike section in a mall. Secondly, I'm going to assume the store is located in a crowded area, specifically in Indiranagar, as brands like Nike often target such locations for their outlets. Lastly, I'll assume this store does not serve online customers, focusing solely on in-store inventory.
Interviewer	Sounds like a well-thought-out approach. How did you estimate the store size and the number of SKUs?
Interviewee	Considering Indiranagar is a prime location, I guesstimated there would be 1 Nike store in the area. For the store size, I estimated it based on the typical size of a brand outlet in a crowded urban area. I then estimated the number of SKUs sold for men, women, and kids, keeping in mind Nike's diverse product range.
Interviewer	And how did you account for the inventory of each SKU?
Interviewee	For the inventory, I estimated the number of items held for each SKU, taking into account the various sizes available for each model. I assumed that 25% of the inventory might be damaged or unsellable for some reason. Additionally, I considered a certain percentage of the inventory to be outdated and thus less likely to sell, and another percentage to be new arrivals not yet available for sale.
Interviewer	How did you conclude your estimation?
Interviewee	After estimating the inventory for each SKU, considering the damaged and unsellable items, and the new stock, I added up all the shoe inventories to arrive at a total guesstimate of the number of shoes in the Nike store.
Interviewer	Thank you for sharing your thought process.

Hotel Rooms

Problem Statement	Estimate stock of hotel rooms in India (provide a general approach) and explain how you'd monetize it for a startup that partners with motels/hotels and improves their operations.
Scoping Questions	Guesstimate part didn't really have much scope for preliminary questions, and for the monetization part, just asked some basic details about the business model, geography where they operated etc.
Problem Breakdown	I followed a demand-side guesstimate analysis, taking into account income levels and focusing on urban areas. For the monetization part, I looked at what type of areas the service can target, what metrics they can look at to target which type of hotel/motel to sell their services to.
Reflections	● I think the interviewer was testing me on the expansiveness of my thinking, which I did well to some extent. ● Could have been a little more structured.

Neom Project

Problem Statement	You are the tech lead for the Neom project, a city on the east coast of SA, 170 km long, 200 m wide "Line". Estimate the demand for Si chips online (based on my work-ex). Be abstract and bucket.
Scoping Questions	NA
Problem Breakdown	Broadly categorized into Public & Private. Public can then be broken down into Defense, Transit services, healthcare, Education etc. Private into homes, automotive etc. Roughly estimated chip usage for one car, this can then be scaled for other uses. Was then asked to recommend another method: i went with comparable city (i.e city with similar overall size & usage)
Reflections	● The PI portion went well, we had already spoken a few times before. it became clear to me in this round that they wanted me ● Needed a few prompts for breakdown

Qatar World Cup

Problem Statement	You are a car rental company by the name Qatar Cab Rentals. The Qatar govt has asked you to arrange the **minimum number of cars that will be required to serve the customers coming via the airport to watch the FIFA world cup happening in Qatar**
Scoping Questions	● Started with the demand side approach of the number of seats in 1 single stadium in Qatar, followed by number of daily matches. > *Was asked to take a supply side approach instead* ● Number of terminals, number of airplanes landing/ hour, operational hours, passengers/ flight.
Problem Breakdown	● While taking a supply side approach, I first calculated the number of air terminals and the number of airlines landing per hour. This would then be multiplied by the number of hours the airport was functional to calculate the number of passengers landing in Qatar in a day. ● However, an important consideration to take here would be that not all passengers landing in Qatar would be leaving the airport, some would have hopping flights and thus this number needs to be reduced from the total number of passengers. ● This number then needs to be divided by the maximum capacity per car, to get the minimum number of cars required to serve all passengers.
Recommendations	Sometimes the interviewer might want to test you on different approaches and having frameworks in mind can really help in such cases. It is also important to consider the corner cases to come to the closest possible answer. Ask crisp and relevant questions in a guesstimate. Asking too many questions can piss off the interviewee and portray you as someone who is not well prepared.
Reflections	Practice Guesstimates properly for ADL interviews and make sure your analysis is comprehensive , MECE and you don't leave out the corner cases.

Spotify Revenue

Problem Statement	Estimate the annual subscription revenue of Spotify
Scoping Questions	• Should the estimate cover global revenue or India-specific revenue? • Does revenue refer to Spotify's earnings or include artists' payouts? • Should we consider only subscription revenue or also advertising revenue?
Problem Breakdown	I estimated potential users starting from India's population, applying digital penetration rates, the proportion of people using music streaming services, and Spotify's approximate market share (assuming an even split among key players). I then divided Spotify users into free and paid (subscription) categories, assumed a 50–50 split for simplicity, and multiplied the number of paying users by the average subscription fee to estimate revenue. Finally, I adjusted for the percentage of revenue shared with artists to calculate Spotify India's retained earnings from subscriptions.
Reflections	Clarifying scope early and using logical, assumption-based estimation is key to simplifying calculations while delivering a defensible revenue estimate.

Water Consumed

Problem Statement	Estimate the quantity of water consumed in Hyderabad on a daily basis.
Scoping Questions	Avoided scoping (for guesstimate) and mentioned them as assumptions and the interviewer was ok with them.
Problem Breakdown	I started with Hyderabad's population of 1.1 crore and divided it into households and commercial usage. Household consumption was estimated per person for kitchen use and daily cleaning, then multiplied by household size. For commercial use, like offices, transport hubs and malls, I factored in operational hours, visitor numbers and average water usage (e.g., per flush in washrooms) to calculate total demand from the bottom up.
Reflections	There is no need to do all the cases in all casebooks, just practice a variety of them to get an idea on how to approach different set of cases.

Smartphones in 2025

Problem Statement	Estimate the number of smart-phones in India in 2025. Can ask only 3 scoping questions
Scoping Questions	• Current Number of Smart Phones • Growth rate in smart phone penetration • Lifetime of a smart-phone (to calculate re-purchase rate)
Problem Breakdown	Firstly, we need to see what is the current number of smart phones in India. Then we need to consider the growth rate in segment and extrapolate it till 2025. Thirdly we need to see what is the lifetime of the smart-phone, this would help to determine the repurchase rate. For e.g.: If the lifetime is 5 years, then a percentage of users who had purchased the phone from 2017 onwards will re-purchase it in 2022 and so on
Recommendations	This was a stress interview, and the Partner was looking at how much composure you can maintain. In the start of the interview, I was asked what are the 3 things you should know to answer this question. So, it is important to take your time and think of all the possible things one would require to answer such a question and only then answer the 3 most important things here.
Reflections	While I prepared a lot of cases, I didn't prepare a lot of abstract guesstimates. Such questions can become stress interviews and one must practice them thoroughly to improve their chances of acing such interviews

Food Delivery

Problem Statement	Estimate the number of Swiggy orders placed in Hyderabad. Assume you have a minute to present your solution in front of a board meeting. How would you go about it?
Scoping Questions	• Swiggy food or instamart orders? - *Just food orders* • Time period? - *1 month* • Demand side approach or supply side considering the number of delivery guys? *- Demand side approach assuming no constraints on supply*
Problem Breakdown	Population of Hyderabad > Smartphone and internet penetration > segmentation into different classes of consumers - 30% frequent (atleast one order per day), 30% semi-frequent (one order per week) and 40% others (atleast 12 orders per year) > math calculation and justifying the numbers at every step
Recommendations	Presenting the solution confidently and not messing up the math calculation went well. Smiling occasionally and making it conversational helped to ease the interview pressure.
Reflections	A structured approach to all the questions helps in communicating the thought process clearly to the interviewer. For example - I was asked which food delivery app I liked? I responded Swiggy and gave reasons for the same. Then, I was asked whether food delivery or Instamart would be a competitive edge for Swiggy? Then I mentioned parameters basis which I would compare both the services and which service seemed to win. The interviewer seemed satisfied with this approach.

Electric Chimneys

Problem Statement	Estimate the quantity of water consumed in Hyderabad on a daily basis.
Scoping Questions	Drilling down and making the initial question provided more specific--such as who will it serve, what kind of price point, what all areas will it service, if the relevant infrastructure is available etc. Further, tried to determine what the interviewer was looking for--whether it was a growth/market entry/guesstimate.
Problem Breakdown	Keeping the case conversational while asking scoping questions, constantly taking the interviewer through your thought process, and providing multiple approaches such as from a supply and a demand perspective. Additionally, telling the interviewer what your objective was and providing them a high-level thought process before diving into a line of analysis kept the interview crisp and limited any deviations.
Reflections	Being dynamic with the case, understanding the requirements, quick back of the envelope math, and continuously trying to reach a solution by trying different approaches even when the initial approach did not work.

Tyres Sold

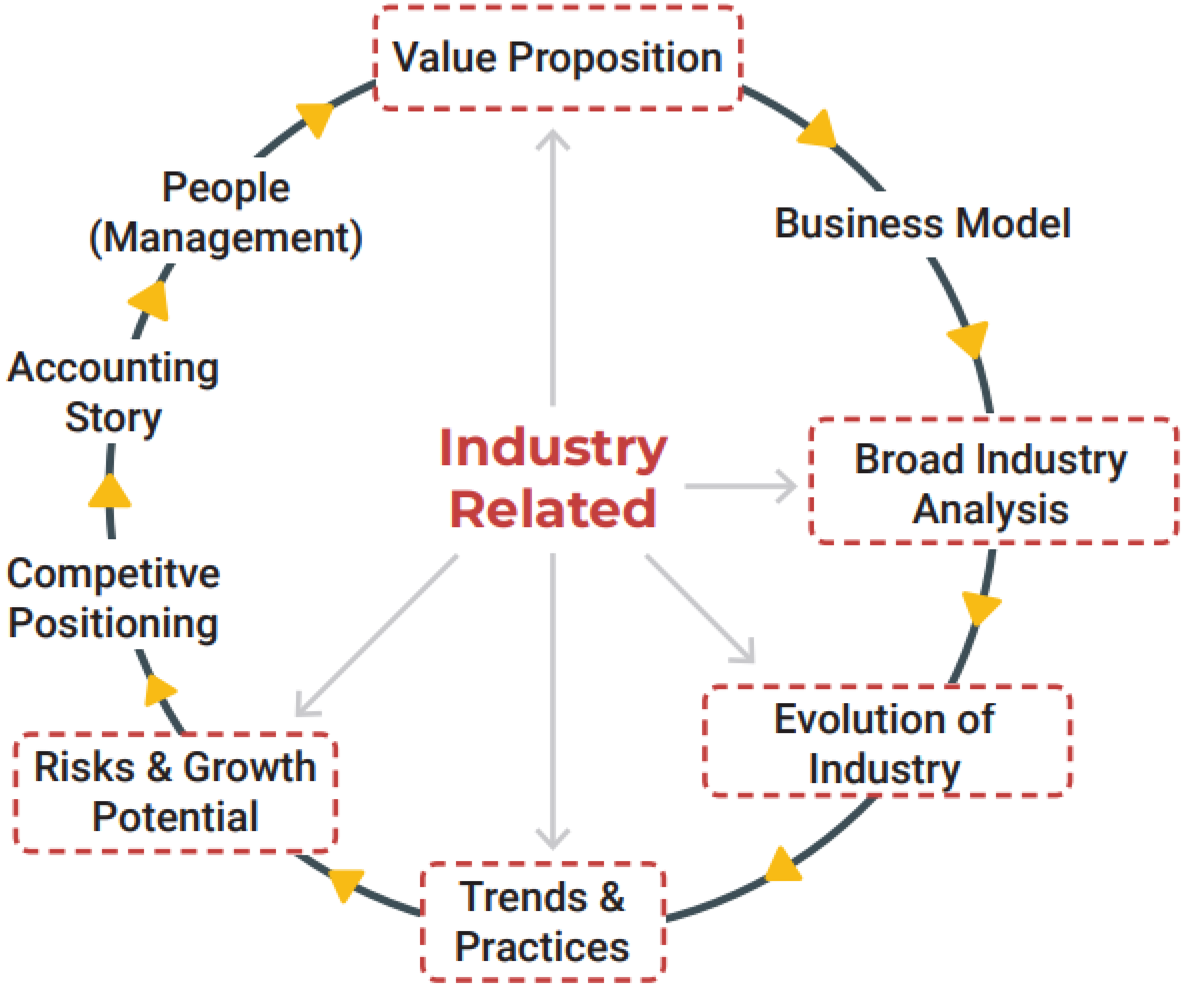
Problem Statement	Estimate the market size of tyres sold in Mumbai in 2021
Scoping Questions	Asked whether car tyres or for all vehicles, he clarified that only tyres for passenger cars
Problem Breakdown	Took the population of Mumbai as 20 million and divided it by 4 for households, as cars are bought by households. Then I segregated households by income and estimated the total number of cars based (High - 1m x 1.5 cars; Middle - 2m x 0.5 cars; Low - 2m x 0 cars). After this, I estimated new cars sold (10% growth), and multiplied by 5 to get the number tyres (4 wheels + 1 spare), and the number of burst tyre replacements (1 every year).
Recommendations	Keep calm and write down all the info you get, don't be afraid to clarify things in the scoping, and keep a dialogue going while you're solving. It should feel like a conversation.
Reflections	He like my structure and approach, and said I scoped well. I forgot at the end to convert the number of tyres sold into the market size i.e. multiply by price, but he told me not to worry.

