Strategic integration in the Swedish nutritional online and offline market

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ABSTRACT
The purpose of this thesis is to investigate how e-business might be integrated into a strategical framework. The strategical framework was based on the Nilsson and Rapp (2005) strategical framework, and e-business strategies were mainly based on customer relationship management strategies that are used in e-commerce companies. We selected Gröndals Apotek, Nu3 and Apotek Hjärtat as our sample, semi-structured interviews as our method and we found that given the external factors in the business environment, retaining and extending online marketing strategies could be integrated into the corporate strategy without taking into consideration of the firm-size. In addition, we found that e-business acquisition strategies such as SEM and blogs were more useful for different firm-sizes in order to create strategic congruence of integrating e-business into the corporate strategy. Lastly, online customer service and pricing were two features that could be appropriate features in the integrated online marketing strategies that aim’s in displaying the competitive advantage.
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1 Introduction

In this chapter we start with a background to our problem statement, followed by the problem statement and purpose and ends with an outline of our study.

1.1 Background

In recent years, the internet has grown and become more important to our lifestyle. People are buying products via their mobile phones and more companies are trying to adapt to this change. One of the main drivers of incorporate e-business strategy is that it can increase sales through reaching a larger customer base (Perrot, 2005). But still there are companies that have chosen to only sell on either offline or online platforms. Amazon is one of the companies that has chosen to only sell on online platform and has become one of the icons for successful online companies. Today, Amazon’s market value is approximate 585 percent higher than the combined value of their offline competitors Target’s and Staples market cap (Amazon 2016, Target 2016, Staples 2016). This result is perhaps an indication that through good online marketing one can outcompete its competitors. However, there are still companies that strive on being purely offline companies. One of the reasons might be that it poses practical risk of introducing e-business into the company. Certain industries such as the pharmaceutical sector might not be inclined to sell their medicines through online channels due to security reasons. Chaffey (2009) mentions that one of the practical risks of having an e-business is hackers obtaining personal and credit info. In the Swedish nutrition market there seems to be a development towards implementing e-business strategy into existing strategy. E-commerce companies in Sweden stood for 45,1 percent of the nutrition market and has become the fourth largest sales channel for vitamins and supplements in 2015 (Svenskegenvård, 2015).

In accordance to Chaffey (2009, p. 260) there is a limited research on how the companies have integrated e-business strategy into their existing strategy. In addition, a European Commission study (2008), found that even though that 95 % of the majority of the business in EU countries have internet access, there are significant differences between the levels of Internet access of micro-business, SME’s and large companies. It’s seems that micro-business and SME’s may have lower levels of access than larger companies and that micro-business have the lowest Internet access. This might imply that larger companies may have greater capacity to integrate e-business strategy than the smaller companies. Different firm-sizes might have their own reasons behind implementing or not implementing e-business strategies. We aim to fill the academic gap
in the limited research on integrating e-business into existing strategy in terms of e-business strategy’s implications.

1.2 Problem statement and purpose
The development of the internet has generated a new market for online retailing and is currently increasing as a means of retailing. On one hand, this produces new obstacles for companies that operates only in the offline sector on how they can adapt their strategies in order to meet new customer preferences. But on the other hand, it also generates growth prospects for e-commerce companies, as more customers tries to buy products through the web. This trend is seen on the Swedish nutrition market, where e-commerce companies have the largest proportion of the market. A market where more companies are implementing e-business strategies, a joint strategic framework might be useful for these companies as using only a traditional strategy might not generate a sustain competitive advantage in the long run. Thus our empirical contribution aims at providing a general strategical framework for companies that want to work on the both with online and offline strategy. Our contribution to the academic world, is to fill the gap of the limited research about integrated e-business into existing strategy. The purpose of this paper aims to investigate how a company can integrate e-commerce strategies into their overall strategy. To clarify the purpose, the following research question has been asked:

*How can e-business be integrated into a strategic framework?*

1.3 Outline
The objective of this research paper is to investigate how e-business can be integrated into a strategic framework. In order to accomplish this, the starting point is Nilsson and Rapp (2005) strategic congruence model, which is used to capture companies’ strategic frameworks. Additional theories such as five generic strategies, customer lifecycle and global brand architecture are used in order to investigate how e-business strategies might be integrated into the strategic model. The next step in our research paper was to conduct semi-structured interviews with managers from Nu3, Apotek Hjärtat and Gröndals Apotek in order to get expertise knowledge of both offline and online company’s strategic frameworks. Based on the interviews and our theoretical framework, we found that the customers from all the three companies had similar preferences. For instance, it seemed like customers wanted a customer service with high product knowledge and that company offers a broad assortment containing unique and value-priced products. The internal strategies that were used by the companies in our sample were
similar in the context of selecting, extending and retaining the customer at the company. The
main differential strategy was the acquisition strategy between the companies. This was due to
differences in the firm-sizes, which gave us the conclusion that strategic congruence between the
online acquisition strategy and corporate strategy was dependent on the firm-size. Meanwhile
online extending and retaining strategies could be integrated into the company regardless of firm-
size. Lastly, the common factors that all companies contributed to be one of the main factors to
achieve competitive advantage were customer service and pricing. Thus we concluded that if e-
business is integrated into a company’s strategic framework, these two features could be
appropriate features in the marketing that aim’s in displaying the customer value proposition, e.g.
the competitive advantage of the company. The disposition of our essay could be summarized
into the following figure:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Introduction</th>
<th>• Purpose: How can e-business be integrated into a strategic framework</th>
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Figure 1. Summary of the disposition of our thesis
2 Theoretical framework

