

## Research Task

In preparation for the **AS Business studies course**, you are going to work individually and conduct research into **TWO** of the following businesses. It is vital that you have a detailed knowledge and understanding of a range of large businesses.

<b>Sky</b>	<b>ITV</b>
<b>Marks and Spencer's</b>	<b>IAG - British Airways</b>
<b>Costa Coffee</b>	<b>Facebook</b>
<b>Morrisons</b>	<b>Primark</b>
<b>Aston Martin</b>	<b>Ryanair</b>
<b>Apple</b>	<b>Dominos</b>
<b>Boots</b>	<b>John Lewis Partnership</b>

You will need to research the following areas and collect evidence of your investigations. At the end of this work you are expected to submit a **portfolio of research** that enables you to deliver **presentation** to the rest of the class.

### Areas to investigate and present findings

#### Topic: Source of competitive advantage

1. What sort of company is this – what is the legal structure, who founded the organisation? Who is now running the organisation? What do the leadership of the firm think are their current challenges?
2. What is their current market position? Who are their competitors? What is their marketing strategy?
3. What is the public image of this company? What do they have a reputation for? Are they responsible?
4. What product / service do they provide and what is the nature of the market in which they operate?
5. Who are their customers, have their customers changed over time? Has demand been affected by recession/GFC?
6. How has the organisation changed over time? Increase/ decrease in size, product range etc.
7. How are they doing now? What are their strengths and weaknesses?
8. What mistakes / problems has the organisation made? What threats do they need to tackle?

9. What is their financial position like, have they spent a great deal of money, do they have much debt, are they making any profits?
10. Who are the principal shareholders in the business?
11. Who are the stakeholders in this business, have their needs always been met?
12. What advice would you give the company in the future? Will the company still be around in ten years' time?

(Hint: use each of the points above and answer each question in detail.) **TASK:**

Having conducted your research you will need to **assess** this business carefully, considering the **strengths and weaknesses** of the firm alongside the **opportunities and threats** it faces. You will then be expected to give **strategic advice** for the future having judged the strategic decisions already taken by this firm. **Is it surviving or growing?**

**You will be providing a folder of information, organised and structured, which will be used in AS Business.** You can choose a company of your own to research besides those listed.

It might be wise to divide your research into key functional areas to collect information:  
Marketing | Finance | Operations | People | Objectives and Strategy

One of the key theories you will learn in Business A Level is that proposed by Michael Porter. Research, then write a two side explanation of **Porter's Five Forces** using business examples.

**Email your topic to:** [atho2866@johnmason.oxon.sch.uk](mailto:atho2866@johnmason.oxon.sch.uk)



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*Reply slip*

Name	My company is....

**BRING YOUR RESEARCH TO YOUR FIRST LESSON IN SEPTEMBER.**