Salon Finances

Problem Statement	1. Estimate the sales of a salon in Banjara Hills 2. Estimate the cost of the salon 3. How would you increase profitability
Scoping Questions	Avoided scoping (for guesstimate) and mentioned them as assumptions and asked if the interviewer was ok with the assumptions stated
Problem Breakdown	Did gender split and average spend per customer wrt gender (detail of how I arrived at the average-based on prices of services*avg no of services taken by each customer), average occupancy-weekday vs weekend, Working hours, Time spent per customer (detailed avg etc). Costing part was split between fixed and variable overheads-came to a reasonable profit margin of 33%, Solved growth part by evaluating topdown and bottom-up approach at which point the interviewer specified that they were looking at increasing only revenues-solved as per framework
Recommendations	Even if the problem statement looks easy and obvious break it down and structure your thoughts-they are not evaluating the solution but your thought process
Reflections	• I ensured that I was detailed in my approach and tried to add in numbers to show them I was comfortable using numbers-eg profit margins, rent per squarefoot and to ensure that I was not coming up with random numbers. Tried to benchmark numbers as well • Could have been more interactive with the interviewer on zoom and juggle between solving and talking

Industry Primers

About the Primer



The 9-Point Business Circuit

The core framework, the "9-Point Business Circuit," provides a model-based approach to analyze any business within any industry. It helps identify industries with above-average profitability and the reasons behind outperformance. This framework is designed for Consultants, managers, and investors to objectively evaluate ideas and existing businesses.

Source: Zebra Learn Industry Handbook

Key Elements of the Industry Primer

1

Value Chain Analysis

The value chain framework, introduced by Michael Porter, helps understand how value is created and delivered within an industry. It maps the major activities from raw material procurement to after-sales service, identifying critical success factors. Consultants and investors must identify the most critical activities for industry success to evaluate company strengths.

2

Business Model

Business model refers to the way money is earned and spent and the manner in which activities are carried out to create value. Business models evolve over time; they are generally a result of a series of small decisions over time, rather than one conscious decision. Some firms can deviate from the basic model and do things differently.

3

Broad Industry Analysis - Porter's forces

This stage relates to the industry level only and it helps understand the attractiveness of the industry. This elaborates aspects such as value chain, risks, demand supply scenario, pricing power, competition within the industry and so on.

4

Evolution of Industry - Key Market Trends

The general trends witnessed in the industry help understand the possible changes and shifts the industry is going through. It also helps understand the common practices in the industry. This gives us opportunities to catch up the new trends and enter the industry doing so.

Source: Zebra Learn Industry Handbook

Industry Overview

E-Commerce is the online buying/selling of goods & services via websites/apps; includes **B2C retail, B2B, D2C** (direct brands), **C2C marketplaces, social commerce, cross-border**, and **q-commerce** (ultra-fast urban delivery)

Worldwide retail e-commerce sales were about **$6.3T in 2024**, tracking toward **~$8.1T by 2026,** with its share as a proportion of total retail rising into the mid 20% range by 2026

Value Chain

Demand Generation
- Performance Ads (search/social)
- Creator/Affiliate programs
- Retail-media on marketplaces
- CRM/Loyalty Programs

Transaction Layer
- Catalog/Product & Service Categories
- Prices, Reviews & Ratings
- Search Recommendations
- Payment Layer

Fulfilment
- Inbound – Fulfilment centres
- Storage & Sorting
- Pick and Pack
- Last mile logistics
- Return/reverse logistics

Post-Purchase
- Service
- Warranties
- Refunds and Replacements
- Subscription/Loyalty Programs
- Personalization

E-commerce Types
- **Marketplace** (Amazon, eBay, etc.)
- **First-party retail** (Walmart)
- **Omnichannel** (Tesco, Target)
- **D2C Brand Storefront** (Shopify)
- **Social Commerce** (Tiktok Shop)
- **Cross Border** (Temu, Shein)
- **Quick Commerce** (Blinkit, Zepto)

Business Model

Cost Drivers
- Customer Acquisition
- Fulfilment & Logistics
- Payments & Fraud
- Customer Service
- Return & Reverse Logistics

Revenue Drivers
- Take rates/commissions
- Advertising
- First-party retail gross margin
- Subscription & Loyalty
- Seller services & logistics fees, payments, BNPL fee

Growth Drivers
- Retail-media expansion
- Tier 2&3 city expansion
- Cross border e-commerce
- Omnichannel integration

Key Players – Global and Indian

amazon | Alibaba.com | ebay | 京东 JD.COM | shopify | Rakuten | Shopee | Lazada | coupang

Flipkart | NYKAA | meesho | JioMart | TATA NEU | pepperfry

Quick Commerce

blinkit | zepto | Swiggy instamart | bb now

Key Market Trends

Challenges (Include policy here only)
- **Thin Margins:** Heavy spend on customer acquisition, last-mile logistics, and high return rates erode profitability despite scale
- **Intense Competition:** Price wars, discounting, & fast-following rivals **(esp. in quick commerce)** make sustaining differentiation difficult
- **Regulatory Burden:** FDI limits (marketplace only), DPDP Act 2023 add compliance cost and constrain operating models.

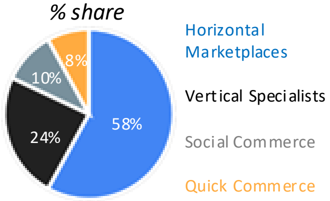
Updates/ Emerging Trends
- **Retail media** is emerging as a **profit machine** (on-site/off-site, clean rooms, CTV tie-ins)
- **Adoption of AI** as a part of **search and recommendations, content automation, dynamic pricing and agentic shopping**
- **Sustainable packaging** is being encouraged and enforced in certain geographies through regulations (EU green claims)
- Normalization of returns with **fees & shorter windows -** avoid fraud

Key Performance Indicators
- **Top-Line**: GMV, Net Review, Active Users, Average Order Value (AOV)
- **Unit Economics/order**: Contribution margin
- **Service & Quality:** Fulfilment rate, Cancellation/Return rate, Net promoter score, App ratings
- **Operations:** Inventory days, Last mile costing/order

Porter's 5 forces
- **Bargaining power of suppliers (•) – Mixed:** Big brands have negotiating power but most long-tail sellers are price-takers. Retail-media makes brands dependent on them for visibility & discovery
- **Bargaining power of buyers (•) – High:** There is price transparency across the market and low switching returns among different players as well as buyers' expectations (free shipping)
- **Threat of new entrants (+) – Moderate:** SaaS has lowered tech barriers, but new entrants cannot achieve the logistics scale of older players
- **Threat of substitutes (+) – Low:** Offline stores (omni, click and collect) and brand-owned D2C stores
- **Competitive rivalry (-) – Intense:** Characterised by price wars and ad auctions and race for faster delivery **(seen in quick-commerce apps)** among competitors

Market Structure

India's e-commerce market is dominated by horizontal marketplaces (Amazon), with vertical specialists (Nykaa), social commerce (Meesho), and fast-growing quick commerce (Blinkit) making up the rest.



Key Terms

Marketplace Model (3P) | Quick Commerce | Fulfilment & Last Mile
Omnichannel | Direct to Customer | First Party Retail (1P)
Customer Acquisition Cost (CAC) | Gross Merchandise Value (GMV)

Retail

Overview

Organized
- Modern Trade
- E-commerce
- Supermarkets

Unorganized
- Mom & Pop stores (Kirana shops)
- Local shops

Consumer preferences: digital-first shopping, convenience, personalization, and sustainability.

Value Chain

Procurement & Sourcing
- Demand forecasting
- Supplier management
- Global Sourcing
- Private Labels
- Wholesale purchases

Logistics & Warehouse
- Inventory mgmt
- Cold chains
- Fulfilment centres
- Outbound logistics
- Distribution centres

Store Ops & Frontend
- Physical stores
- Digital storefront
- Merchandising
- Customer service

Marketing & Customer Engagement
- Loyalty programs
- Targeted promotions
- Personalization
- Omnichannel campaigns

Business Model

Cost Drivers
Fixed Cost:
- Rent :Contracts, , Utilities, Agreements
- Advertising
- Tech Investments

Variable Cost:
- Direct Material
- Direct Labor
- Logistics
- Warehousing

Revenue Drivers
- Sales Margin
- Subscriptions/ Loyalty programs
- Omnichannel premium
- Data Monetization

Key Performance Indicators
- Same store sales growth
- Basket Size
- Average order value
- Footfall/MAU
- Inventory turnover ratio
- Customer Acquisition Cost & LTV
- GM , EBITDA

Market Structure
Based on FY 2024:, retail market structure is as follows:
- Apparel & Accessories - 29.9%
- Groceries - 25.1%
- Footwear - 18.8%
- Personal & Beauty Care - 15.8%
- Others - 10.5%

Key Players

Global
Walmart Save money. Live better.

Carrefour

7-ELEVEn

Domestic
Reliance Retail

NYKAA

lifestyle YOUR STYLE. YOUR STORE.

Porter's 5 forces
- **Bargaining power of suppliers (-):** Large retailers dictate terms, but luxury/local suppliers retain leverage
- **Bargaining power of buyers (+):** Price-sensitive, low switching cost, choice abundance
- **Threat of new entrants (+):** Quick-commerce & D2C easier but scale demands high capital
- **Threat of substitutes (+):** Kirana stores, direct farmer markets, resale & thrift platforms, informal retail
- **Competitive rivalry (+)** : Aggressive price wars, delivery speed, and assortment competition

Key Market Trends

Challenges
- Thin margins & high price competitions
- Supply chain inefficiencies (especially perishables).
- Increasing customer expectations for personalization & instant delivery.
- Regulatory constraints (FDI rules, labor laws, data privacy).
- **Kearney** projects a **~9% CAGR** for India's retail industry over the period 2019 to 2030, growing from US $779 billion in 2019 to around US $1.8 trillion by 2030
- (Trend) Severe disruption; sector lost **USD 1B+ sales in 2020** due to lockdowns.Accelerated shift to online, digital payments, home delivery

Updates/ Emerging Trends
- Omnichannel retail (integration of offline + online).
- Quick commerce (10-30 min deliveries).
- AI/ML Drivers : Hyperpersonalization, dynamic pricing models
- Sustainability push: green packaging, ethical sourcing, resale & circular economy.
- BNPL (Buy Now Pay Later) & embedded fintech offerings.
- Rise of D2C brands and social commerce.

