

TEACHING NOTE

McDonald's Corporation

Case Overview

The case is written from the perspective of McDonald's CEO Steve Easterbrook. Easterbrook assumed office in March 2015, and the case highlights the company's recent and dramatic decline in performance amidst increasing competition. In addition, the case details Easterbrook's strategic initiatives in an attempted turnaround of McDonald's fortunes.

With some \$25 billion in sales (in 2017) and some 45,000 restaurants globally (thereof 27,000 in the U.S.), McDonald's remains the largest quick-service restaurant (QSR) chain. At the same time, McDonald's has been struggling on several fronts in recent years. Attempting to be "everything for everybody," McDonald's fell victim to being "stuck-in-middle," without a clear strategic position. With such a large global installed base of restaurants and franchisees, any changes coming from McDonald's headquarters require significant leadership, investment, and potential risk.

Easterbrook must confront several challenges if he is to return the company to its former glory. Among the many issues to address:

1. How to balance the need to introduce new items while addressing menu "bloat," which makes operations more complex while slowing service times?
2. Re-establishing the reputation for quality products. McDonald's food has received some of the poorest quality ratings ever in 2017
3. Appealing to millennials (one of the largest target segments that has both the disposable income and desire to eat out).
4. Diffusing broad-based criticism from labor activists who want the company to increase wages even further and who have filed suit to make headquarters liable for the labor practices of its franchises.

In brief, the company is amid its most serious turnaround situation, and needs to define a clear strategic position to deal with competitive challenges on several fronts.

Key Concepts

- Vision, mission, and values
- Core competency
- Business model
- Business unit and corporate strategy
- Industry and competitor analysis

Discussion Approach

This case provides a broad canvas that instructors can both reinforce core strategic management concepts, while also encouraging students to engage in open-ended and thought-provoking case discussion. It nudges business students to think more like executives: prioritizing information, developing a point of view, and supporting their arguments with data. While the case provides a veritable buffet of topics to choose from, the instructor should gently redirect the conversation to the most relevant strategic management topics.

When **redirecting the discussion to more course-specific content**, the teacher may follow up on students' initial comments with affirming, yet, challenging follow-up questions:

- Yes, and do you consider that a root cause of the problem or merely a symptom? Why?
- Yes, and how does that relate to the McDonald's business-level strategy?
- Yes, and do you believe that is an issue unique to McDonald's or all companies in this industry?
- Yes, and do you believe that is one of the top issues McDonald's should pursue? Why?

As a caveat, students may tend to offer personal opinions or perceptions about McDonald's because it is such a ubiquitous brand. This is particularly an issue with younger (i.e., undergraduate) students who may lack extensive work experience or exposure to non-B2C brands. Without invalidating those feelings towards McDonald's, we can challenge students to support their comments with **supporting evidence** such as:

- Yes, and what evidence from the case supports that position?
- Yes, and how would you argue that case in front of the McDonald's executive team?
- Yes, and what data points would give you the confidence that the issue was being resolved?

For strategists to truly affect change, they need to be able to Analyze, Formulate, Implement. This initial pasture focuses on the students' ability – with guidance from the instructor – to distill the key issues and logically structure their recommendations.

Suggested Discussion Questions

1. What is the strategic issue(s) that McDonald's needs to address?
2. What are McDonald's' core competencies?
3. What is McDonald's' business model? How does McDonald's make money?
4. Which trends in McDonald's' external environment are likely to have the greatest impact on the company's ability to sustain a competitive advantage?
5. What is McDonald's' strategy? Has it changed over the last few decades, and if so, how?
6. How should Easterbrook adapt the organizational structure of McDonald's to achieve his strategic plan?

Suggested Answers

1. What is the strategic issue(s) that McDonald's needs to address?

Students will likely gravitate to the most obvious parts of the case: product quality, changing customer preferences, diversity of new types of competition, and inputs costs. These are all pertinent, but the instructor has the opportunity to challenge the students' thinking by categorizing and prioritizing the topics for more coherent discussion flow and retention. For example, **Exhibit TN-1** stratifies the types of issues, and asks the group to rate the relevant urgency and importance of the issues. Depending on the instructors teaching objectives and the initial input from the students, the content and ratings may vary considerably.