This chapter consists of the strategic congruence model, customer life cycle model, global brand architecture and corporate governance. We have used the strategic congruence model as a reference model for companies’ strategic frameworks. Furthermore, we have used customer life cycle model and integrate e-business strategies into this model in order to better understand how e-business strategies might be integrated into the strategic framework. The remaining theories have been used as supporting components to better understand the companies’ strategic framework’s.

2.1 Strategic framework

This section describes the strategic framework model, its different variables and the relationship between them.

![Figure 2. Nilsson and Rapp (2005) strategic congruence model](image)

**2.1.1 Environment**

A strategy is in general influenced by its environment, but it is also affecting its business environment to some extent. This could be for example when a company introduces a new business model it may cause a change among the competitors and the market itself. Thus the management cannot control all the factors, but the focus will be on the variables in the environment where the companies can interact. Customers, suppliers and other major stakeholders affect the basic features of the environment. The contingency theory and researches within this study area have dedicated a significant attention to one specific feature, the uncertainty aspect. The uncertainty aspect is explained by the possibility to foresee both major and minor changes in the business environment, for example research and development, changes
in trends and customer preferences. The uncertainty factors will make the company in need to invest in developing projects without being aware of future demand patterns. A low degree of uncertainty represents a stable business environment, where the company can take time to make correct decision-making, which is the opposite of a turbulent environment. In this figure, the degree of uncertainty is a central factor in the environment, the significant part of corresponding to external demands with internal resources (Nilsson and Rapp, 2005).

The information technology has an impact on the external environment and contributes to significant changes in the business for many industries. The network-based global e-commerce business models are increasing and are starting to dominate the market (Wymbs, 2000). These changes are contributing to the overall market and many organizations are now using the internet in order to meet their client needs and to globalize their business (Kraemer and Dedrick, 2000).

2.1.2 Integrated Control
The control system of the company is a significant instrument for executing a strategy for the management. The control system is also an important tool in the development of new strategies, for example by noticing company’s activities that do not create value. The focus within control system is on the use to create an internal fit, which means correlating the company’s overall strategy with its internal capabilities and resources and its expected performance (Nilsson and Rapp, 2005).

2.1.3 Strategic Congruence
The figure 2 in 2.1 assumes the following: The environment is considered to influence the internal resources, such as the control system, which is most common done by mediation of strategy. The management is in position to decide a strategy that is well matched to its business environment (external fit) (Nilsson and Rapp, 2005). The focus is on the company’s environment and its strategy, to create a perfect correlation between them. It is not enough that such congruence exists in a small portion of the company. In order to coordinate the company’s business units effectively and build competitive strength it is an advantage to have coordinated strategies on an upper level, which further will create a high degree of strategic congruence (Nilsson and Rapp, 2005).

This could be illustrated through Thomson five generic strategies. It can be identified on the market by focusing one of the following five generic strategies; being an overall low-cost
provider or differential strategy, targeting a narrow or a broad market, or the best cost strategy that combines all the four generic strategies.

If a company is an overall low-cost provider compared to its competitors, the company can take advantage over its competitors by offering lower price compared to them. A low-cost strategy is often suited for a high price-competition in the market and there are not many alternatives to differentiate the company’s product. If the company has advantage of lower price to grab sales from competitors and if buyers do not care about product differentiation, then they tend to buy the lowest-priced brand. This is an example of utilizing internal resources in terms of price and at the same time focusing on business environment showing price sensitivity. The risk of this strategy is that it can lead to a negative price setting spiral with competitors and result in low profitability. One way to reduce this profitability risk is to offer the same price as the market and generate higher profit margin (Thompson, 2015).

If a company chooses to adapt a differentiated strategy, a company will then produce goods with tangible or intangible features that will distinguish the company from its competitors. The reason behind a differentiated strategy is that a company hopes to set a price premium, while selling more units and making customers loyal to the brand. In accordance to Thompson (2015), product differentiation works best when the buyer needs products that are diversified. When there are various customer preferences of products or services leads to a need for adapting these features into the company’s product or services. There are several ways to achieve a differentiation strategy. One way is to increase marketing and brand building activities in order to create customer loyalty as well as setting the company apart from their competitors. For example, even the most loyal Pepsi or Coke consumers cannot distinguish the products apart, but they are still loyal to their company. Another way to differentiate from your competitors is by improving customer service in terms of delivery, returns and repair, which can be useful in creating product features that other companies lack. In other words, it can be expressed as utilizing its internal capability as customer service and caring about the business environment and the customer need of product differentiation. The risk of executing a differentiation strategy is if the product or services are easy to duplicate and the business will most likely fail in the long run (Thompson, 2015).
Companies can also target a narrow market. A company should focus on a narrow market when there is a small risk that the market leaders will compete in the narrow market and when the niche market has the potential of growth and profit. Examples of companies that have adapted this strategy are Rolls-Royce, Louis Vuitton and YouTube. The risk of adapting this strategy is that the niche member’s preference might shift towards similar preferences for the majority of the buyers (Thompson, 2015).