FMCG

Industry Overview

The **FMCG sector in india** is estimated to be around **$236B in 2024** and is expected triple; reaching size of **$780B by 2030**; FMCG is the 4th largest sector in India;

FMCG spans Food & Beverages, Household & Personal Care, and Healthcare products. Products are **low-cost, high volume goods with frequent repurchase cycles**

Rural consumption is growing faster recently and contributes **1/3rd + of FMCG demand** and **50%+ of total rural consumer spending**

Value Chain

R&D
- New Products
- Improvements in existing products

Procurement
- Sourcing raw materials
- Quality test and release
- Storage

Manufacturing
- Production
- Packaging
- Quality/grammage testing
- Storage

Distribution
- Distribution centres and warehouses
- Distributor channel - wholesales, distributors, retailers
- E-comm and Q-comm

Sales &Marketing
- Branding
- Advertising
- Promotion
- Complaints & Feedback

Business Model

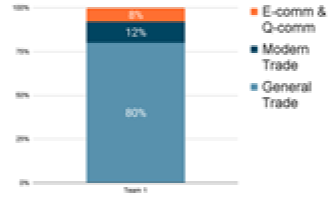
Cost Drivers
- Raw materials (agri, chemicals, edible oils)
- Packaging & mfg
- Marketing
- Distribution Logistics
- Trade margins to channel partners

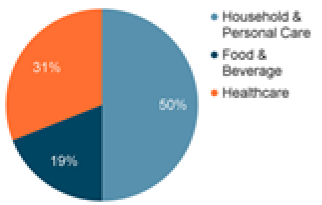
Revenue Drivers
- High Sales Volumes
- Strong Brand Equity
- Product portfolio across price points
- Distribution Reach
- Product Innovation
- Market Penetration

Growth Drivers
- Rising Disposable Income
- Urbanization
- Lifestyle & aspirations changes - premiumization
- Government Support - FDI in single-brand retail
- Quick comm & D2C brands

Key Performance Indicators
- **Sales Vol. & Revenue growth:** Important to distinguish price led growth from actual consumption increase; same-store sales and category-wise growth rates
- **Market Share**: Brand's % share of total sales in a category
- **Brand Recall:** % of consumers who recall the brand unprompted
- **Others:** OpEx ratios; inventory turnover; working capital days

Market Structure





Key Players

Unilever | Nestlé | ITC Limited | PEPSICO | Coca-Cola | Dabur | Colgate-Palmolive | marico | PARLE | Amul The Taste of India | BRITANNIA | reckitt | Johnson&Johnson

Porter's 5 forces

- **Bargaining power of suppliers (+) – Low:** Farmers are primary suppliers and 86% of farmers are small or marginal; individual farmers have low bargaining power. Large companies face very low switching costs in case of price increases from suppliers
- **Bargaining power of buyers (-) – High:** Consumers, retail outlets and distributor intermediaries have leverage through choice of brands and substitutes; face low switching costs
- **Threat of new entrants (•) – Mixed:** New players emerge often; supported supported by rise of quick commerce and D2C channel. Scaling requires CapEx, Dist networks, and marketing spend. Incumbents enjoy economies of scale and brand loyalty
- **Threat of substitutes (-) – High:** Low product differentiation leads to high substitutability
- **Competitive rivalry (-) – Intense:** Multiple large firms and local brands fight for market share; high spends on promotions

Key Market Trends

Challenges (Include policy here only)
- **Inflation & Margin pressures:** Rising input costs have squeezed margins; Companies are resorting to **shrinkflation**
- **Distribution & Channel conflict:** Traditional distribution channels are facing pressure from quick commerce and D2C brands
- **Regulatory & Policy:** Changing GST tax regime; regulations on packaging waste; strict labelling and consumer protection norms

Updates/ Emerging Trends
- **Premiumization:** Indian customers are trading up to premium brands and value added products with rising income levels
- **Rural market resurgence:** Rural government spending and increased distribution reach have stimulated demand in the rural markets
- **Health & Wellness focus:** Customers are prioritizing health, hygiene and wellness; health snacks, nutraceuticals, & home hygiene cleaners have grown faster than the overall market

Key Terms

Shrinkflation | General Trade | Modern Trade
SKU Rationalization| On Shelf Availability (OSA) | Trade Margin
Premiumization| FEFO/FIFO | Share of Shelf (SOS)/Planogram

Real Estate

Overview

- **Segments: Residential, Logistics, Commercial, Retail, REITs**
- **Outlook: 20-year growth, rising GDP share with formalization, capital inflows**
- **Policy: RERA (2016), REIT framework for transparency**

Key terminologies

RERA, REITs, FSI/FAR, Carpet vs Built-up area, Escrow accounts, Title clearance, Affordable housing, Green buildings, Digital land records.

Value Chain

Land Acquisition & Approvals → **Design & Development** → **Construction & Procurement:** → **Marketing & Sales** → **Transaction & Financing** → **Operations & Assets**

- **Land Acquisition & Approvals:** Identification of land, due diligence, title verification, zoning, and clearances.
- **Design & Development:** Architecture & design (including BIM), master planning, construction approvals
- **Construction & Procurement:** Materials procurement (steel, cement, etc.), site execution, project management.
- **Marketing & Sales:** Project branding, marketing (offline/online), channel partners, broker tie-ups.
- **Transaction & Financing:** Buyer financing (loans), escrow arrangements under RERA, legal sale agreements.
- **Operations & Assets:** Facilities/lease management, REIT listings and distribution.

Business Model

Cost Drivers

Land, approvals, materials, labor, finance, marketing commissions: standard developer P&L cost drivers.

Revenue Drivers

Unit sales, lease rentals, amenities, REIT monetization, property management fees.

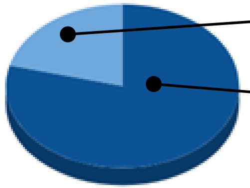
Key Performance Indicators

Residential: launches, sales, price growth, unsold inventory months

Office: gross absorption, vacancy, rentals

REITs: occupancy, NOI, distribution yield

Market Structure



Others (Commercial, Retail, Logistics, Data Centers, REITs): 21%

Residential Real estate: 79%

Key Players

Global players include Brookfield, Blackstone, CPPIB, GIC, and ADIA (Knight Frank, SEBI).
Key Indian players are DLF, Godrej, Lodha, Oberoi, Sobha, Prestige, Brigade, L&T Realty, and Tata Housing.

Key Market Trends

Housing: Shifting to mid-premium, affordable share declining

Office: Demand surging; India a global GCC hub

Capital: Institutional flows rising through PE and REITs

Policy: Stable support via RERA, GST, SEBI

Porter's 5 forces

Suppliers (±): high dependence on land owners, cement/steel; bargaining varies by cycle.

Buyers (+): higher transparency post-RERA; low switching in late cycle for ready units.

New Entrants (+): capital/land/approvals are barriers, but platforms/PE capital aid scale

Substitutes (±): NBFC-funded rent-to-own/co-living; WFH dampens some office demand, offset by **GCC/tech** hiring.

Rivalry (–): intense in city micro-markets; branded players gaining share.

Updates/ Emerging Trends

- **Luxury sales** ↑28% YoY in Q1 2025 (₹4cr+ homes)
- **Data center demand** +15–18 mn sq ft by 2025
- **Sector CAGR** 9.2% (2023–28)
- **H1 2025 land deals**: 2,898 acres, US$3.6 bn
- **REIT penetration** to 25–30% by 2030
- **FY26 deals** ₹60,415 cr (PE, M&A, IPOs)

Cement

Overview

India is a top cement producer with integrated & grinding units. Demand driven by housing and infrastructure

Installed capacity ~553 MTPA (Apr 2024), with major additions planned for FY25-27

Key terminologies

Raw materials (limestone, clay, gypsum), OPC, PPC, PSC, Clinker, Blended cement, Fly ash use, Capacity utilization, Emission intensity, Alternative fuels

Value Chain

Raw Material Mining,Transport → **Clinker Production** → **Grinding & Blending** → **Packaging & Logistics** → **Sales & Marketing** → **Circular & Green Initiatives**

- **Raw Material Mining,Transport:** Limestone mining (often captive), gypsum, fly ash collection and transport
- **Clinker Production:** Kiln-based processing to produce clinker from limestone
- **Grinding & Blending:** Clinker ground with gypsum and additives to produce cement variants
- **Packaging & Logistics:** Packing in bags or bulk, dispatch via road/rail, distribution to dealers
- **Sales & Marketing:** Supply to construction, retail dealers, ready-mix concrete companies
- **Circular & Green Initiatives:** Integration of waste heat recovery, use of alternative fuels, recycled materials

Business Model

Cost Drivers

Fuel & power (coal/petcoke), freight/rail, raw materials (limestone/gypsum), maintenance capex, emission compliance

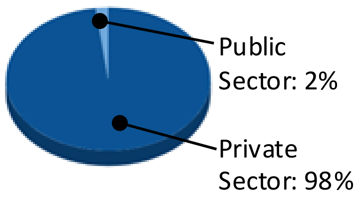
Revenue Drivers

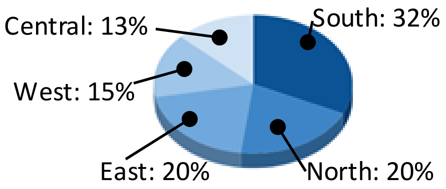
Volumes (bagged & bulk), price realization by region, premium products (blended cements), **RMC** and value-added solutions

Key Performance Indicators

Capacity utilization, **EBITDA/tonne**, clinker factor, **fuel mix & specific power/heat consumption**, **lead distance/freight share**, CO_2 intensity and WHRS share. (Metric set used widely across top producer disclosures.)

Market Structure





Key Players

Global players: Holcim Group (ACC & Ambuja) and HeidelbergCement India

Domestic players: UltraTech, ACC, Shree, Dalmia, India Cements, Ramco, Birla Corp, Orient Cement, HeidelbergCement India

Porter's 5 forces

Suppliers (+): exposure to **fuel/energy volatility**; limestone mining rights are critical.

Buyers (±): fragmented retail/institutional buyers; price sensitive but switching limited by logistics.

New Entrants (–): high capex, permits, and raw material linkage barriers.

Substitutes (±): alternative binders/green cement gaining traction but early-stage.

Rivalry (–): regional competition; freight economics drive pricing.

Key Market Trends

Capacity expansion: ~130 MTPA new grinding planned FY25–27

Green shift: WHRS, alternative fuels, blended cement driving CO_2 reduction, guided by industry initiatives

Infra push: Roads and urban housing fueling long-term demand

Updates/ Emerging Trends

- **Demand growth** 7–8% CAGR FY25–27
- **UltraTech** adding 35–40 MTPA; utilization ~72%
- **National demand** +6–7% FY25
- May 2025 avg price **₹367/bag** (+1.6% MoM)

Oil & Gas

Overview

#3	15%	4.6%	12.2%
India's ranking in global oil & gas consumption	Contribution of O&G industry to India's GDP.	Proj. 10 yr CAGR of India's **oil demand**	Proj. 10 yr CAGR of India's **gas demand**

- ✓ India accounts for over **25%** of global oil consumption
- ✓ **239.2 MMT:** India's total consumption of crude/petroleum (FY25)
- ✓ Oil constitutes **25%** of **total energy supply**, natural gas at **5%**

Value Chain

Upstream: E&P

- Geological surveys, seismic imaging to **locate** O&G reserves
- **Drilling** Exploratory wells, to gauge commercial viability
- **Extraction** of oil & gas to surface, commercial scale production

Midstream: Production & Storage

- **Transportation:** Crude is moved through marine tankers & cross country pipelines. NG is transported in cryogenic carriers (as LNG).
- **Storage:** Large tank farms & terminals, usually near refineries or coastal terminals
- **Initial Processing:** Removing impurities from NG, like propane & butane

Downstream: Refining & Marketing

- **Refining** crude by distillation to convert into products like gasoline, diesel, jet fuel, lubes, asphalt, etc.
- **Petrochemicals:** Cracking of products like Naphtha to produce plastics, fertilizers and other chemicals
- **Marketing & Distribution:** Fuels & chemicals

Business Model

Cost Drivers

- ✓ **Crude oil**: 85-88% import dependency
- ✓ **CAPEX**: Highly capital intensive across stages
- ✓ **Government Levies**: Excise duties, state VAT

Revenue Drivers

- ✓ **Refined products**: Fuel prices largely govt controlled
- ✓ **Refining margins** or crack spreads (diff. between crude & refined products price)
- ✓ **Upstream**: Crude sales in international markets

Key Performance Indicators

- ✓ **Upstream**: Reserve Replacement Ratio (RRR), Production Growth Rate, Lifting Cost (cost per barrel of production)
- ✓ **Downstream**: Gross Refining Margin (GRM), Refinery Throughput and Utilization Rate, Marketing Margin per liter, Inventory Turnover

Market Structure

- India's O&G sector is an oligopoly dominated by PSUs: ONGC/OIL in upstream, IOCL-BPCL-HPCL in refining & marketing, and GAIL in gas. RIL & Nayara are only comparable pvt players, particularly in refining & petrochemicals.
- Government of India exerts significant influence over the sector through ownership, regulation, and pricing interventions.