This initial brainstorming of key challenges will lead to a deeper discussion into the company's core competencies, and perhaps more importantly, how those invisible unique strengths can help McDonald's weather the storm and reinvigorate the brand and business.

2. What are McDonald's' core competencies?

This case study covers McDonald's growth and maturity over many decades. It serves as an excellent backdrop for a robust discussion on the principles which define, and nuances which complicate, strategists' understanding of core competencies. Students should be conversant on the primary definition – that core competencies are invisible, unique strengths developed by an organization over a long time. Note: Students have the tendency to use “core competency” too loosely – often using it interchangeably with more common concepts like “strength” or “market position”. Core competency is much more than that.

While there are multiple ways to facilitate discussion, we encourage the instructor to continually tie the discussion back to the fundamental characteristics of core competencies as shown below. This will push the students' thinking beyond the surface observation of case facts and personal experience, to a more rigorous understanding of how integral, and often definitional, core competencies can be for a company's success (see **Exhibit TN-2**).

Core competencies:

- Allow a firm to differentiate its products and services from those of its rivals
- Are often learned by the organization over many decades, often through failures
- Are unique strengths that lie deep within the firm; find their expression through products and services
- Eventually lose their ability to yield a competitive advantage if not nourished and refined

McDonald's Core Competencies

While the precise wording will vary by student, it will likely resemble this statement: **Operational consistency to provide food and drink quickly and at a low-price point globally**. See **Exhibit TN-3** for a list of potential topics, reasons, and data elements from the case relating to this statement.

Discussion format #1: The instructor may choose to cold-call or ask questions of students. Note: this tends to elicit one-word answers or short phrases, like the ones shown above. The instructor can stress-test the student's response – asking “why?” or “how is that different from competitors?” By allowing the conversation with the student(s) to expand beyond the knee-jerk expression, the instructor can layer some of the implications of these core competencies. See the list of probing questions below.

Discussion format #2: Another method is to have students pair-up with their neighbor and write down a one-sentence summary of the core competencies. This has the advantage of allowing quieter or more introverted students to discuss their ideas with one person, prior to sharing with the larger class. It frees up the instructor to observe interactions, and safely cold-call on a student who has participated less in the class so far.

After 3–4 minutes (less time is better), select a few groups to share their core competency summary and ask them probing questions of WHY they chose those concepts and how it can be defended from the written case.

Probing questions:

- Why did you choose that word (consistency, global, brand etc.)?
- What data from the case supports that argument?
- What makes that unique to McDonalds and not to Wendy's and Subway?
- Do you think that applies as much today as it did in the past?
- What does McDonald's need to do to reinforce that core competency?

This case provides an excellent opportunity to reiterate the fundamental idea that strategy takes place over the long-term. In the case of McDonald's, their strategic positioning was created over multiple business cycles. They did not become Fortune 150 by accident, or overnight. Likewise, their core competencies require continual investment through both their capabilities, as well as their resources. For example, Ray Kroc described a three-legged stool supporting McDonald's' success as employees, franchisees/operators, and suppliers. Gartner has ranked McDonald's' supply chain as the second best in the world for the last three years.¹ USA Today is quoted as saying that McDonald's is safer than a kid's school lunch."²

The previous diagram provides a simplified way to see McDonald's and its virtuous cycle of core competencies, activities, competitive advantage and superior firm performance.

3. What is McDonald's' business model? How does McDonald's make money?

A business model describes how the company puts its strategy into action and makes money. This is a good contrast with the previous, and sometimes abstract, discussion of core competencies. In the most practical terms, the question we are posing to students is "How does McDonald's make money?"

While all students will have visited McDonald's at some point in their lives, only a few of them may be as familiar with the multiple ways that McDonald's makes money. We urge instructors to push the students' thinking beyond the obvious answers and get to the question of WHY does McDonald's do business this way, and does it still apply now that McDonald's has grown to be such a mature and global business?