Finally, the best cost strategy is a strategy that combines all the four above-stated strategies. The company should target offering good quality products with features that correspond to the competitor’s products, but to a lower price on the middle market price range. This strategy is suited for buyers preferring product differentiation and value for money products. The downside of this strategy is that the company may fail in competition with the companies using lower cost and high-end differentiation and thus making its product or service less attractive to customers (Thompson 2015).

The five generic strategies were used in order to illustrate how the corporate strategy is related to the customer relationship strategies in order to create strategic congruence.

2.1.4 Competitive Advantage
Porter claims the importance of knowledge of the present competitive arena (external fit) to be able to create competitive advantage. Additionally, it is important to recognize and understand the internal fit, how to utilize the internal structures in positioning the product offering. Only when there is a high level of congruence between the internal fit and external fit, a strong competitive position in the market can arise. A strategy that is well integrated in the company’s business environment, but has a lack of control system that offers support for its business approach will not create value and vice versa (Nilsson and Rapp, 2005). For instance, as previously discussed in strategic congruence, Pepsi and Cola have created a competitive advantage by utilizing their internal resources in terms of brand while taking into account the business environment in terms of product differentiation (Thompson, 2015).

2.1.5 Performance
The performance is correlated with the value creation of the company’s crucial stakeholders. Some scholars argue that customers and the employees are also crucial stakeholders who must be taken into consideration when discussing the performance. The performance is defined as the
degree value level created for employees, customers and shareholders. Overall, to have high performance and create a value, a strong competitive position is the key, with a consideration of all three groups (Nilsson and Rapp, 2005). One example how the business environment and the internal capabilities worked together in order to create a strategic congruence was when Apple introduced a payment system. Apple has introduced its new payment system due to the customer preferences, constant changes in the telecom market and opinion of majority of the retailers who agreed that it’s less complicated to register your payment through your smartphone rather than pull out cash. Apple has introduced a payment system, Apple Pay, and Samsung has announced that they will also have a payment application in order to create added value to customers. This seems to be as a strategy that more and more companies are implementing to add value for customers through payment app. In 2014 consumers made 4 billion dollars off in-store purchase through their devices. Scholars in this study area predict that 2019 sales will increase rapidly to 34 billion dollars. In other words, it is time to get rid of the traditional way of paying and replace it with a digital one. Paying by phone is not faster or easier than using a card, but perhaps mobile-pay providers will use rewards to motivate the customer. “Retailers seem to think that if you just offer mobile capability, people will use it,” Shevlin notes, “but they’re going to need to give consumers a real benefit.” (Weisser, 2015).

2.2 Supporting components for the strategic framework

2.2.1 Customer Life Cycle Model
The internal capabilities are important when it comes to retaining customers. According to Chaffey (2009) one necessity in order to sustain a business in the long-term, is having long-term relationships with customers. As acquiring new customers can be expensive and one of the benefits with acquiring customers through offline channels is that it is often cheaper than acquiring customers through online channels. A study made by Reichheld and Schefter (2000) shows that customer acquisition through online channels are 20-30 percent more expensive than traditional customer acquisition. However, the study also shows that if an online company can retain only five percent of the customers, it can increase their profits by 25 to 95 percent. Based on this, the authors Reichheld and Schefter (2000) argue that the profitability increases faster in online companies than traditional companies, when customer loyalty increases. In order to improve the customer relationship during a lifecycle, Chaffey (2009) suggest the following customer lifecycle of Select, Acquire, Retain and Extend as an appropriate strategic framework:
Customer selection is the first stage where a company defines the targeted customer. Important factors to consider when selecting customers are their value, lifecycle and how to reach them (Chaffey, 2009).

Customer acquisition is the second step, which consists of the methods to converting sales leads into customer for the selected customer segment. The main objectives for customer acquisition are minimizing acquisition cost, using the right channels and optimizing service quality. There are different kinds of strategies in order to accomplish this such as Search Marketing, Online PR and Online Partnership. Search marketing aims at optimizing the search traffic to the company by marketing channels such as SEO and SEM. The main advantage of using these channels is to more accurately target the customer segment and to get higher traffic volume. However as search marketing is dependent on competition and backlinks, it may have negative impact on the design of the website and the ranking algorithm. Online PR aims at maximizing brand awareness on third-party web sites. It can be done for instance by bloggers displaying a company’s product on their blog or chatting about the company’s products. A company can often through bloggers find right customer at a low cost. Marketing through bloggers can also improve SEO by backlinks in the blog. However, the drawback of this strategy is that it can be time consuming. Online Partnership aims at managing the links through to a website. It means for instance sponsorships and co-branding. Online partnership can both be effective if the cost is low and the co-branding
arrangement leads to synergistic effects. At the same time, it can also lead to increased brand awareness but not enough to acquire the customer (Chaffey, 2009). Considering the offline channels, a company could use for instance posters as acquisition channel. As posters can be strategic placed and as such attract a large group of potential customers at a low cost. But one of the downsides is that it can be difficult to display the specific consumer benefits (Fill, 2009). Another traditional way to acquire customers is through mass media channels such as newspaper, radio and television. It has an advantage of reaching a larger customer base than online channels. However, these mass media channels are less efficient in targeting customer than online channels and tend to have a higher cost of acquisition. Furthermore, certain techniques such as sales promotions can be used to acquire customers (Chaffey, 2009).