Key Players

ONGC, Bharat Petroleum, Reliance Industries Limited, ऑयल इंडिया लिमिटेड Oil India Limited, Petronet LNG Limited, adani Gas, IndianOil, HP, NAYARA ENERGY, GAIL (India) Limited, vedanta transforming for good

Porter's 5 forces

- **Bargaining power of suppliers (HIGH):** India imports ~85% crude requirements; OPEC+ controls global supply and pricing.
- **Bargaining power of buyers (LOW):** Retail fuel prices are regulated and tax-driven; limited options even for bulk industrial buyers
- **Threat of new entrants (LOW):** High capital requirements, strict regulation, PSU dominance deter new players.
- **Threat of substitutes (MODERATE & rising):** EVs, biofuels, renewables gradually displacing oil.
- **Competitive rivalry (LOW but rising):** Few dominant PSUs, RIL & Nayara; limited retail price competition. However, shift towards petrochemicals and nonfuel business is opening competition.

Key Market Trends

Challenges

- **High Import Dependence:** India imports ~85–88% crude, exposing it to OPEC+ decisions, global price volatility, and diplomatic risks.
- **Flat Domestic Output:** Despite policy reforms, crude and gas production remains stagnant, worsening the import burden.
- **Infrastructure Gaps:** Gas grid, LNG terminals, and city distribution need major investment to enable a gas-based economy.

Updates/ Emerging Trends

- **Digitalization:** AI, IoT, and digital twins are enhancing refinery uptime, pipeline safety, and project efficiency
- **Energy Transition:** Most players pivoting into renewables, biofuels, and hydrogen to build integrated energy portfolios.
- **Hedge against EVs**: Increasing manufacturing of (non-fuel) industrial chemicals through integrated petrochemicals complexes.
- **Biofuel Push:** Ethanol blending (20% by 2025-26) and SATAT biogas program are driving rural-linked, circular biofuel ecosystems.
- **Green Hydrogen:** India's National Mission aims to lead in green hydrogen and ammonia, decarbonizing heavy industries and creating exports.

Hospitality

Overview

India's hospitality industry is a key pillar of services, encompassing hotels, resorts, restaurants, and allied services

Demand is anchored by domestic tourism, business travel, and international arrivals.

Key terminologies

ARR/ADR, RevPAR, GOPPAR, Occupancy rate, MICE, Asset-light model, OTAs, Loyalty programs, F&B revenue, Digital booking, Franchise vs Management contracts

Value Chain

Site Selection & Development → **Design & Construction / Conversion** → **Pre-Opening Setup** → **Operations** → **Distribution & Sales** → **Asset Management**

- **Site Selection & Development:** Location analysis, land acquisition, approvals, brand positioning
- **Design & Construction / Conversion:** New builds or renovation (refurbishing old properties)
- **Pre-Opening Setup:** Hiring, systems setup (PMS, reservation systems), branding and staffing
- **Operations:** Core operations: Rooms, Food & Beverage (F&B), events/MICE, add-ons (spa, ancillary)
- **Distribution & Sales:** Direct channels, OTAs, GDS, corporate contracts, loyalty programs
- **Asset Management:** Running properties under management contracts, franchising models, asset-light structures

Business Model

Cost Drivers

Payroll, F&B cost of sales, utilities, brand/management fees, maintenance/capex, distribution/OTA commissions.

Revenue Drivers

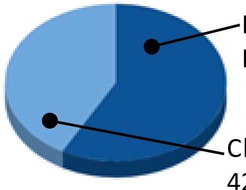
Rooms (ADR × Occupancy), F&B & Banqueting, MICE, Ancillary (spa, rentals), loyalty partnerships.

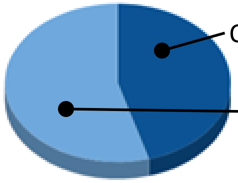
Key Performance Indicators

Occupancy (%), ADR/ARR (₹), RevPAR (₹); also **GOPPAR** and channel mix (direct vs OTA).

India FY24/24-Q4 ranges cited by HVS-ANAROCK: **Occ ~63–67%, ARR ~₹7.1k–9.1k, RevPAR ~₹4.4k–5.9k** depending on period/market.

Market Structure





Key Players

For Hospitality, the prominent **global players in India** are Marriott International and IHG Hotels & Resorts

The **major domestic players** are Taj Hotels (Indian Hotels Company Ltd), Oberoi Hotels & Resorts (EIH Ltd), ITC Hotels, Lemon Tree Hotels, and The Park Hotels

Porter's 5 forces

Suppliers (±): brand/management contracts and skilled labor drive cost; bargaining varies by city.

Buyers (+): corporate accounts, OTAs increase price transparency & switching.

New Entrants (+): asset-light franchise/management contracts lower barriers in mid-scale.

Substitutes (±): homestays/short-lets rise, but corporate/MICE stick to branded hotels.

Rivalry (–): strong in metros/tourist hubs; pipeline disciplined post-COVID.

Key Market Trends

Sustained upcycle: FY24/25 performance above pre-COVID; pricing power intact

Domestic tourism & events lifting occupancies; FTAs recovering

Asset-light growth (management/franchise) and **brand conversions** accelerating

Digital distribution (OTAs & direct), revenue management & loyalty ecosystems deepening

Updates/ Emerging Trends

- **Revenue growth** +7-9% FY25, +6-8% FY26
- **Industry revenue** US$59 bn by 2028; FTAs 30.5 mn
- **Luxury travel** CAGR 9.8% (2024-30) → US$124 bn
- Apr 2025: **Occ 66-68%, ARR ₹8.2k–8.4k, RevPAR ₹5.4k-5.7k**
- **100k** new hotel keys in 5 yrs; **5 cr jobs** expected in 5-7 yrs

Telecom

Overview

The Telecom Industry facilitates communication by providing a broad range of services such as - Voice Services (including mobile and fixed line telephone for person-to-person and business communication); Data Services (offering high speed internet access via 4G/5G mobile networks, broadband and wireless communication); Messaging Services (supporting SMS, OTT messaging and enterprise communication platforms); and other Value Added Services (like content delivery, enterprise solutions etc.)

Value Chain

Infrastructure and Equipment Manufacturing

Companies building telecom towers, laying fiber optic cables, and producing network equipment like 5G base stations and routers. The government supports domestic manufacturing under policies like the National Telecom Policy 2025 and Production Linked Incentives, aiming to reduce import dependency and create a self-reliant ecosystem.

Network Operators and Service Providers

Telecom companies such as Reliance Jio, Airtel, and Vodafone Idea operate and manage networks, delivering voice, data, and digital services. They invest heavily in network modernization including rapid 5G rollout, deployment of technology, and cloud-native infrastructure to enhance coverage, capacity, and service quality.

Content, Cloud and Application Ecosystem

This layer involves OTT platforms, digital content providers, and cloud service companies that leverage telecom networks to deliver streaming, gaming, enterprise software, and IoT applications. These services drive data consumption and boost operator revenues through partnerships and bundled offerings.

Regulatory and Government Support

Regulators like TRAI and government bodies enact policies for spectrum management, cybersecurity, simplifying compliance, and promoting digital inclusion. Initiatives to foster innovation, upskill workforce, and encourage exports create an enabling environment, reinforcing India's position as a global telecom hub.

Business Model

Cost Drivers

- Spectrum Acquisition and Licensing Fees
- Customer Acquisition and Retention
- Regulatory and Government Levies
- Technology and Innovation Investments
- Network Maintenance

Revenue Drivers

- Wireless Data Usage
- Rising Data Consumption
- Tariff Hikes
- Government Digital Initiatives
- 5G Adoption & Enterprise Services
- Value Added Services (OTT Content Bundles, Cloud Messaging etc.)

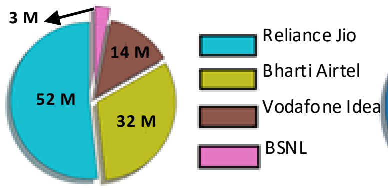
Key Performance Indicators

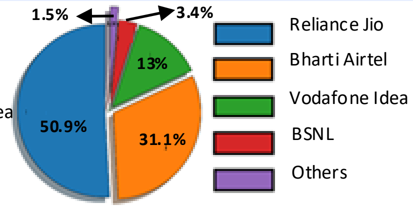
Financial KPIs - Revenue Growth Rate, Avg. Revenue per User, Operating Profit Margins, Debt Levels

Audience and Consumption KPIs - Broadband Subscribers, Internet Penetration, Wireless Data Usage, Avg. Minutes of Usage, Subscriber Acquisition Cost,

Operational and Market KPIs - Market Share, Capex Intensity, Spectrum Utilization, Subscriber Base, Network Availability, Customer Churn Rate

Market Structure





Key Players

Reliance Jio, BSNL (Connecting India Faster), Vi, airtel, TATA COMMUNICATIONS

Porter's 5 forces

- **Bargaining power of suppliers (Moderate):** Suppliers of network equipment, spectrum, and specialized technology hold moderate power; however, telecom companies often engage multiple vendors to reduce dependency.
- **Bargaining power of buyers (High):** Customers have many alternatives—multiple telecom operators, OTT platforms, and internet providers—leading to high price sensitivity and demand for quality and bundled services.
- **Threat of new entrants (Low):** High entry barriers due to massive capital investments for spectrum, network infrastructure, regulatory compliances, and strong brand loyalty among existing players.
- **Threat of substitutes (High):** OTT communication apps (WhatsApp, Zoom), fixed broadband, and emerging internet-based technologies offer alternatives to traditional voice and messaging services.
- **Competitive rivalry (High):** The industry is marked by fierce competition among major players like Reliance Jio, Airtel, Vodafone Idea, with aggressive pricing, service innovation, and expansion into enterprise and digital services.

Key Market Trends

Challenges

- Telecom operators face heavy spectrum auction costs and huge debt burdens, straining finances.
- Complex policies, unresolved OTT regulation, and revenue-sharing issues create market unpredictability.
- Rising cyber threats and data privacy concerns escalate with digital penetration.
- Foreign investment and supply chains affected by geopolitical tensions and policy unpredictability.
- Rural teledensity lags urban due to poor infrastructure, low digital literacy, and affordability gaps.

Updates/ Emerging Trends

- Rapid 5G expansion and early 6G research enable smart cities, IoT, and advanced connectivity.
- Increased adoption of AI and automation enhances network management and customer experience.
- Government programs and affordable devices drive digital inclusion in rural areas.
- Major operators compete with attractive pricing and investments in network expansion, ensuring broad 5G accessibility soon.
- Telecom operators bundle OTT content and digital services to boost revenue.
- Operators are investing in energy-efficient infrastructure and renewable energy to reduce carbon footprint and improve environmental impact.
- Growth in IoT and edge computing powers real-time industrial applications.

Automobile Industry

Industry Overview

Automobile by definition is a self-propelled **road vehicle** designed primarily for passenger or goods transport. Industry/sector comprises of vehicle categories X propulsion type X value chUnits ain segments

Global Market Size: Significant variation depending on definition & scope of inclusion / exclusion of value chains in the reports

Future Market Insights: $4.5T @ 5.6% CAGR (10Yr) to $7.8T by 2035

Spherical Insights: $3.56T @ 6.8% CAGR (10Y) to $6.9T by 2033

Indian Market Size: 3rd Largest (Units - 4.3M 2024), 5th Largest (Revenue - ~$120B 2024); 7-8% CAGR (Units) - Overall Automobile

Value Chain

R&D, Product Design	Concept, Design, Engineering New models / platforms and components, growing focus on EVs, connected car tech, light-weighting, battery tech, Hybrid powertrains, etc, brakes, suspensions.
Raw Material, Component Manufacturing	Vast Network of Domestic and International Suppliers for raw material - steel, aluminium, rubber, plastics, as well as a wide array of automotive components - engine (self or sourced)
Vehicle Manufacturing, Assembly, QC	Production of engines, chassis, and other parts, followed by the final assembly of the vehicle. Major manufacturing clusters are located around Chennai, Pune, NCR. QC & Inventory Mgmt are next steps
Logistics, Distribution	Warehousing, Efficient transport (road, rail) from manufacturing plants to dealers, sea ports
Dealers, Sales Network, Marketing & After Sales	Dealers serve as primary point of sale (new+pre-owned), responsibility for after sales - parts, service, maintenance, repairs, supply of spares etc. Generally, dealers double down as after sales partners

Automobile Segmentation

Two Wheelers: Largest Segment by Volume, 6-8% CAGR by 2030, Electric 2-wheelers leading growth (Proj. 30% of sales by 2030)

Passenger Vehicles (PV): Cars, UVs, Vans

Commercial Vehicles (CV): Industrial, Agricultural (Trucks, Buses, Tractors, LCVs, MHCVs)

Three Wheelers: Auto Rickshaws, seeing growth driven by EVs

EVs: Spanning across segments, ~30% CAGR

Business Model

Cost Drivers

- Raw Material(60-70% Opex) Steel, Aluminium, Plastics, Rubber, other parts
- Employee & Labour 5-10%
- Marketing, Dealer Margin 5-10%
- Depreciation, R&D 5-10%

Revenue Drivers

- Automobile Sales (incl. exports): 85-90%
- After Sales & Service: 8-12%
- Financing & Other Services - 2-5% (interest on vehicle loans, insurance, extended warranties etc.)