- How does McDonald's make money?
- Why did McDonald's choose to franchise its businesses?
- Why does McDonald's collect royalties from revenues instead of profits?
- Why does McDonald's own the real estate and buildings?
- Why does McDonald's keep some company stores?

HOW DOES MCDONALD'S MAKE MONEY?

On the surface, the answer is quite simple. McDonald's serves food and drink to a large number of people and makes a margin on the sales. However, McDonald's is quite different from many other restaurant companies who own their stores—like Starbucks or Chipotle. McDonald's has four primary revenue streams:

- Franchise initiation fees – Fees collected with the granting of the franchise
- Franchise royalties – Fees collected as a percent of total store revenues
- Franchise rent – Rent collected on the land and buildings owned by corporation
- Company sales – Revenues from small percentage (< 7 percent) of company stores

For this reason, McDonald's financial performance depends on economic trends (e.g., discretionary budget for eating out), secular trends (e.g., consumer preferences and tastes), as well as the growth and performance of the franchise network. If McDonald's opens many new stores, they will receive a boost in one-time franchise start-up fee revenue. Instructors are encouraged to use this case to discuss concepts of the distribution channel and value chain.

A strong business model has individual elements which are complementary and reinforce each other. While McDonald's has an enduring brand and large marketing budget to communicate directly to end consumers (B2C), it also is operationally tied to its franchisees (B2B). It is this B2B element, which is at the core of the McDonald's business model and deserves students' attention.

WHY DID MCDONALD'S CHOOSE TO FRANCHISE?

Students will be able to answer these questions directly from the facts in the case. Franchising enabled McDonald's to grow quickly and take advantages of consumers' increasing discretionary income and willingness to eat outside the home. The instructor can mention to the students that there are two types of franchisees – wholesale and retail – so that some franchisees own one store, while others have a territory and operate dozens, and sometimes hundreds of locations. In fact, McDonald's recently sold 80 percent of its business in China to Citic (state-owned investment group) and the US private equity firm Carlyle. They are currently looking for partners to open an additional 1,500 stores in China, Hong Kong, and Korea.³ See Exhibit TN-4, "Organizing Economic Activity: Firms vs. Markets."

Thought-provoking questions to spark conversation:

- If franchising is the way to quickly expand the brand and reach, does it continue to serve McDonald's well – now that it has more than 12,000 free-standing locations and reached relative maturity? What other benefits does franchising have for McDonald's?
- What are the potential downsides of franchising and how has McDonald's mitigated the principal-agent problem?

WHY DOES MCDONALD'S COLLECT ROYALTIES FROM REVENUES INSTEAD OF PROFITS?

McDonald's collects up-front fees from new franchisees as well as on-going royalties as a percentage of the revenues. Note the potential conflict of interest between McDonald's who is paid from revenues, compared to the franchisee who makes money on residual profits. In this way, McDonald's has incentives to increase total volume and price, with arguably less concern on expenses and capital costs. In contrast, the franchisee has incentives to minimize expenses so that profit margins are as high as possible.

From McDonald's' point of view, this approach makes sense. McDonald's is not able to control the expenses and the operational efficiency of each store location. Hypothetically, a poorly run location could lose money, even if its revenues were the highest in the system. Additionally, this focused McDonald's on what it controls (brand, marketing, new product development) and the franchisee on what she controls (operational efficiency and quality control).

WHY DOES MCDONALD'S OWN ITS OWN REAL ESTATE AND BUILDINGS?

In many ways, McDonald's is both a restaurant company and a real estate company. Over the last 50 years, it has excelled at identifying prime locations to set up profitable and sustainable businesses. Rents generate approximately 25 percent of McDonald's revenues, and likely an even higher percentage of the profits. Since McDonald's has owned the land of many of its locations for dozens of years, the properties are fully depreciated and provide incredibly high profits. This also provides some control of the franchisee network, as the physical location and building is under the control of corporate McDonald's.

