

### Introduction

It's a framework for defining strategy. And like most brilliant things, its effectiveness lies in its simplicity. For many businesses, especially smaller companies, 'strategy' is a luxury. They are too busy keeping customers happy right now and keeping payroll paid this week to enjoy contemplating a high-falutin' strategy. Regardless of company size, the 3C framework is an excellent tool for defining strategy. Even if your company is at a point where strategy feels like a luxury, the 3 C model will help you think about strategy — for that day when it becomes not just a reality but a necessity for your business.

The 3 Cs in the model are Company, Customer and Competitor. At the intersection of these 3 things is good strategy:

<http://www.profitguide.com/manage-grow/strategy-operations/the-3-cs-of-a-great-b2b-marketing-strategy-30480>

### The Idea

The idea is that at the intersection of a company's strengths, the needs of a customer group and the offerings of competitors lies the opportunity. If your company is fantastic at building custom software for insurance brokers and there is a large group of insurance brokers out there who need software to help them be more successful, and there are no other companies out there building software for insurance brokers, then wow, you have your strategy. Of course real life is a bit more complicated than that — but the framework works, you usually just add more detail.. Here's how to put it to use:

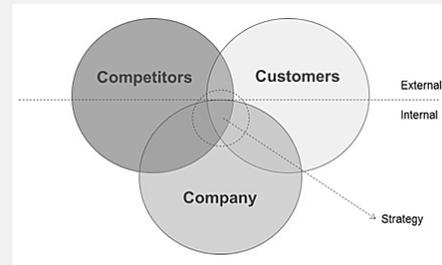
### The Company — the internal analysis section

3 key questions to answer:

1. What are our competencies (what are we really good at?)
2. What are our aspirations (what do we want to do?)
3. What resources do we have?

The next two sections are external analysis. Companies can do a workshop among management, sales and customer service to get the answers to these — and it's almost always helpful to get independent research among customers and on customers (although almost every company I know thinks they already know all the answers). They do tend to know a lot, but not everything.

### The 3C Model



### Customers

1. Who are the customers in the market? (on a segment basis — might be by vertical, function, geography, company size or other parameter)
2. What are the needs of the various customers? (again, this is on a segment basis)
3. How do they buy? (segment)
4. How much do they buy? (ultimately, your market has to be big enough to support your company in achieving its growth goals)

### Competitors

1. What are competitors offering (and not offering) that your customers need?
2. What can competitors not easily offer that you might offer?
3. How do competitors go to market (sell, service, market) that does not connect well with customers?

### Your marketing strategy

Your marketing strategy becomes apparent. You'll be able to define:

- What you offer
- How you offer it
- What your unique value proposition and market positioning is
- Your message that will connect with your target market