Growth Drivers

- Rising Incomes, Expanding Middle Class
- Policy Support (FAME-II, Scrappage, Export incentives)
- Organized Pre-owned market + rise in demand for shared mobility ecosystem

Key Performance Indicators

- **Domestic Unit Sales:** PVs+CVs+2-Wheelers
- **Market Share %, Export Volume (Units)** - Strategic Importance
- **Revenue Growth %, EBITDA / Operating Margin Growth %**
- **Capacity Utilisation %** - Efficiency in Production Facilities
- **Average Realization/Vehicle:** Revenue/unit sold (due to sales mix impact)
- **Warranty Claims Ratio:** Claims / 1000 vehicles - quality & reliability
- **Fuel Efficiency + EV/CNG Share:** Sustainability, alternate fuels sales target

Market Structure - FY25

2-Wheeler: Hero (29%), Honda (25%), TVS (18%), Bajaj (12%), Others (15%)
3-Wheeler: Bajaj (35%), Piaggio (14%), Mahindra LMM (8%), Others (40-45%)
PVs: Maruti Suzuki (40%), Hyundai (13.5%), Tata (13%), Others (30-35%)
CVs: Tata (33%), Mahindra (25%), Ashok Leyland (18%), Others (25%)
EVs: 2-Wheeler: Ola 30%, TVS 21%, Ather 11% | **3-Wheeler:** Bajaj 36%
EVs: PVs: Tata (35%), MG (30%), Mahindra (21%); **CVs:** Tata (49%), Olectra (8%)
Luxury: Mercedes (35%), BMW (30%), JLR (12%), Audi (12%), Porsche (6%)

Key Players – Indian Market

Hero, HONDA, TVS, BAJAJ, SUZUKI, ROYAL ENFIELD, OLA ELECTRIC, ATHER, KTM, TRIUMPH, VIDA

MARUTI SUZUKI, HONDA, KIA, MG, PIAGGIO, TATA, ASHOK LEYLAND, HYUNDAI, Mercedes-Benz, BMW, Audi, PORSCHE

Porter's 5 forces

- **Bargaining power of suppliers (-) Low/Medium:** Excluding specialized manufacturing, suppliers largely competitive, fragmented nature of ancillary parts limits bargaining power
- **Bargaining power of buyers (+) High:** There is price transparency across the market, stiff competition across buyer segments and presence of various models
- **Threat of new entrants (+) High:** Entry of intl. players (esp. EV segment) signify capital and regulatory are not insurmountable
- **Threat of substitutes (/) Medium:** Rail/Air, Increasing reliance on public transport, rideshare; online meetings eliminating transport
- **Competitive rivalry (+) High/Intense:** High growth market, high future potential, domestic and international brands vying for market share across buyer segments

Key Market Trends

Challenges (Include policy here only)

- **Reliance on Global Supply Chain:** Prone to global supply disruptions
- **Infrastructure constraints:** EV Adoption Bottleneck - charging infra
- **Intense Competition:** Pricing pressure, R&D for differentiation
- **Regulatory Uncertainty:** Prone to Cess / GST fluctuations; long-term policy for the industry unclear; luxury market taxation stifling growth
- **Road Network:** Remains a challenge for enabling faster logistics

Updates/ Emerging Trends

- **Electrification:** Across segments, driven by lower taxes and FAME policy
- **Connected Cars**: Telematics, Infotainment, Remote Control & Diagnostics
- **Shared Mobility**: Changing ownership mindset on account of ride-hailing services, car-sharing platforms
- **Digitization**: Online automobile sales (Amazon, Flipkart, Acko), digital maintenance records, OTA updates for car/bike software
- **Focus on Safety**: Growing customer sentiment around NCAP scores, regulatory emphasis on safety, features (ADAS, Standard AirBags)
- **Scrappage & E20:** War on Diesel cars by govt; Ethanol Blending in Petrol

Key Areas & Terms

Regulatory: PLI Scheme, FAME-II, E20, Fuel Blending, BS-VI Norms
Macro: Pre-Owned Market impact on industry; Semiconductor shortage
Manufacturing, Ops & Business: JIT, Global Supply Chain, Captive Finance, Fleet Sales, SKU Rationalization
Technology: Autonomous Driving Levels 0-5, Telematics, IoT

Airlines - Commercial (Passengers & Cargo)

Industry Overview

Airlines provide scheduled or chartered air transportation for passengers and/or cargo, connecting domestic and international markets

Global Market Size: $900B USD (2024), $1T by 2027

Indian Market Size: $20B USD FY24, 8-10% CAGR Next 5 Years driven by rising disposable incomes, tourism, and UDAN scheme (improved regional connectivity)

Value Chain

Manufacturing & Leasing ▶
- Manufacturers:
- Boeing, Airbus, Embraer;
- Leasing Companies: Avolon, GECAS

Airline Operations ▶
- Network planning
- Ticket sales
- Fleet & Crew Management
- Aircraft Maintenance
- Customer experience
- Fuelling, Baggage

Airports & Ground Handling ▶
- Provide Infrastructure
- Airport Services
- People Management
- Security, Control Tower

Distribution & Post Purchase
- OTAs, Direct Airlines, Travel Agents (Offline)
- Loyalty Programs, In-flight sales, cargo logistics , customer support

Airline Segmentation

- **FSC** - Full Service Carriers (Air India, Lufthansa, Singapore Airlines)
- **LCC** - Low Cost Carriers (Indigo, Ryanair, Southwest)
- **ULCC** - Ultra LCC (Spirit, Allegiant)
- **Regional** (Star Air (India), American Eagle) and **Charters** (TUI Fly, GoAir Charter Ops)
- **Cargo Airlines** (Blue Dart Aviation, FedEx Express, UPS Airlines, DHL Aviation)

Business Model

Cost Drivers
- Fuel (30-40% Opex) - International crude & forex
- Lease & Depreciation
- Maintenance, Repair, Overhaul (MRO)
- Airport Charges, ATF Taxes
- Staff, Distribution, Mkting

Revenue Drivers
- Tickets (Eco, Premium, Business, First Class)
- Add-Ons (Baggage, Meals, Seating, Loyalty)
- Cargo Services
- Codeshare, interline agreements
- Charters, Wet-lease ops

Growth Drivers
- Rising Incomes, Expanding Middle Class
- Expansion + Regional connectivity
- LCCs, Fleet Modernization (Fuel efficiency, longer range)
- Tourism, Trade, E-Commerce

Key Performance Indicators

- **Load Factor**: Seats Sold / Seats Available
- **RASK / CASK**: Revenue/Cost per available seat kilometer (ASK)
- **Passenger Yield ($/RPK):** Revenue per passenger-kilometer
- **OTP:** On Time Performance; measures schedule reliability
- **Ancillary Revenue / Passenger** Income from Extras (meals, baggage, priority checkin, seating etc.)
- **Aircraft Utilisation:** Block hours per aircraft per day (or cycles/day)

Market Structure

Passenger Market Share:
Indigo: 63%, AirIndia Group: 27%, Akasa 5%, Spicejet 4%, Others 1%

Passenger Service Type: LCC (70-80%), FSC (20-30%)

AirCargo: Indigo (38%), AirIndia (30%), BlueDart (20%), Quikjet (2%)

Key Players – Global and Indian

American Airlines, Ryanair, Singapore Airlines, Lufthansa, Delta, Emirates

Akasa Air, SpiceJet, IndiGo, Air India, Air India Express

Porter's 5 forces

- **Bargaining power of suppliers (+) High:** Manufacturers (Boeing, Airbus), Fuel Suppliers, Contract Staff Agencies, Talent Shortage, Airports all have and wield strong leverage over airlines
- **Bargaining power of buyers (+) High:** There is price transparency across the market (digitization, OTAs, price discovery apps) and low switching costs among passengers as well as logistics companies
- **Threat of new entrants (–) Low:** High Cost of Entry (Leasing reduces capex but remains an issue), regulatory approvals, slot scarcity, high fuel costs deter entrants
- **Threat of substitutes (–) Low/Moderate:** Rail/Road (Passengers), Ships (Freight/Cargo); video-conferencing for business travel
- **Competitive rivalry (+) High/Intense:** Price wars in LCC, FSCs compete on loyalty and network strength

Key Market Trends

Challenges (Include policy here only)
- **High Fuel Taxes in India:** ATF (aviation turbine fuel) taxed at 25-30%
- **Infrastructure constraints:** Slot Scarcity, Congestion at Major Airports
- **Intense Competition:** Leads to pricing pressures and eroding profits
- **FX Volatility**: Significant portion of costs denominated in USD
- **Pilot and Crew Shortages**: Training, Attrition bottlenecks growth
- **Regulatory:** DGCA Norms, Safety Mandates, env. regulations

Updates/ Emerging Trends
- **Fleet Modernization:** Fuel efficient aircrafts (A320neo, Boeing 737 Max)
- **Digital Transformation**: AI-driven dynamic pricing, predictive maintenance, personalized customer experience
- **Consolidation**: Struggling Airlines merged/acquired reshaping aviation
- **Sustainability**: SAF (Sust. Aviation fuel) adoption, carbon offsets
- **Ancillary Growth**: Increasing adoption of add-ons and loyalty programs
- **Regional Connectivity**: Government schemes boosting Tier-2 and Tier-3 connectivity

Key Areas & Terms

Regulatory: DCGA, UDAN Scheme, FDI Norms, ATF Pricing, GST Debate
Sustainability: IATA, ICAO Targets for Net Zero by 2050
Operational: TAT, Widebody, Narrowbody, Hub&Spoke, Point to Point, GDS (Travel agent booking backbone), ACMI, Stage Length, Belly Cargo)

Logistics

Overview

Logistics is the movement, storage, flow of goods (road, rail, sea, air, warehousing, last-mile)
Segments: Road (60%), Rail (30%, rising with DFCs), Air Cargo, Coastal, Warehousing, Express/Parcel, Cold Chain, 3PL/4PL.
Global Market Size: ~US$3.9–6.4T (2024/25).
Indian Market Size: ~US$228B in 2024, projected ~US$429B by 2033 (6.5% CAGR).
Logistics cost ~13–14% of GDP (NCAER: ~8.35%).

Value Chain

Transportation

Moving goods from A to B.
First-mile: Initial pickup from origin.
Linehaul: Long-distance, main transport.
Last-mile: Final delivery to customer.

Warehousing

Storing and fulfilling orders.
Storage: Holding goods in stock.
Fulfillment: Picking, packing customer orders.
Cold chain: Temperature-controlled logistics.
Cross-docking: Moving goods with minimal storage

Distribution

Delivering, handling returns.
Reverse logistics: Goods moving backward.
Returns: Managing customer product returns.
Service support: Post-delivery customer assistance.

Enablers

Tools and services that support logistics.
Freight forwarding & customs: Managing international shipments.
3PL/4PL orchestration: Outsourcing and managing logistics.
TMS/WMS: Software for managing operations.
IoT: Real-time data tracking.