McDonald's was in the news over the last few years as investors regarding its real estate holdings. Some investors were eager for McDonald's to spin off its real estate holding (estimated at \$16–\$18 billion) into a separate Real Estate Investment Trust (REIT) to free up the “hidden value” of the land and buildings. Management at McDonald's declined saying that the real estate was an integral part of the business model.

WHY DOES MCDONALD'S KEEP COMPANY STORES?

Currently, McDonald's is reducing the number of its company stores. Like many hotel chains (e.g., IHG and Marriott), McDonald's has been pursuing an asset-light strategy, where franchisees take on most of the financial and operational risk. This allows McDonald's to focus on its core competencies (supply chain, operational efficiency, new product development, global branding). That said, McDonald's still maintains a healthy number of company stores to serve as a metaphorical test kitchen for new products and processes.

4. Which trends in McDonald's' external environment are likely to have the greatest impact on the company's ability to sustain a competitive advantage?

This is a case where trends in the external environment are exerting a strong influence on industry (and therefore firm) performance. Ask the students to perform a PESTEL analysis and then identify the two or three segments of the most strategic importance. Next, ask them to identify the specific trends and their likely impact on the industry. They should be able to support their analysis with data (see Exhibit TN-5).

POLITICAL / LEGAL

Trends in this segment are consistent with and positively reinforce the sociocultural shift toward greater health consciousness. Congress passed the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act in March 2010. While its primary emphasis was on health insurance, the Act also contained a stipulation that calorie counts must be displayed on all food service menus of chains with at least 20 units and that restaurants must provide additional nutritional information upon request. Increased transparency benefits restaurants that have healthier menus, but it creates significant challenges for those that do not. Appointees to the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) by the Trump administration make it less likely the lawsuit against McDonald's Corporation as employer for franchisee employees will succeed, consistent with prior legal precedent.

ECONOMIC

One key insight that can be shared with students here is that McDonald's as a low-cost options benefits from economic downturns. McDonald's was the strongest performer during the "Great Recession" (2008–2010) among all quick-service restaurants. Generally, low-cost leaders are less well positioned when the economy is doing well, and consumers have more disposable income. So, industry-level effects on McDonald's run counter to the business cycle.

The U.S. economy continues has bounced back from the 2008–2010 great economic recession. The unemployment rate has been cut in half from its 2009 peak at 10.0 percent to just 5.1 percent in by 2015, and per capita real disposable income is near record highs. Since the end of 2016, the economy has picked up further with the U.S. stock markets reaching all-time highs in 2017. By fall of 2017, the U.S. unemployment rate had further declined to 4.3 percent.

ENVIRONMENTAL

As a restaurant chain, McDonald's' variable costs are sensitive to changes in the prices for beef, cheese, milk, and other food inputs. Since McDonald's has both economies of scale and a well-established supply chain, cost of goods sold (COGS) have remained 60–65 percent since 2007. In 2016, Gartner ranked the supply chain at McDonald's as number two, one of the best across any industry, commenting that they have been able to achieve incredible consistency across more than 100 countries.⁴ McDonald's has been in the top 10 supply chain rankings from Gartner since 2011.

SOCIOCULTURAL

The U.S. population is becoming increasingly health conscious. The CDC estimates that roughly 18 percent of children aged six to 19 years are considered obese, which places them at a higher risk for cardiovascular disease, diabetes, bone and joint problems, sleep issues, and poor self-esteem. Obesity-related health care expenses in the United States total \$663 billion annually. This is causing customers to shift preferences away from beef in favor of chicken and other lean meats and to avoid saturated fats (which are used in frying).

This trend obviously presents a problem for a restaurant chain whose menu primarily features beef products and fried foods. In part because of its market dominance, McDonald's has been heavily criticized for its contribution to the obesity crisis. The company has been the target of lawsuits and an unflattering documentary charging that its food makes people fat. Other negative press has come from its lack of transparency about its use of animal fats, an exposé on "pink slime," and a confrontation between a nine-year-old girl and then-CEO Thompson at a board meeting.