The third step refers to customer retention, meaning how to make customers loyal to the company. Chaffey (2009) argues that one of the most important keys in order to improve brand loyalty for an e-commerce company is through customer service. In accordance to a study made by Feinberg et al (2000), which aimed in investigating why customers leave a company, the main reason was due to “poor service experience”. In fact, bad customer service represented 68 percent of the respondents’ answers, while other factors such as price and product had less significance when leaving a company. Building upon this, Chaffey (2009) suggests five components that could lead to improved customer loyalty for companies operating on both online and offline markets; responsiveness, assurance, empathy, tangibles and reliability. Responsiveness can be defined in terms of the speed in replying customers’ requests. Assurance means that the company is safe in terms of privacy and security by having a security accretion such as Internet Shopping is Safe on its website. Empathy to customer requests is reflected in customer service email replies or customers queries in a store. Tangible refers to website with high-quality content. Lastly, reliability refers to the replies to customers queries (Chaffey, 2009). Another strategy for making customers loyal is through value-adding programs such as loyal programs for online and offline companies (Buttle, 2009). A loyalty program aims at rewarding the customer for buying more. For instance, the airline American Airline offered free flights to frequent fliers in 1981. The positive outcome of implementing loyalty programs is that it gives an incitement for customers to continue buying from the company. However, according to Buttle (2009), the loyalty scheme can be very expensive to manage as it requires marketing and technologies in order to make customers using the program and in the long run it isn’t sure that it generates a positive outcome. For instance, the supermarket Safeway in United Kingdom dropped their
loyalty program as it costed them £30 million per year. In addition, a company should also use sales promotions as a method for retaining existing customers. Buttle (2009) argue that sales promotions are not only useful for acquiring customers but also for retaining existing customers, as it encourages customers to repeat purchases, for instance customers can buy a product and receive a voucher that provides them with discounts on future products. However, one of the disadvantages with using sales promotions is if the promotion is not encouraging customers enough to boost the sales, the profitability will take a hard hit (Kazmi and Batra, 2008).

The forth step refers to customer extension, the methods to extend customer lifetime at a company by increased interaction and product awareness. The strategy in order to accomplish this could for instance be cross-selling. It means that the company tries to sell an additional product to the customer. It can be done, by offering similar products via email after a sales order has been made by the customer or by displaying other products that may be of interest when the customer purchase a product. Other strategies for extending customer lifetime are by providing special offers to existing customers via email. Lastly, these email-based strategies could generate additional orders but at the same time customers could get annoyed by the emails, which in turn could lead to customer’s leaving the company (Chaffey, 2009).

2.2.1.1 The customer life cycle model and the link to the strategical framework

The customer life cycle model and Nilsson and Rapp (2009) strategical framework are mutually linked. The strategical framework put focus on external factors such as customer demand and what internally has to be done to be successful for meeting certain objectives. The customer life cycle has pure focus on customers. When the strategy is set up, what customers should be targeted and how to extend its basis. Both the strategical framework and the customer life cycle have to be carefully matched to each other to provide a successful business strategy. For instance, if a company wants to select customers and construct a marketing strategy, it needs to assess what the customer wants in the business environment and take into consideration of the internal resources and capabilities in integrated control. This means for instance if a company has young people as customers but old people in the company, it might need to address a strategy to hire younger people in order to better understand how to attract, retain and extend the customers life cycle.
2.2.2 Corporate Governance
The concept of corporate governance has also been studied using the help of other theoretical perspectives and it has been linked to the overall business strategy of the company and the way companies evolve over time. The scholars of strategic management have focused on how the concept of corporate governance influences the critical resources of the firm and the overall formation of the capabilities that are necessary for the firm and are also firm specific (Lazonick and O'sullivan, 2000). The amount and the nature of external and internal finance are most likely going to impact the demands and the expectations that are put on corporate governance in order to maintain transparency and the independence of the boards. According to the resource-based view of the organization, the internal capabilities of the company which include the skills, knowledge and information (Mahoney and Pandian, 1992). The concept of corporate governance plays an important role in the internal coordination of the firm and the motivation of the employees which is an important aspect. It basically depends on the nature of the skills and knowledge that are necessary to achieve the competitive advantage. The necessary and non-essential compulsory nature of the human assets of the managers and the workers has an impact on the effectiveness of the different nature and modes of corporate governance (Aoki and Jackson, 2008).