Business Model

Cost Drivers

- Fuel & tolls
- Fleet Lease & depreciation
- Driver Wages
- MRO & tyres
- Warehouse rent & power
- Compliance

Revenue Drivers

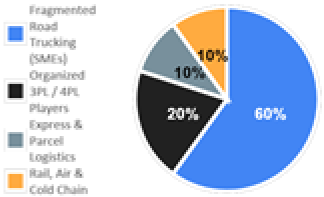
- Freight charges (FTL/LTL)
- Express/Parcel
- Warehousing & VAS
- Cold Chain premium
- Cross-border forwarding
- SLA-linked contracts

Key Performance Indicators

- **Order Management:** Shipping Time, Order Accuracy, Perfect Order,
- **Supply:** Lead Time, Capacity Utilization, Productivity
- **Inventory:** Backorder Rate, Inventory Accuracy, Inventory Turnover
- **Distribution:** Trailer Utilization Rate, Warehousing Costs, Average Dwell Time
- **Transport Management:** Delivery Time, Average Days Late, Truck Turning, Freight Payment Accuracy, Transportation Costs

Market Structure

India's logistics industry is highly fragmented, dominated by small trucking firms, with growing contributions from organized 3PL/4PL players, express parcel firms, and rail/air/cold chain specialists as formalization and infrastructure improve.



Key Players

DTDC
XPRESSBEES
SAFEXPRESS
BLUE DART
GATI

Porter's 5 forces

1. Bargaining Power of Suppliers — High: Key inputs have limited suppliers and volatile prices; Ports, airports, and rail operators are few and highly concentrated; Driver shortages increase dependency on labour suppliers.

2. Bargaining Power of Buyers — High: Large shippers run competitive tenders and switch vendors easily; High price transparency and low switching costs make buyers powerful; Buyers often demand strict SLAs and penalties for delays.

3. Threat of New Entrants — Moderate: Tech-enabled aggregators and asset-light models lower entry barriers; Achieving network density, regulatory compliance, and capital scale is hard; New entrants face thin margins and high customer acquisition costs.

4. Threat of Substitutes — Low to Moderate: Limited substitutes for long-haul freight; Some substitution by hyperlocal delivery, in-house logistics, or nearshoring for short-haul and urban flows. Rail/air are viable substitutes.

5. Competitive Rivalry — High / Intense: Highly fragmented industry → price wars. Players compete on speed, reliability, tech visibility, cost efficiency

Key Market Trends

Challenges

- **Fragmented trucking base** → low scale, inconsistent service quality
- **Empty backhauls** → poor asset utilization and higher costs
- **Urban congestion & curb-side limits** → delays, low delivery density
- **Fuel & toll cost volatility** → margin pressure
- **Cold-chain gaps & high-power costs** → spoilage risk, low reliability
- **Regulatory burden** → permits, e-way bills, city entry bans
- **Talent shortages** → driver attrition, lack of skilled planners

Updates/ Emerging Trends

1. Policy – NLP (2022), Gati Shakti, GST cut (5% multimodal freight):
Driving cost reduction and network integration through national policy support.
2. Infrastructure – DFC commissioning, multimodal parks:
Expanding rail capacity and creating efficient multimodal logistics hubs.
3. E-com / Q-com – Tier-2/3 logistics boom, dark stores, EV fleets:
Fueling rapid last-mile growth with localized fulfillment and green fleets.
4. Sustainability – EVs in last-mile, SAF in air cargo, pooling/backhaul recovery:
Reducing emissions via cleaner vehicles and better load optimization.
5. Tech – Control towers, predictive ETAs, IoT cold-chain monitoring, fintech freight payments:
Digitizing operations for real-time visibility, reliability, and faster settlements.

AI & Deep Tech (India) Industry

Overview

- The sector includes all software-based AI applications: machine learning (ML), natural language processing (NLP), computer vision (CV), and generative AI.
- Covers horizontal platforms (e.g., model-as-a-service) and vertical solutions (e.g., medical imaging AI, chatbots, predictive analytics).
- Driven by explosive generative AI adoption post-2022, large-scale cloud infrastructure, and open-source model availability.
- Backed by major government support and a growing base of 1900+ Indian AI startups.
- Faces rapid technological churn, heavy compute needs, and data sensitivity challenges.

Value Chain

Data Acquisition	Model Development	Deployment	Support & Monitoring
• Data sourcing • Annotation & cleaning	• Training & tuning • Validation	• Integration with apps • Scaling infra	• Model drift mgmt • Bias detection

Business Model

Cost Drivers

- Cloud compute (GPU/TPU)
- Talent (ML engineers, researchers)
- Data acquisition & labeling
- MLOps & infrastructure
- Compliance & cybersecurity

Revenue Drivers

- Subscription (SaaS, API)
- Licensing AI models
- AI consulting & custom builds
- AIaaS (usage-based billing)
- Enterprise deployment & support

Key Performance Indicators

- **Model Accuracy**: F1, BLEU, AUC, error rates.
- **Operational Efficiency**: Latency, cost/inference, uptime.
- **Customer Success**: Retention, user engagement, cost savings.

Market Structure

- Highly fragmented: startups focus on niches, IT majors offer platforms, Big Tech runs infra.
- GenAI wave led to 60+ new Indian startups (Rephrase, Gan.ai).
- Consolidation ongoing: Big IT firms acquiring AI specialists (e.g., TCS, Wipro).
- Large players offer AIaaS, startups specialize in vertical use-cases.

Key Players

- **Startups:** Rephrase.ai (video AI), Uniphore (voice AI), SigTuple (healthcare CV), Gan.ai (GenAI video).
- **IT Majors:** Infosys, TCS, Wipro – AI platforms, consulting.
- **Big Tech / GCCs:** Google, Microsoft, IBM – AI infra & foundational models.
- **Public Sector:** CAIR, IITs (AI4Bharat), CDAC (AIRAWAT), IndiaAI Mission.

Porter's 5 forces

- **Bargaining power of suppliers (•):** Moderate – GPU/infra monopolies, but cloud providers compete.
- **Bargaining power of buyers (+):** High – many AI vendors, open-source alternatives, low switching costs.
- **Threat of new entrants (+):** High – open-source models, cloud infra reduce entry barriers.
- **Threat of substitutes (•):** Moderate – legacy tech/manual labor still used in early adopter sectors.
- **Competitive rivalry (+):** High – rapid innovation, talent war, overlapping solutions.

Key Market Trends

Challenges

- **Talent Crunch:** Skilled AI engineers and researchers are scarce.
- **Compute Costs:** GPU access and training costs remain prohibitive.
- **Ethical Risks:** Bias, transparency, misuse of generative AI.
- **Data Governance:** Quality, availability, and privacy enforcement.

Updates/ Emerging Trends

- **Policy Push:** IndiaAI Mission ($1.25B) aims to democratize compute, train models, boost AI infra.
- **GenAI Boom:** India leads in ChatGPT mobile usage; 60+ GenAI startups launched since 2023.
- **Sector Use-Cases:** BFSI (fraud, risk), Healthcare (diagnostics), Retail (recommendations), Logistics (route optimization).
- **Infra Push:** AIRAWAT supercomputer, Azure OpenAI in India, GPU compute grid initiatives.

IT & ITES

Overview

#1	#3	#1	#2
India's ranking in global IT outsourcing	India is the third-largest startup ecosystem	India is the largest exporter of IT services worldwide	India is the second-largest base for SaaS companies

✓ **7.5%** contribution of IT-BPM industry to India's GDP in FY24.
✓ **$250+ Bn** industry size, projected to reach $500 Bn by 2030.
✓ **32–35%** of IT revenues now come from digital services

Value Chain

Talent & Infrastructure (Input Layer)
- Skilled workforce acquisition, reskilling in digital skills
- IT parks, SEZs, cloud/data centers, network infrastructure.
- Policy & regulatory frameworks (SEZ benefits, data protection)

Core IT & ITES Delivery
- IT Services: Application development, infrastructure management, testing
- ITES/BPM: Customer support, HR, finance, analytics, research
- Engineering R&D and product design outsourcing

Digital & Consulting Services
- Digital transformation (AI/ML, Cloud, IoT, Blockchain).
- Cybersecurity, compliance, and enterprise modernization.
- IT/Business consulting & process re-engineering.

Client Delivery & End Markets
- Global delivery model (onsite–offshore mix, GCCs, managed services).
- Export markets (North America, Europe, Asia-Pacific).
- Domestic demand: Fintech, e-governance, digital India initiatives.

Business Model

Cost Drivers
- **Talent costs:** Skilled workforce salaries (wage inflation)
- **Infrastructure:** IT parks, data centers, office facilities
- **Technology investments:** Cloud, AI/ML, cybersecurity, automation
- **Compliance costs:** Data protection, global regulations

Revenue Drivers
- **Outsourcing contracts** (BPO, IT services, consulting).
- **Software & product development**
- **Digital transformation projects** (AI, Cloud, Cybersecurity)
- **Global captive centers (GCCs) and managed services**

Key Performance Indicators
- Revenue per employee, Utilization rate, Attrition rate.
- Onsite-offshore mix, Average billing rates.
- Share of digital revenues (AI, Cloud, IoT, Analytics).
- Pipeline of large/mega deals and renewal rates.

Market Structure
- **Highly competitive, fragmented:** Mix of Indian giants (Infosys, TCS, Wipro), MNCs (Accenture, IBM, Capgemini), and startups.
- **India dominates offshore outsourcing;** Philippines is key competitor in BPO.
- **Growth of Global Captive Centers (GCCs)** in India (1,600+ GCCs).
- **High dependence on North America & Europe** (~70–75% revenues).

Key Players

tcs TATA CONSULTANCY SERVICES, Infosys, wipro, HCL, TECH mahindra, accenture, IBM, Capgemini, genpact, Google, Microsoft, amazon, JPMorganChase

Porter's 5 forces

- **Bargaining Power of Suppliers (Low to Moderate):** Large talent pool keeps supply abundant, but niche skills in AI, cloud, and cybersecurity remain scarce.
- **Bargaining Power of Buyers (High):** Fortune 500 clients dominate contracts, exert pricing pressure, and can switch easily due to multiple alternatives
- **Threat of New Entrants (Low):** Scale, brand trust, compliance requirements, and delivery models act as strong entry barriers, limiting new large players
- **Threat of Substitutes (Moderate and Rising):** Automation, Generative AI, and SaaS solutions are reducing demand for traditional IT services and BPO.
- **Competitive Rivalry (High):** Intense competition among Indian majors and global players pushes firms to differentiate through digital and consulting services.

Key Market Trends

Challenges
- Margin pressure from rising wages, high attrition, and client pricing pressure.
- Over-dependence on US & Europe (~75% revenue) → exposed to recession & visa restrictions.
- Automation & AI reducing demand for traditional outsourcing (voice BPO, basic coding).
- Data security & compliance costs rising with GDPR, India's DPDP Act, and global cybersecurity norms.

Updates/ Emerging Trends
- Generative AI & digital services (Cloud, IoT, Cybersecurity) now contribute >30% of revenues
- Global Capability Centers (GCCs) expanding rapidly in India (1,600+ centers)
- Domestic demand surge via Digital India, UPI, ONDC, and Smart Cities initiatives
- Tier-II & III city expansion for talent sourcing and cost efficiency
- M&A and consolidation as IT majors acquire AI, SaaS, and cybersecurity startups to strengthen digital capabilities

Overview

The Media and Entertainment Industry (M&E) is a broad vertical that combines cinema/movies, gaming, television, music, internet and advertising into one sector.

It encompasses both traditional media like television, radio, print etc. as well as new and digital media such as OTT streaming platforms, social media and mobile content.

The content of this industry can be highly diverse, crossing multiple languages, cultures and geographical boundaries.

Value Chain

Content Creation and Development

Ideation, scripting, and production of diverse content across film, TV, OTT, music, gaming, animation, and live events. India produces about 1,600 films and 200,000 content hours annually, with strong emphasis on regional and vernacular content.

Aggregation and Packaging

Aggregation of content by broadcasters, OTT platforms, and digital publishers, packaging into subscription plans, ad-supported models, or hybrids. Digital media has become the largest segment, driving 32% of revenues.

Distribution and Delivery

Content reaches consumers via traditional channels like TV and cinema, plus digital platforms (OTT streaming, social media, mobile apps). Connected smart TVs are expected to reach 40-50 million units, boosting digital viewership and advertising.