TECHNOLOGICAL

The definition of "quick-serve" has changed dramatically over the last few years. While McDonald's has always prided themselves on serving food quickly (no need to look further than the timer displayed above the cash register and drive-ins), pioneers like Starbucks and Panera now routinely take orders electronically, and have them ready for patrons as they walk in the store. As such, McDonald's

is amid a significant upgrade to the ordering system and in-store experience; they are planning to have electronic ordering available in 25,000 stores and kiosks in 2,500 locations by the end of 2017.⁵

As a sign of their commitment to these facilities upgrades, McDonald's is paying up to 55 percent of the upgrade costs for their franchisees. These changes are considered "unprecedented" by franchisees because is a transformational plan, not just selling more equipment or décor. In a letter to franchisees, McDonald's said, "[A key component of its growth plan is] "transforming how customers experience our brand by modernizing the interior and exterior of our restaurants and leveraging hospitality and technology to enhance our customers' experience."⁶

5. What is McDonald's' strategy? Has it changed over the last few decades, and if so, how?

This open-ended question is an excellent way to gauge students' understanding of strategic management concepts year-to-date. After discussing core competencies and business models, students often incorrectly recite the company's strengths or market positioning as a proxy for strategy. It helps to disabuse the students of this misconception by reiterating some competitive strategy fundamentals:

- Strategy means being different; performing different activities or doing them differently
- Strategy is focused on the long-term and should be sustainable
- Competitive strategy is different from corporate strategy

For many years, McDonald's could carve out a clear competitive position as low-cost leader – pioneering the franchise fast food industry by providing reliable, affordable, and fast food to millions of customers globally. Over time, the hallmarks of McDonald's' advantage became more commonplace. It is difficult to argue that McDonald's has a uniquely superior supply chain, franchise model, and operations.

The instructor can ask the students to support their arguments with follow-up questions such as:

- What does McDonald's do differently?
- Do you believe that the competitive strategy at McDonald's is the same as it was 70 years ago? Why?
- What is the strategic positioning of McDonald's today? What are the trade-offs that McDonald's should make going forward?
- Strategy is deciding what not to do. What should McDonald's not do, going forward?

As McDonald's has grown – in some ways becoming the surrogate for the entire QSR industry – they cannot be as flexible or nimble as smaller competitors. They are too large to position themselves uniquely against a multitude of competitors and customer segments. In the most basic terms, they need to play their own game – focusing on their unique core competencies and optimizing their business model. In some ways, they are not competing against a benchmark, they are the benchmark. As an example, when McDonald's announced that they were transitioning to cage-free eggs, 400 businesses announced a similar change within four weeks.⁷

Easterbrook has launched several initiatives to focus on what made McDonald's famous in the first place: limited menu, high quality, and customer value.

- It pared back the bloated menu from over 200 items by discontinuing low-volume products, such as sandwich wraps. It reduced complexity by having one type of quarter-pounder with or without cheese, instead of four.
- It also improved the perceived quality by removing preservatives from the Chicken McNuggets and taking high-fructose corn syrup out of the hamburger buns.⁸ Finally, the quarter-pounders will use fresh beef starting in mid-2018, instead of the frozen patties that they have been using since the 1970s.⁹

In a similar way, the plan is for McDonald's to increase their franchisee-operated locations from 85 percent to 95 percent over the coming years. They have sold 1,750 struggling McDonald's in China and Hong Kong, and plan to sell the operations in Japan. Wall Street analysts seem to applaud this decision and brings McDonald's closer to its roots as a franchisee-led operation.

6. How should Easterbrook adapt the organizational structure of McDonald's to achieve his strategic plan?

As long as McDonald's tries to pursue both differentiation and cost leadership as part of its business-level strategy, it will have to find ways to reconcile the trade-offs inherent in these two approaches. This suggests transforming McDonald's into an *ambidextrous organization* to balance *exploitation* (applying current knowledge to enhance firm performance in the short term) with *exploration* (searching for new knowledge that may enhance a firm's future performance). Structurally, this implies the need to:

- Balance centralization with decentralization
- Develop multiple core competencies along the value chain
- Invest in both product and process innovations
- Create economies of scale and scope

Ambidextrous organizations frequently make use of the following techniques to resolve trade-offs across internal value chain activities and time:

- Flexible and lean manufacturing systems
- Total quality management
- Just-in-time inventory management
- Six Sigma
- Use of teams in the production process
- Decentralized decision making at the level of the individual customer

Another avenue is to ask students to analyze whether (and how) Easterbrook's initiatives are likely to help McDonald's increase its ambidexterity as an organization, and thereby avoid (or escape) staying "stuck-in-the-middle."