2.2.3 Global Markets and International Business
The geographic strategy that the firms use to manage and sort out their brands is defined by a hierarchical structure of all the products and the brands which are present in the global market and the firms use different options in their branding strategies. This includes the local and the domestic branding to branding at the regional, multiregional and the global level. This is called the Global brand architecture and it refers to the different collection of brands which are associated with the company and the company controls it at different levels of scope and the degree of consistency (Townsend et al., 2009). There are cases that the global brands perform and act in a better manner in the different markets because of the influence from the national culture. The various regions around the world have very different mechanisms through the process of which the global brand and the perceptions and attitudes regarding it are formed. These perceptions and attitudes are then processed and employed in the decisions regarding to purchase decisions (Akdeniz and Talay, 2013). There are different effects of culture acting as a moderator between the relationship of the product signals and the performance of the organization. Research in the area has shown that the global retail brands have an effect on the customers through different psychological and functional values (Swoboda et al., 2012). Culture is basically a measure of the values and beliefs of and it is the basis on which the global brand is accepted in
the foreign country. When the consumers are in doubt, they will choose products and brands that are synergetic in nature and with the values and beliefs which are inter related with the cultural heritage (Alden et al., 2006). In order for a firm to be successful in all the markets where it operates, a mix of brands can be varied and some products can be available in one country and the others will be available in another country. Toyota has a global brand which is recognized around the world but its products vary on different markets-. There are studies which say that the means of these brands is to compete with each other with support of local knowledge and having the ability to be flexible (Douglas and Craig, 2011).

When the companies are becoming patriotic and ethnocentric then these are the strategies that these companies undertake. Brands with narrow geographic approaches provide attractive options for the consumers and this increases the notion that the global brands act as a sign of the quality signal (Kapferer, 2002). These different positions in the GBA give a very different signal in the market in which the business is done. The global brands have been established as the signal and sign of quality. Signs such as these are used to offset the elements of uncertainty present (Klein, 2002). Consumers most of the times are not aware of the quality of the product or the brand and in order to find out they will make use of the information that is available when they are evaluating the product. The evaluation by the consumer is either extrinsic or intrinsic (EM Steenkamp et al., 2003). GBA is a very important strategic element of the brands position and the firm’s stage of internalization. There is a variety of the attitudes to the local and the global products and the companies should choose different strategies that properly match product portfolio (Yeniyurt et al., 2007).
2.3 Summary
The strategic framework has been designed by means of Nilsson and Rap (2005) model, which consists of five parts; environment, strategic congruence, integrated control, competitive advantage and performance. A company needs to adapt its strategy to the business environment by using its internal capabilities in order to create a congruence for the company’s overall strategy. By using both an external and internal fit strategies, a company is able to create competitive advantage. This in turn generates value for stakeholders and enhances the performance. Specific theories were integrated into the different parts of the model. For instance, the five generic strategies were implemented in the strategic congruence part of the model. Overall this model explains how strategic congruence can be created on the Swedish nutritional market in order to create competitive advantage and performance by taking into account the conditions of the customer relationship strategies. The remaining theories as customer life cycle, corporate governance and global brand architecture can be regarded as supporting components of the developed theoretical strategical model.
3 Method
This section covers the research context, sampling procedures, data collection, data analysis, limitations, and ethical consideration that were adopted during the implementation of this study. The section concludes with the presentation of the summary of the research method in which the exploratory approach and semi-structured interviews were used.

3.1 Research context
The study aims to investigate how a company can integrate e-commerce strategies into their overall strategy. The study is exploratory in its nature and as such we have taken a qualitative approach. In accordance with Saunders (2012), an exploratory approach is appropriate when a problem is not enough investigated. The study was based on interviews and analysis of the existing documents (annual reports in this case). The responses from the participants were noted down in form of the quotations. We conducted semi-structure interviews with managers from Gröndals Apotek, Nu3 and Apotek Hjärtat. In total there were 6 interviews, two from each company. The managers who were selected were all involved in strategic decisions. We selected the companies as they represent different firm-sizes and selling platforms. As we assumed that the firm-size and selling platform might generate some differences between the companies’ strategies. In an ascending firm-size order, the following companies were chosen; Gröndals Apotek, Nu3 and Apotek Hjärtat. We have used these three companies within the nutrition market as an example in this paper since it is a market where the e-commerce is expanding and it is also interesting since we found three companies uses different sales platforms. Gröndals Apotek is an offline company where Nu3 is an online company and Apotek Hjärtat has implemented a mixed strategy. The strategic model we have used is based on Nilsson and Rap (2005) and it takes into consideration the business environment, integrated control, strategic congruence, competitive advantage and performance. The reason behind choosing this model as a reference model for the strategic framework was mainly as it takes into consideration of the changing business environment. This we found important due to the development within digitalization and its influence over the changing trends within customer preferences, it might be important for a company to respond to these changes with the help of its resources and capabilities. Many industries are facing these types of external environment changes, which argue for the importance of a joint strategic framework for several industries not only for the nutrition market.
3.2 Sampling Procedures
According with Buckland (2015) a non-probability sample is not all the respondents who have equal chances of participating in the study as some members are more suitable to answer the questions than others. Some of the non-probability samples are purposive, quota and convenience sampling (Buckland, 2015). For this study, we selected convenience sample as it provided the possibility of accessing valid data concerning the strategic frameworks of the companies. The benefit of this approach was that we had the possibility to ask questions after the interview. The sample in this study constituted of all the managers having direct insights regarding the strategic framework of the company. The sample included two managers each from Gröndals Apotek, Apotek Hjärtat and Nu3. From the two apothecaries, we conducted interviews with general managers, which have an overview of the whole business and are in the position to answer our questions regarding the strategy mostly. The first interview with the Nu3 respondent entailed the country manager for Sweden whose role is to set a strategic framework at Nu3. The second interview of Nu3 included the category manager for Sweden. The category manager is responsible for the Swedish product portfolio and the category management at Nu3, which could give us valuable knowledge regarding the products and their marketing strategy.