Monetization and Support Services

Revenues generated through advertising, subscriptions, licensing, branded content, ticket sales, and in-app gaming purchases. Support includes media outsourcing, VFX, post-production, and AI-driven content creation, making India a global content hub.

Business Model

Cost Drivers

- Content Creation and Customer Acquisition Costs
- Technology and Infrastructure
- Marketing and Distribution
- Talent and Labour Costs
- Regulatory and Compliance Challenges

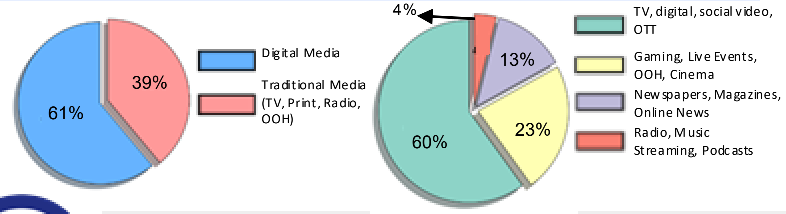
Revenue Drivers

- Digital Media and Advertising
- OTT and Subscription Services
- Gaming and E-Sports
- Influencer and Creator Economy
- Licensing and Merchandising
- Regional Entertainment, Podcasts and Short Films

Key Performance Indicators

- **Financial KPIs** - Revenue Growth Rate, Avg. Revenue per User, Advertising Revenue, Profit Margins
- **Audience and Consumption KPIs -** Total viewership or subscribers, Engagement Metrics, Content Reach, Content Popularity, Box Office Collections, Digital Ad Click-Through-Rate, Music Streaming Counts and Paid Subscribers
- **Operational and Market KPIs** - Market Share, Digital Penetration, Customer Acquisition Cost and Churn Rates

Market Structure



Key Players

Google, Sun TV, Sony, NDTV, Zee, Saregama, Viacom18 Studios, Netflix, The Times Group, Sony Pictures, prime video, PVR, Balaji Telefilms

Porter's 5 forces

- **Bargaining power of suppliers (Moderate):** Content producers, actors, and creative talent can negotiate strongly due to demand, but increasing competition and digital tools moderate their power.
- **Bargaining power of buyers (High):** Consumers have abundant free and paid content options including OTT platforms, TV, and social media, increasing their power to demand quality and variety.
- **Threat of new entrants (Moderate to Low):** High capital costs, regulatory barriers, and established brand loyalties pose significant entry barriers, but digital platforms lower distribution costs enabling niche entrants.
- **Threat of substitutes (High):** Substitute entertainment sources include social media, gaming, short videos, live events, and international content on global OTT platforms, fragmenting audience attention.
- **Competitive rivalry (High):** Intense competition exists among TV networks, OTT platforms, streaming services, gaming companies, and social media providers vying for audience and ad revenues.

Key Market Trends

Challenges

- OTT platforms face profitability challenges amid rising content costs and subscription fatigue
- Talent shortage exists, especially in digital content and tech roles.
- Traditional TV and theatrical revenues are declining, with TV ad revenues falling 6% and subscriptions down 3%.
- Content rights and licensing are shifting from broad blanket rights to specific limited rights due to revenue pressures
- Regulatory complexities, IP risks, and compliance management are increasing.

Updates/ Emerging Trends

- Digital media has surpassed television, now contributing 32% of total revenues, driven by OTT, short video, and creator-led content.
- Regional and vernacular content accounts for over half of OTT content, expanding markets beyond metro cities.
- Gaming, Esports, and live events are growing rapidly, capturing new audiences
- Market consolidation through mergers and acquisitions is accelerating for scale and efficiency.
- India is emerging as a global hub for content production, animation, and media outsourcing.
- AI and advanced technologies are revolutionizing content creation, distribution, and monetization.

Food Processing

Industry Overview

Food processing industry involves **transformation of raw agricultural** produce into consumable products with enhanced shelf lives and value. **Categories include** fruits, vegetables, meat, poultry, milk and dairy products, grains, cereals, fisheries, and beverages (incl. alcohol), confections, chocolates etc.

Sector estimated at **$866B in 2022** and expected to grow to **1.3T by 2027.** Contributes **8.8% of Gross Value Added (GVA) in manufacturing and 8.4% of GVA in agriculture**

Value Chain

Agri Produce ► **Procurement** ► **Processing** ► **Packaging** ► **Distribution**

Agri Produce
- Fruits
- Vegetables
- Grains
- Spices
- Milk & Dairy prods
- Meat/Fish/Poultry

Procurement
- Catalog/Product & Service Categories
- Prices, Reviews & Ratings
- Search Recommendations
- Payment Layer

Processing
- Flour to biscuits
- Milk to Cheese
- Fruit pulp to jam
- Grains to breakfast cereal
- Recipes, Flavors, Packaging

Packaging
- Pouches
- Bottles
- Advanced aseptic bags
- Tins for longer shelf life
- Sealing and labelling

Distribution
- Cold chain - storage & transportation
- Distribution Centers
- Kirana stores
- Modern Supermarts
- Q-Comm platforms

Business Model

Cost Drivers
- Agri raw material
- Processing & mfg
- Packaging & Logistics
- Quality Control
- Regulatory Compliance
- Marketing & Branding

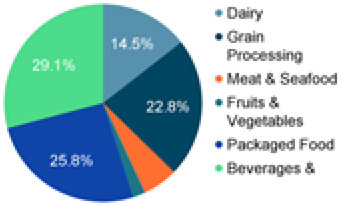
Revenue Drivers
- High Domestic Consumption
- Value add and branding
- Product Mix and SKUs
- Export/Global Markets
- Distribution and Reach
- Premiumization

Growth Drivers
- Changing Lifestyle & Urbanization
- Health/Wellness Trend
- Rising Global Demand
- Government Support through PLI schemes

Key Performance Indicators
- **Processing Yield**: % of finished output from given quantity of raw input
- **Cost per ton**: Average production cost to process 1 ton product
- **SKU Productivity:** Number of retail outlets carrying product; number of cities or districts penetrated; size of the dist. network
- **Distribution Reach:** Inventory days, Last mile costing/order

Market Structure

2.5 million unorganized small and micro food processing enterprises employ 74% of workforce in the food processing industry. Food processing activities also often cluster around the areas of raw material sources or major consumption centers



Key Players

TATA CONSUMER PRODUCTS, Reliance Retail, Nestlé, Unilever, ITC Limited, Parle, Britannia, Amul The Taste of India

Porter's 5 forces

- **Bargaining power of suppliers (•) – Mixed:** Farmers are primary suppliers and 86% of farmers are small or marginal; individual farmers have low bargaining power. Can command premium for specialized products. Processors face low switching costs.
- **Bargaining power of buyers (-) – High:** Consumers, retail outlets and distributor intermediaries have leverage through choice of brands and substitutes
- **Threat of new entrants (•) – Mixed:** New players emerge often; supported by govt. policies for startups. Scaling requires CapEx, Dist networks, and marketing spend. Incumbents enjoy economies of scale and brand loyalty
- **Threat of substitutes (-) – High:** Substitutes are home-made meals and fresh fruits or unbranded products leading to high threat
- **Competitive rivalry (-) – Intense:** Price Wars and fight for shelf space; Smaller brands enjoy national reach through E-commerce

Key Market Trends

Challenges (Include policy here only)
- **Food Safety Standards:** FSSAI and other regulators are tightening norms to ensure food safety and quality
- **Packaging & environment:** FSSAI allowed recycled plastic in certain packaging; strict migration limits and requirement for traceability
- **Climate Change:** Irregular monsoon, drought or floods impact raw material supply;

Updates/ Emerging Trends
- **Health & Wellness:** Consumers pivoting towards healthier eating post pandemic; led to growth in plant based and vegan products
- **Quick Commerce:** Increasing impulse and snack purchases due to proliferation of quick comm and D2C brand websites; higher volume
- **Sustainability:** Regulations and consumer sentiment driving push for use of recyclable and biodegradable materials; emerging concept of **"food miles"** - distance from prod to consumers & carbon footprint

Key Terms

Mega Food Park (MFP) | Cold Chain | PLISFPI (PLI for food) Processing Yield | SKU Productivity | Inventory Turnover Reefer Logistics | Traceability | Contract Farming

Healthcare (Hospitals and Clinics) Industry

Overview

- The sector encompasses all establishments that provide medical services, from diagnostic to surgical treatments.
- Includes inpatient care (hospitals), outpatient care (clinics), and specialized services like surgery and diagnostic imaging.
- Subject to a high degree of government oversight and licensing requirements to ensure quality and safety standards.
- Marked by intense competition, technological advancements, and a trend of consolidation and network expansion.

Value Chain

Patient Acquisition

- Marketing
- Scheduling
- Registration

Patient Acquisition

- Diagnosis
- Treatment
- Surgery

Post-Care and Follow-up

- Discharge planning
- Rehabilitation

Support and Administration

- Billing
- Administration
- IT

Business Model

Cost Drivers

- Labor & Staffing
- Medical Equipment & Supplies
- Pharmaceuticals
- Facilities
- IT & Cybersecurity
- Regulatory Compliance

Revenue Drivers

- Insurance Reimbursements
- Patient Out-of-Pocket Payments
- Ancillary Services
- Specialized Procedures
- Telehealth

Key Performance Indicators

- **Patient Outcomes:** Readmission rates, infection rates, patient satisfaction scores.
- **Operational Efficiency:** Bed occupancy rates, patient wait times, average length of stay.
- **Financial Health:** Operating margins, revenue per patient.

Market Structure

- The market is highly fragmented, ranging from large, multi-hospital systems to small, independent clinics.
- Consolidation is a major trend, with larger hospital systems acquiring smaller facilities and clinics to expand their network and gain market share.
- The presence of both for-profit and non-profit hospitals creates a complex competitive landscape.

Key Players

- **Large Hospital Chains:** Apollo Hospitals, Fortis Healthcare, Max Healthcare, HCA Healthcare.
- **Specialized Hospitals:** Narayana Health (cardiac), L.V. Prasad Eye Institute (ophthalmology).
- **Government-Run Hospitals:** All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS).
- **Clinic Chains:** Practo, and various local and regional clinic networks.

Porter's 5 forces

- **Bargaining power of suppliers :**High → Doctors, nurses, equipment vendors are scarce and costly
- **Bargaining power of buyers :** Medium–High → Patients price-sensitive; insurers & govt schemes pressure margins.
- **Threat of new entrants :** Medium → high capital needs but fragmentation allows regional entrants.
- **Threat of substitutes :** Low–Medium → Home care, telemedicine growing but not full substitutes.
- **Competitive rivalry :** High → Fragmented market, intense competition, consolidation ongoing

Key Market Trends

Challenges

- **Rising Costs:** Labor and technology costs are escalating.
- **Workforce Shortages:** A persistent lack of doctors and nurses.
- **Cybersecurity:** Constant threat of data breaches due to sensitive patient information.
- **Regulatory Burden:** Complex and evolving compliance requirements.

Updates/ Emerging Trends

- **Policy Update:** The **Clinical Establishments Act** in India mandates registration to ensure minimum standards of care.
- **Generative AI:** Use of AI to automate administrative tasks and assist in diagnostics.
- **Value-Based Care:** Shift towards models that link payments to patient outcomes, not just the volume of services.

Pharmaceutical Industry

Overview

- The industry discovers, develops, produces, and markets drugs for use as medications.
- Characterized by high R&D costs, long development cycles, and strict regulatory oversight.
- The sector is a mix of large multinational corporations and smaller biotech companies.
- The business model is shifting from "blockbuster" drugs to personalized and targeted therapies.

Value Chain

Research & Development

- Drug discovery
- pre-clinical testing
- clinical trials (Phases I, II, III)

Manufacturing & Production

- Active Pharmaceutical Ingredient (API) production
- Formulation
- quality assurance

Sales & Marketing

- Market access
- pricing
- sales force management
- brand promotion

Distribution & Service

- Logistics
- cold chain management
- hospital/pharmacy sales
- patient support programs

Business Model

Cost Drivers

R&D: Average cost to develop a new drug is $1B+.
Clinical Trials: Make up ~68% of R&D expenses.
Marketing & Sales: Can be 15-20% of revenue for major companies.

