

Self-knowledge is a major contributor to long-term export success. An analysis of strengths and weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) should be part of the Export Planning process. It will help you identify the next steps for your company to take and potential export opportunities.



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# SWOT analysis

## outline

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## what a SWOT analysis does

A SWOT analysis looks at your company's:

- Strengths - to build on
- Weaknesses – to cover
- Opportunities – to capture
- Threats – to defend against

It aims to:

- Reveal your competitive advantages
- Analyse your prospects for sales and profitability
- Prepare your company for problems
- Allow for the development of contingency plans

## what strengths and weaknesses are examined

The strengths and weaknesses analysis is an internal examination that focuses on your past performance, present strategy, resources and capabilities. It is based on an analysis of facts and assumptions about the company, including:

- Sales
- Products
- Markets
- Financial resources (debt to asset ratio and personal equity)
- Capabilities/scalability
- People and skills (in particular marketing, export experience)
- Capital structure suppliers
- Customers (market research)
- Intellectual property

## what opportunities and threats are examined

The opportunity and threat analysis is carried out by examining external factors in your domestic and export market(s). This is usually broken down into environmental factors and competitors, including:

### Environmental

- Demographic
- Economic
- Political/legal
- Sociological
- Environmental
- Technology
- Cultural

## Competitors

- Market segments
- Products
- Prices
- Promotion
- Distribution
- Capability
- Resources
- Ownership
- New entrants
- Substitute products
- Suppliers customers
- Product life cycle
- Risk and cost of intellectual property violation of your product

## doing a SWOT analysis

Use the New Zealand Trade and Enterprise SWOT worksheet on the following page.

The items listed in the SWOT are typical of the issues companies identify during a SWOT analysis. Tick the box which shows how each issue will affect your company, and whether it has a high or low influence on your company's performance. The final analysis should help you develop short and long term business goals and action plans, business plan, export plan and an annual marketing plan.

To fulfil some of the information needs under the opportunities/threats analysis, may require market research. New Zealand Trade and Enterprise is resourced to assist with this.

## plan to succeed

Planning is essential if a company is to operate efficiently and be a successful and profitable exporter. New Zealand Trade and Enterprise provides a wide range of services to export businesses, including assistance with planning and strategy. Our goal is to work in partnership with the New Zealand export community, so that exporters can maximise export profitability and increase foreign exchange that flows into the country. We work with companies of all sizes and at all stages of export readiness, customising solutions to meet their needs.

## SWOT worksheet

Download the SWOT analysis worksheet from [www.nzte.govt.nz/get-ready-to-export](http://www.nzte.govt.nz/get-ready-to-export)

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