Additional Resources

1. Articles

- "McDonald's is going for healthier fare and greater digitisation," *Economist*, June 28, 2017.
- "McDonald's 'Secret Sauce' for Supply Chain Success", *Supply Chain247*, December 20, 2016.
- "McDonald's Boosts Its Payout for Franchise Upgrades", *Wall Street Journal*, May 11, 2017.
- "McDonald's to Switch to Fresh Beef in Quarter Pounders", *Wall Street Journal*, March 30, 2017

2. Videos

- McDonald's Progress Report from CEO Easterbrook, *Fortune*,
- <http://fortune.com/fortune500/mcdonalds/> (4:03 min).
- McDonald's CEO on Turnaround Plan, Customer Growth, Bloomberg, July 26, 2017 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xfn-D654m7s> (12:27 min).

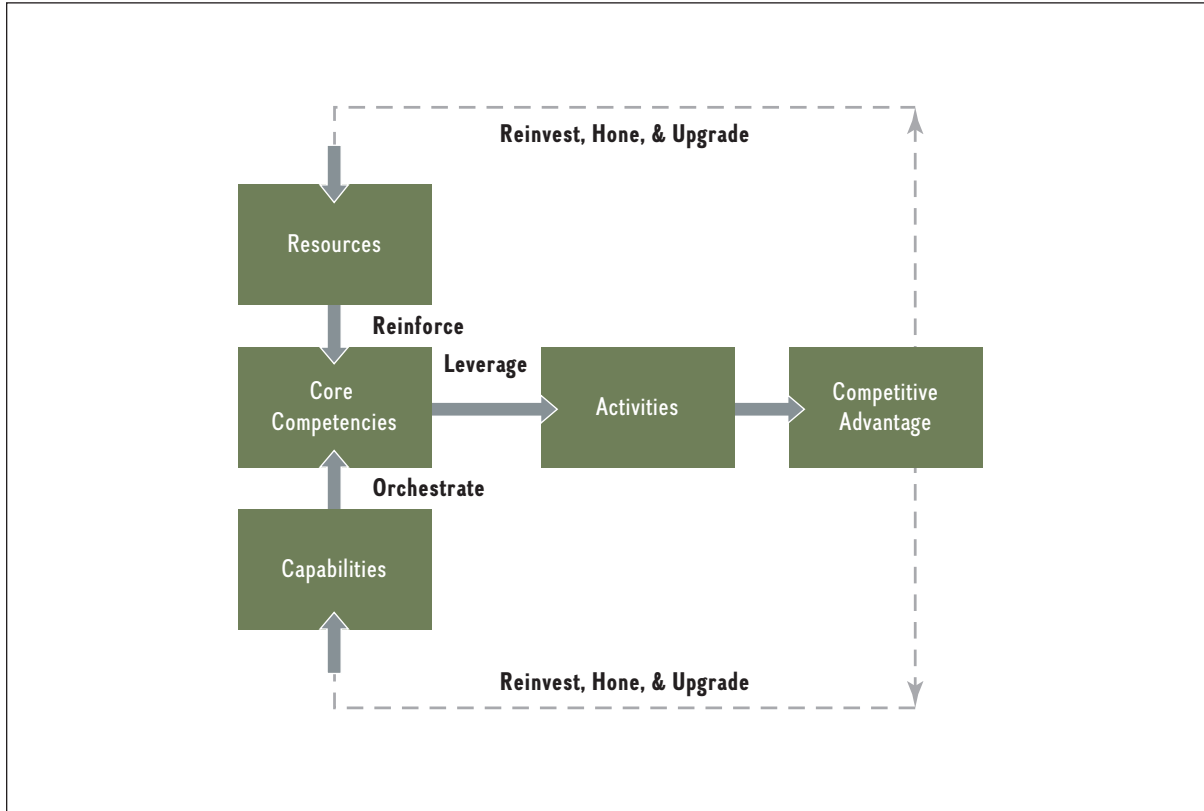
EXHIBIT TN-1 Strategic Issues McDonald's Needs to Address and Their Relevant Urgency and Importance