3.3 Data Collection
As previously mentioned, the study was based on a qualitative method focusing on interviews to collect data. Three types of interviews exist; structured, semi-structure, and unstructured. We decided to use semi-structured interviews. Marinus (2015) argues that exploratory studies are essential when a researcher wants to interview experts as a way of acquiring detailed knowledge concerning subjects with less clarity. Marinus (2015) continues to explain that when a researcher does not have sufficient knowledge about the topic under study, the study may involve using open-ended questions. Since the phenomenon under study was so specific and concepts had to be created with the sources of data, we found semi-structured interviews best applicable for this study. The semi-structured interviews helped in providing answers that had fewer restrictions although they covered the topic. Using the semi-structured interviews helped to focus on the scope of this study in comparison to unstructured interviews that mostly create answers tending away from the scope of the study (Adams, 2014).

We made the process of developing new questions for the semi-structured interviews proactive and ongoing during the entire period of data collection. That was done primarily to ensure that we collected the required data within the time limit. However, we discovered that there were issues around the utilization of the structured interviews for data collection. For instance, we discovered
that there was a problem when collecting information that appeared to touch sensible subjects about the interviewee’s responsibilities in the company. In this case, some answers were given in a way that did not ideally match the question. As a strategy for addressing this problem, we tried to create better understanding of the interviewee. That involved acquiring the "shoe" of the participants in which we assumed to be the participant. This helped us in framing the questions in a way that resulted in better answers. In general, we had three business areas within which we put questions to our interviewees; Strategy, Customer Relationship Management and General questions. Our strategy questions refer to the general strategies that the companies have adapted in order to be and maintain competitive. These questions are connected with Nilsson and Rapp’s model where the focus is on the internal and external fit. The second part of the questions is about the Customer Relationship Management, which tends to answer how different online and offline customer strategies impact the corporate business strategy. The third part with general questions where about adding further information and get an overall view of their business. These questions where open in order to get as much information as possible.

3.4 Data Analysis

Cross-case analysis was used when we’ve collected the data from our interviews. Cross-case analysis is a method used for multiple-cases, where each case is first individually collected and then analyzed (Saunders, 2012). Furthermore, certain methods can be used in order to analyze the findings. When there are only few cases, an appropriate technique is to provide a word table that is a comparison framework of uniform components (Yin, 2009). This approach was used to illustrate the building blocks of Gröndals Apotek, Nu3 and Apotek Hjärtat’s strategies (see table 4) and building upon this, we further analyzed how the Nilsson and Rapp (2005) strategic congruence model could be applied in our findings. We integrated several theories in the parts of strategic congruence and performance to make the model more applicable for our purpose. We used Porter’s five generic strategies as an example as our position of how a company might achieve strategic congruence by also taking into account the business environment and integrated control. Finally, one of the theories that were added into the performance part was about mobile payment system and mobile capabilities. These theories were used in order to determine how a company might achieve competitive advantage and performance. Based on the theoretical strategic framework, we discussed the benefits and drawbacks of the companies’ different strategies. This was done in order to determine which components in the companies’ strategies were most important to create a general strategy for the Swedish nutritional online and offline
market. Based on this discussion, we developed a structure of the general strategical framework for Swedish nutritional online and offline market in figure 5.

3.5 Limitations
We have only focused on the Swedish nutrition market. This joint strategic framework could of course work on other industries as well, but for this study we took investigated just the nutrition market. This was due to its changing business environment towards e-commerce and because we found three companies with different selling platforms. This was an opportunity to compare them, of how well the different strategies fit the present business environment.

