

SPORTS DIRECT

Over the summer, Sports Direct's share price took a considerable hit after the publication of their full-year results. The results revealed the shock news that the firm had been hit by a £600m tax bill from the Belgian authorities. This news, alongside the firm's recent acquisition of struggling retailer House of Fraser has weighed heavily on the company's profitability. This story highlights the constant threats that the external environment can present to a business.

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SuperGroup.Plc

The fashion retailer announced in July that it would launch its first website in India to capitalise on the growth potential in this large market. Up until now, Superdry has largely sold to the Indian market via a joint venture agreement with an established local brand called Reliable Brands. This move is a great example of how a business can exploit technology to exploit an international strategy without committing to significant fixed physical costs.

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The American sportswear giant celebrated the one-year anniversary of its European "Sneakers" app. The app creates a platform for customers to trawl through the company's vast collection of trainers in a tech-friendly way. In a business sense, it has revolutionised the consumption channel for Nike trainers and has introduced some creative marketing tricks to entice customers and boost the sales performance of the footwear division. This is a prime example of how technology has adapted the Marketing Mix for a firm.

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One of the largest toymakers in the world, Hasbro (the makers of the Transformers toys and the Monopoly boardgame) announced that it would buy the firm Entertainment One for £3.3bn. This attractiveness of this firm lies in its ownership of some of the most popular children's TV shows in the market such as Peppa Pig. The global appeal of cartoons will help Hasbro catapult its reputation and brand into a host of different underdeveloped international markets.

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Between January and July, the UK's entrepreneurial tech sector received a record level of investment from foreign investors and companies. The investment figures illustrated the underlying strength of the UK's tech start-up culture and provides these high-growth but high-risk firms with the source of funding to become more competitive. It is important to note that these figures have been driven up by the fall in the value of the pound over this period (makes it cheaper for foreign investors to invest in the UK).

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The boss of M&S's clothing division has been removed after the company announced disappointing sales figures which reflect long-term weaknesses in this division. Weak growth in food and clothes sales has weighed down the bottom line of the company and the firm has now fallen out of the FTSE 100 for the first time since the 1980s. This move represents a strategic change of direction from one of most high-profile British retailers. The challenge for the firm is how it can rediscover its appeal with its target market.

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The discount chain Poundland announced that it will begin experimenting with a series of special products priced at less than a £1. This might sound counterintuitive, but the firm is looking to source new business opportunities by raising revenue by cutting prices. This is a great example of a firm experimenting with its pricing strategy to exploit the PED value of some of its products and boost overall business revenue.

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This summer, the German sports brand Adidas lost a key trademark battle in the European courts after it was ruled that the iconic three stripe logo used by the sportswear firm was not "distinctive" enough to meet EU trademark requirements. Large reputable companies like Adidas always attempt to protect their intellectual property to prevent smaller firms commercially capitalising on an idea or design originally conceived by the firm with the resources to create it in the first place.

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COSTA COFFEE

One of the largest coffee shop brands in the world has had to face off allegations from a collection of staff members across the UK in regards to employee working conditions and rights. The allegations have been denied by the company, but an internal investigation has been launched to get to the root of the problems. This explains why it is important for firms to maintain a strong employer-employee relations and to manage staff in the right way.

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