| | Challenge | Importance (L, M, H)* | Urgency (L, M, H) |
|-------------|---|----------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Customer | Lower willingness to pay because of perception of low quality, less healthy option | H | M |
| Company | Ability to maintain operational efficiency and lower costs while managing broader menu, and diverse geographical locations / requirements | H | H |
| Competition | Competition from low-priced incumbents (e.g., Taco Bell), fast casual (e.g., Panera Bread), and premium hamburgers (e.g., Shake Shack) | M | M |

* L, M, H = Low, Medium, High

Source: Courtesy of F.T. Rothaermel.

EXHIBIT TN-2 Linking Core Competencies, Resources, Capabilities, and Activities to Competitive Advantage



Source: Rothaermel, F.T. (2018), Strategic Management, 4th edition. Burr Ridge, IL: McGraw-Hill..

EXHIBIT TN-3 McDonald's Core Competencies: Key Words and Their Potential Topics from the Case

| Key Word | Potential topics, reasons, data elements from case |
|----------------|---|
| Consistency | Hamburger U, supply chain, branding |
| Food and Drink | Product line extension (beyond hamburgers), Café, product innovation |
| Fast | Customized equipment, service kiosks, speed-related measurement/metrics |
| Low-Price | Economies of scale, menu selection, quality vs. price trade-offs |
| Globally | Supply chain, standard menu vs. local customization |

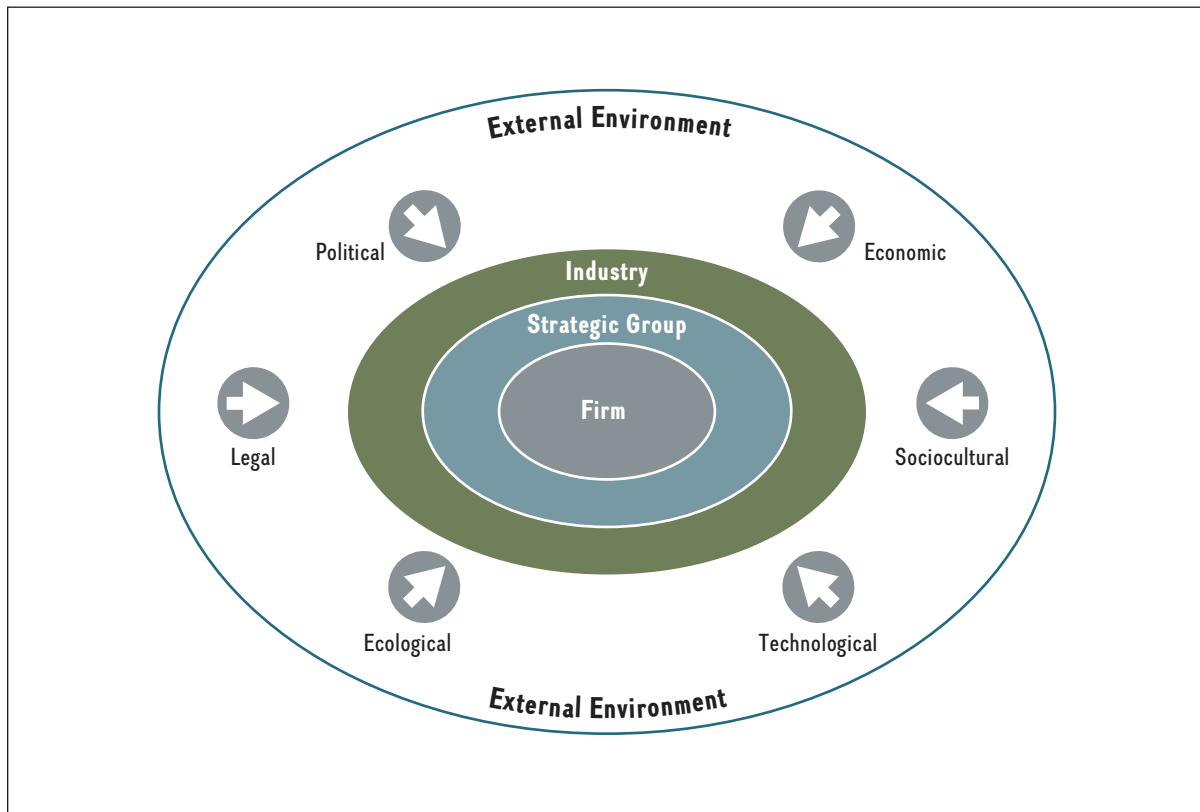
Source: Courtesy of F.T. Rothaermel.