One drawback with conducting interviews is that the interview might have its own agenda and thus might not provide the answers that fully reflect the facts. However, we tried to provide information from the company’s annual reports to support their answers. Only Apotek Hjärtat had a comprehensive annual report, Gröndals Apotek only displayed their financials and Nu3 had not public records of their annual reports. We decided to support only Gröndals Apotek and Apotek Hjärtat’s answers about their companies’ financial status. This is one of the drawbacks in our report. Another drawback is that our interviews with the managers at Nu3 were conducted through Skype. The interviews felt less natural and as such it might have impact on the depth of the answers. The interviews with the managers were on average 30 minutes while the interviews with other staff 45 minutes on average. In addition, we conducted a convenience sample and it might have impacted our ability to criticize the interviewees answers, as all of the interviewees were known by us.

3.6 Ethical Consideration
The participation of the Gröndals Apotek and the Nu3 in the study was dependent on their informed consent. The first step during the implementation of this study involved explaining to the Gröndals Apotek, Apotek Hjärtat and Nu3 participants what the process was all about. That was meant to sensitize them about the process considering that their participation was voluntary. We observed confidentiality by avoiding asking those questions that the participants had early refused to answer. Moreover, those questions that appeared to infringe the privacy of the participants were excluded from this study.
3.7 Summary of Research Method
The section presented the methodology that was utilized to carry out the research on the study. The study adopted an exploratory approach and used semi-structured interviews as the methods of data collection. We selected six managers as our sample (two from each company); Gröndals Apotek, Apotek Hjärtat and Nu3. The limitations of the study were covered, and most of them were about the procedures of the interviews. Based on this methodology, we conclude that the exploratory approach that was adopted in this study could be useful in providing the basis for future research covering joint strategic framework in Swedish offline and online nutritional market. As presented above, this study relied on interviews for data collection, in particular, semi-structured interviews. The semi-structured interviews can be very helpful in providing a clear set of instructions for the interviewer and can provide reliable and comparable qualitative data. That is because this type of interviews helps in providing answers with no restrictions and keep to the topic. Moreover, semi-structured interviews give answers that point towards the scope of this study.
4 Findings
This chapter begins with a short introduction of Gröndals Apotek, Nu3 and Apotek Hjärtat, followed by the findings of the conducted interviews, summaries of the findings and ends with comparison of the results.

4.1 Short introduction of Gröndals Apotek, Nu3 and Apotek Hjärtat
As previously mentioned in the method section, we have chosen three companies that have different firm-sizes and selling platforms. Where Gröndals Apotek is an apothecary store located in Stockholm and it is owned by Din Apotekare. From 2012 to 2015, the profit went from 154 thousand SEK to 283 thousand SEK, representing an 84 % increase in profit (allabolag, 2015). In addition, they can be classified as a small-size company as they have only five employees working at the stores. Nu3 is a German e-commerce company that sells their products on a multinational scale. For instance, besides Sweden, the company also sells their products in Germany, France, Denmark, Norway and Finland. Finally, Apotek Hjärtat is also an apothecary store and was acquired by ICA Gruppen in 2014. Furthermore, the company sells their products both online and offline in Sweden. From 2014 to 2015, the operating profit went from 21 million SEK to 209 million SEK (ICA Gruppen, 2015). They could have been regarded as a large-size company as the company had 390 stores in 2015.

4.2 Gröndals Apotek
4.2.1 Strategy
“Our vision is to reduce the work load for the general health care by having a competent work force that helps our customers’ needs in finding the right product.” (Gröndals Apotek, 2016)

Gröndals Apotek’s vision is to support the general health care with providing suitable products to their customers. In order to do this, the store focuses on having good customer service and competent personal. This means, there is a requirement for the employees to have a 5-year education in pharmaceutical. In addition, the store has only one common desk, where they sell both prescription medicines and non-medicines such as nutritional products. The reason behind this is that the employees need to see the big picture and recommend suitable vitamins to their customers when the customer buys a certain prescription medicine or product. Building upon this, the general manager argues that one competitive advantage they have over larger apothecary’s stores is the big picture concept. As larger apothecary’s stores often have two desk concept,
separating prescription medicines and non-prescription medicines such as nutritional products. Beside this competitive advantage, the general manager argues that the store perhaps has more loyal customers than larger apothecary’s chains and e-commerce companies.

“We have high customer focus, meaning that we for instance order directly by customer requests. We have a paper near our cashier where we put our customers request and base our purchase orders by these requests.” (Gröndals Apotek, 2016)

She argues that as the customers are living near the store, it has created more personal relationship through dialogs and advices with the customers. Which has made the customers more loyal to the local company than perhaps compared to the customers of larger apothecary’s stores or e-commerce companies since the employee-customer relationship becomes more personal. Building upon this, the manager claims that this personal relationship has led to a comfort for the customers to ask the employees, if they could order certain products. It’s being noticed on a piece of paper and when a certain amount of customers has demanded a certain product, a purchase order is made to the supplier.

4.2.2 Customer Relationship Management

“Our customers could be defined as women (often with children’s) that are around 20 to 30 years old” - Gröndals Apotek (2016)

Gröndals Apotek’s customers could be regarded as local citizens living near the Gröndals district. The typical customer for buying nutritional products is woman around 20 to 30 years old. Specifically, women tend to buy mostly multi-vitamins such as the brand Mittval, while men tend to buy sport bares.