Revenue Drivers

Patented Drugs: Can have profit margins of 15-30%.
New Launches: Blockbuster drugs can generate billions in sales.
Biologics: The fastest-growing segment, with a high growth rate.

Key Performance Indicators

R&D ROI: Return on R&D investment, has declined for years.
Clinical Trial Success: Only ~10% of drugs entering Phase I trials receive approval.
Time to Market: Averages 10-15 years from discovery to approval.
Gross Margin: Can range from 40% to 80% depending on the product mix

Market Structure

Oligopoly: Global market dominated by few large pharmaceutical companies.
Market Segmentation: The market is segmented into branded drugs, generics, biologics, and over-the-counter (OTC) products.
Patent-driven: Market leadership is often a direct result of intellectual property rights and patent protection.

Key Players

Big Pharma: Pfizer, Johnson & Johnson, Merck, Roche, Novartis, AstraZeneca.
Biotech: Amgen, Gilead Sciences, Regeneron.
Generics: Teva, Viatris, Sandoz.

Porter's 5 forces

- **Bargaining power of suppliers (Low to Medium):** While API suppliers can have some power, the market is competitive. However, for specialized or patented raw materials, power increases.
- **Bargaining power of buyers (High):** Buyers, including governments, insurance companies, and Pharmacy Benefit Managers (PBMs), exert significant pressure on pricing and formulary inclusion.
- **Threat of new entrants (Low):** Extremely high barriers to entry due to immense R&D costs, complex regulatory approvals, and established market players.
- **Threat of substitutes (Medium):** Generic drugs are a significant substitute after a patent expires. Alternative therapies, herbal medicines, or non-pharmacological treatments also exist.
- **Competitive rivalry (High):** Intense competition among major players to discover and market new drugs, secure market share, and gain first-mover advantage in new therapeutic areas.

Key Market Trends

Challenges

- **Patent Cliffs:** Loss of exclusivity on blockbuster drugs leading to generic competition.
- **R&D Productivity:** High failure rates in clinical trials and rising R&D costs.
- **Regulatory Scrutiny & Pricing Pressure:** Increasing demands for price transparency and affordability from governments and payers.
- **Digital Transformation:** The need to integrate AI, big data, and digital health tools into existing processes.

Updates/ Emerging Trends

- **Personalized Medicine:** Development of drugs and therapies tailored to an individual's genetic and molecular profile.
- **AI & Machine Learning:** Use of AI in drug discovery, clinical trial design, and data analysis to accelerate R&D.
- **Growth of Biologics:** Increasing market share of large-molecule drugs, including gene and cell therapies.
- **Decentralized Clinical Trials:** Shift to virtual and hybrid clinical trials to improve patient access and diversity.
- **Digital Therapeutics:** Software and digital tools used as medical interventions to treat or prevent a disease.

Banking

Marketing
- Advertisement
- Branding and Promotion

Sales
- Offerings
- Acquisition
- Retention

Product & services
Funding: Deposits & securities

Investing: Credit, Securities & financial products

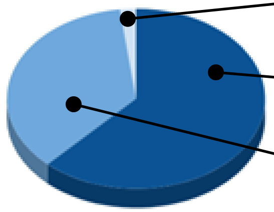
Services: Account & asset mgmt., IPO/Issuance

Transactions
- Payment Clearing
- Settlement
- Trading

Key Performance Indicators
- Credit Growth (SCBs): ~11% in FY25 (vs 16.3% in FY24)
- Deposit Growth (SCBs): ~10.3% in FY25
- GNPA Ratio (SCBs): 2.3% (Mar'25)
- PSB GNPA: 2.58% (Mar'25)
- Capital Adequacy (CRAR, SCBs): ~16.8% (Mar'25)

Cost Drivers
- Interest expense
- Labour
- Advertising
- Technology & digital infra

Revenue Drivers
- Interest on lending
- Investment activities
- Deposits with RBI
- Fee-based income

Market Structure


Porter's 5 forces
- **Bargaining power of suppliers (•):** Market dependent given capital is the primary resource, bank need to maintain borrowing, and withdrawal needs of its customers
- **Bargaining power of buyers (•):** Low threat by Individuals/ firms, however low switching cost can be a threat with switching easier with internet banking
- **Threat of new entrants (+):** Low risk specially on account of trust, market is largely dominated by large public sector banks and few private sector banks- HDFC, ICICI, Axis (~82% of advances)
- **Threat of substitutes (+):** Low risk, however Insurances, Mutual Funds, NBFCs are other players providing financial services
- **Competitive rivalry (-):** High competition from established players, customers usually have account in multiple banks

Key Market Trends: Policy
- Implementation of Basel 3 capital capital framework
- Account aggregation framework
- Aggregation of Public Sector Banks
- Basel III norms fully phased in
- Reduced infra project provisioning: 5%→1% (Oct'25)
- Partial rollback of higher risk weights on unsecured retail & NBFC exposures (2025)

Key Market Trends: Emerging Trends
- Focused Customer relationships with API and AI solutions
- BNPL (Buy Now Pay Later) as a form of consumer lending
- Digitization and a fast-emerging new ecosystem
- Net banking (banks without any branches) system rising
- Account Aggregator (AA): Data-sharing framework with unified control across institutions
- Neo-banking: Branch-less, cost-efficient, user-friendly banking models operating via licensed partner banks

Key Facts
- **Gross Bank Credit:** ₹118.9 lakh crore (Mar'22)
- **Credit Growth:** ~9.9% CAGR (2015–22); sharp uptick to 16.3% in FY24; moderated to 11% in FY25
- **Credit Growth Split (FY25):** PSBs 12.2% vs Private Banks 9.5%
- **Sector-wise Credit (SCBs, Mar'22):** Personal (28%), Industry (27%), Services (26%), Agriculture (12%), Others (7%)
- **NPA trajectory:** 5.9% (Mar'22) → 2.3% (Mar'25, multi-decade low)
- **Credit-to-GDP ratio:** ~56% (FY25) - lower than peers China (180%) & US (200%)

NBFCs

Marketing → **Sales** → **Disbursement** → **Collection** → **Regulatory compliance**

Marketing
- Based on type of loan, multi-channel marketing is done

Sales
- Offline branches, mobile apps top channels for loan sales

Disbursement
- Cash/non-cash disbursement for different types (non-cash for EMI loan, cash for personal loan)

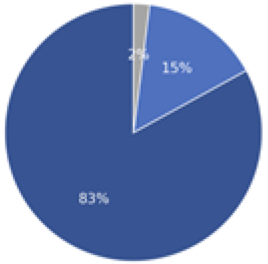
Collection
- Mostly automated; includes collection of interest and principal amounts

Regulatory compliance
- Report NPAs to RBI
- Report other financial performance reports to regulatory bodies

Key Performance Indicators

- NPAs
- Liquidity
- Net interest margin
- Earning asset yield
- Balance sheet size
- Capital adequacy
- Governance/compliance
- ROE
- Industry Credit Growth
- Net advances

Distribution by AUM



Growth Drivers

- Internet penetration
- Increased digitization
- Embedded financing

Cost Drivers

- Funds cost
- Branch operations costs
- Digital/tech infrastructure cost
- Regulatory compliance & reporting cost

Challenges

- Rising cost of funds
- No option to refinance
- Adherence to regulatory compliance
- Increased scrutiny: Tighter norms on liquidity & asset-liability mismatches.

Revenue Drivers

- Interest on loans
- Processing & other fees & charges

Porter's Five Forces

- **Bargaining power of suppliers (High)**: Investors have various options to invest funds elsewhere
- **Bargaining power of buyers (High)**: Easy to switch from one provider to another; not very differentiated offerings
- **Competitive rivalry (High)**: Many players, similar offerings
- **Threat of new entrants (Moderate)**: Easier to get NBFC license compared to bank license
- **Threat of substitutes (Moderate)**: Private lenders and private/public banks are other alternatives

Key Market Trends

Emerging Patterns:
- **AUM Growth Outlook:** Expected to moderate to 13–15% in FY25–26 (vs ~23% in FY24).
- **Bank Lending to NBFCs slowed:** FY25 growth only 5.7%, April 2025 saw a ₹25,512 crore drop.
- FinTech NBFCs sanctioned ₹1.06 lakh crore personal loans (~10.9 crore loans) in FY24–25.
- **Utilization of AI-driven predictive financing:** leveraging both internal and external customer data to offer valuable financial solutions.
- **Voice and vernacular digital innovations:** enabling businesses to effectively engage with previously underserved segments.
- **Implementation of alternative credit scoring:** a necessity to address the financial needs of those without traditional banking access.
- **Government Policy Transformation**: Implementation of Scale Based Regulation - Establishment of a regulatory framework with four tiers based on NBFC size, operations, and perceived risk (2021).
- **Strategic Focus**: NBFCs now contribute to approximately 25% of the credit volume handled by banks, achieved by targeting sectors where banks exhibited inefficiencies.

Sales & Marketing → **Underwriting** → **Product & Pricing** → **Claims** → **Service**

Sales & Marketing
- Channel Mgt
- Lead Generation
- Distribution Mgt

Underwriting
- Underwriting Assessment
- Risk Management
- Asset Management

Product & Pricing
- Actuarial analysis
- Analytics
- Product Development

Claims
- Assessments
- Fraud Management
- Claims payout
- Adjudication

Service
- Customer Relationship Management
- D2C & Agent Based

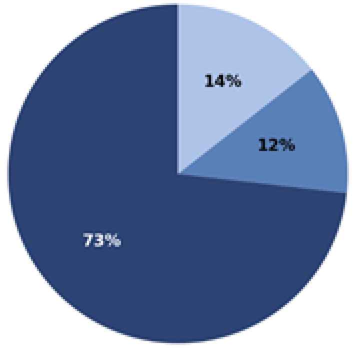
Industry Challenges

- Lack of organised data makes underwriting difficult which could lead to improper pricing
- Low insurance penetration to tier 2+ cities
- High claims ratios in health insurance post-COVID leading to profitability pressures.
- Low financial literacy and trust gap in tier 2/3 cities despite growth push.

Porter's Five Forces

- **Rivalry Among Existing Competitors (High):** with 70+ players in the industry; Higher exit barriers compared to entry barriers (new digital entrants + 24 life, 31 non-life + health insurers).
- **Bargaining Power of Suppliers (Moderate):** Large IT firms supporting tech; Limited number of re-insurers
- **Bargaining Power of Buyers (Moderate):** Individuals & SMBs have low power. Larges businesses & orgs have some
- **Threat of Substitutes (Low):** No real substitutes; Investment-oriented customers have other avenues
- **Threat of New Entrants (Low-Moderate):** Highly regulated industry.Other financial companies may enter

Sector Composition



- Life insurance (73%)
- Motor insurance (12%)
- Health insurance (14%)
- Misc (1%)

Cost Drivers

- Claims paid
- Product Development, mkt and sales support
- Operating and IT support
- Regulatory compliance costs
- Distribution/partner commission costs

Revenue Drivers

- Premiums collected
- Investment income (interest income)
- Fee income from riders/add-on covers

Premium growth

Life: ~12% CAGR (2017–23)

Non-life: ~11% CAGR (2017–23).

Key Market Trends

- **New Distribution Channels:** Bancassurance (Bank & Insurance Providers partner), NBFCs, and Online Insurance have widened their reach. App based insurance – PhonePe, Paytm, Policybazaar, Amazon Pay, and embedded insurance models (with e-commerce, travel, fintech apps).
- **InsurTech Startups:** 150+ startups in India. Global funding 7x in last 5 yrs. Emergence of New Customer Segments (Tier 2+, women, SMEs etc.), enhanced customer experience, Data & Analytics. Indian unicorns - Acko, Digit Insurance, PolicyBazaar
- **Ease in Regulatory Environment:** In Budget 2021, Government has increased FDI limits in insurance sector from 49% to 74%. Ever since, FDI remains at 74% but IRDAI is now easing product approval norms & pushing "Insurance for All by 2047" vision.
- IRDAI now allows launching health & most general insurance products without prior approval. Govt & IRDAI in-discussions to lower capital entry requirement from current ₹100cr
- IRDAI's Bima Trinity (2023–24):
  - Bima Sugam (online marketplace, launch in 2025)
  - Bima Vistar (standardized comprehensive policy)
  - Bima Vaahak (women-led rural distribution)

Contact Us

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Click Here

Happy Preparation !