EXHIBIT TN-4 Organizing Economic Activity: Firms vs. Markets

| | Firm | Markets |
|---------------|--|---|
| Advantages | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Command and control <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fiat - Hierarchical lines of authority • Coordination • Transaction-specific investments • Community of knowledge | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High-powered incentives • Flexibility |
| Disadvantages | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administrative costs • Low-powered incentives • Principal-agent problem | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Search costs • Opportunism <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hold-up • Incomplete contracting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Specifying & measuring performance - Information asymmetries • Enforcement of contracts |

Source: Rothaermel, F.T. (2018), Strategic Management, 4th edition. Burr Ridge, IL: McGraw-Hill..

EXHIBIT TN-5 The Firm within Its External Environment, Industry, and Strategic Group, Subject to PESTEL Factors



Source: Rothaermel, F.T. (2018), Strategic Management, 4th edition. Burr Ridge, IL: McGraw-Hill.

Endnotes

- 1 Kate Vitasek, "McDonald's 'Secret Sauce' for Supply Chain Success," SupplyChain247, last modified December 20, 2016, http://www.supplychain247.com/article/mcdonalds_secret_sauce_for_supply_chain_success.
- 2 Peter Eisler, Blake Morrison, and Anthony DeBarros, "Fast-Food Standards For Meat Top Those For School Lunches," *USA Today*, accessed October 2017, https://usatoday30.usatoday.com/news/education/2009-12-08-school-lunch-standards_N.htm.
- 3 "McDonald's Agrees China Franchise Sale," BBC News, last modified January 9, 2017, <http://www.bbc.com/news/business-38552276>.
- 4 "Gartner Announces Its Ranking of the 2016 Supply Chain Top 25," SupplyChain 247, last modified May 20, 2016, http://www.supplychain247.com/article/gartner_announces_its_rankings_of_the_2016_supply_chain_top_25.
- 5 "McDonald's is Going for Healthier Fare and Greater Digitisation," *Economist*, last modified January 28, 2017, <https://www.economist.com/news/business/21715704-it-may-soon-be-surpassed-starbucks-mcdonalds-going-healthier-fare-and-greater>.
- 6 Julie Jargon, "McDonald's Boosts Its Payout for Franchise Upgrades," *Wall Street Journal*, last modified May 11, 2017, <https://www.wsj.com/articles/mcdonalds-boosts-its-payout-for-franchise-upgrades-1494542999>.
- 7 "McDonald's CEO on Turnaround Plan, Customer Growth," YouTube, accessed October 2017, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xfn-D654m7s>.
- 8 "McDonald's is Going for Healthier Fare and Greater Digitisation," *Economist*, last modified January 28, 2017, <https://www.economist.com/news/business/21715704-it-may-soon-be-surpassed-starbucks-mcdonalds-going-healthier-fare-and-greater>.
- 9 Julie Jargon, "McDonald's to Switch to Fresh Beef in Quarter Pounders," *Wall Street Journal*, last modified March 30, 2017, <https://www.wsj.com/articles/mcdonalds-to-switch-to-fresh-beef-in-quarter-pounders-1490878800>.