“In accordance to Swedish law, we are prohibited to market medicines and as the medicines have low margins in comparison to nutritional products. We have an incitement to market nutritional products near our customers (e.g. posters and fliers in Gröndal, Universities and via Facebook). “(Gröndals Apotek, 2016)

In order to acquire customers to their store, they primarily use campaigns through social media, posters or engagement at universities. Their campaigns are mostly focused on discounted vitamins, such as Mittval. Furthermore, as medicines have a minimal gross margin, their primary gross profit are non-medicines products. In addition, the campaigns for vitamins tend to be cyclical as the customers’ demands change over time, e.g. the manager describe that during the
winter there is a high demand on d-vitamins and during the spring, customers tend to buy multi-vitamins. She also mentioned a growing trend for ecological products in the market. There has been a significant increase for ecological products and especially for the ecological brand Weleda, one of their top brand sellers.

“We have seen an increase in ecological products and especially people seems to buy Weleda, one of our top sellers.” (Gröndals Apotek, 2016)

Building upon this, she claims that the three winning attributes for a successful product are ecological, good profit margin and popular brand. Their product portfolio consists of an array of products, stretching from prescription medicines, pollen allergy tablets, vitamins to sport bares. The buying procedure is based upon automatic parameters, when three products of a brand have been sold, a purchase order is either made to their wholesale Tamro or through an external wholesale/supplier in Finland to order 3 more products of that brand. The wholesale may provide campaigns for all the apothecary’s companies especially when there are new products in the market or season-wise products such as pollen allergy tablets. When a wholesale sets a 20 % discount on purchase price, Gröndals Apotek often matches it with 20 % discount on retail price. Thus selling a product for the minimal margin in order to boost sales for this product. The general manager argues that this strategy is caused by the customers’ high price sensitivity in the market in combination with competing against larger companies such as Apoteket and Apotek Hjärta. One would expect a decline in the company’s net profit on a yearly basis. However, the general manager claims that due to the low number of employees, the company has been able to generate profits on a yearly basis. One way they have tried to retain regular customers is through a membership card suited for only regular customers. Where these customers get discounts on non-medicines and other products.

4.2.3 General
As previously stated, one of the general manager opinions is that one of the company’s competitive advantages is more personal customer service and one-desk concept than larger apothecary’s chains. One of her suggestions to improve the company is through implementing swish as a charging method, as a result of the high fees of handling cash by the external company, Loomis.

“One way to improve our business could be integrating e-commerce into the company. The customer could order the product on the web and then later pick it up in the store. We
don’t want to lose the personal service in terms of providing recommendations on suitable products to the customer when he arrives to the store." (Gröndals Apotek, 2016)

In addition, she suggests that the company could integrate e-commerce into the company. This would mean that the customer could order their products through the company’s website and then pick it up at Gröndals Apotek. She claims that the product shouldn’t be directly delivered to the customers, as the company wants to differentiate itself from its competitors in the big picture concept and personal customer service.

4.3 Nu3

4.3.1 Strategy

“The vision is to become the European leader of intelligence nutrition.” (Nu3, 2016).

Nu3 vision is to deliver intelligent nutrition to their customers. This means providing high-quality products combined with expert customer service. At first, their business plan was more about cost leadership, but today quality and service are starting to be more in focus.

Winning concept - “Natural/Eco, plain design, good price. The marketing from the company is so important, nothing sells just by themselves.” (Nu3, 2016)

Nu3 product portfolio can be categorized into five types of products; health, nature, beauty, sport and slimming products. The three most popular categories are health, nature and sport. Where the best product groups at Nu3 in descending order are nutrients in combination, protein, turmeric, rosehip, omega -3, magnesium, goji and energy Bars. The category manager also says that there is an increasing demand on ecological products at Nu3. For instance, he states that in some categories, ecological products sell more than normal products. Based on this, he claims that a winning concept of a Swedish nutritional product should be ecological, together with plain design, high quality and a good price in comparison to competitors.

“In the segment where we sell ecological products, the ecological product sells more.” (Nu3, 2016)

He also argues that not only the product that needs to be good but also the marketing to get customers to buy a product and especially new products. For instance, when new products are launched at Nu3, their marketing strategy is making an intro-campaign with discount, plan CRM-email about the news at Nu3 to customers and making it visible for customers on the front-page of the website. In accordance to the category manager, one attribute that sets them apart from
their competitors is the integration of a chat-bubble that most of Nu3 competitor lacks on their homepages. Another competitive advantage is being a multinational company that can coordinate their marketing campaigns and product. For instance, if the company notices that a new product launch is successful in France, then the company could launch that product into the Swedish market.

“The benefit of being a MNC is that we can purchase French products and sell it to the Swedish market.” (Nu3, 2016)

In addition, one of their competitive advantages of being a multinational company is having a larger network of stakeholders. The country manager states that, the company normally gets products from one of its wholesaler Tamro in Sweden, but if a certain product is cheaper in France, than the company can put a purchase order to the French wholesaler. However, the category manager says that one of the drawbacks of selling across different countries is the label of the foreign product. He claims that Swedish customers might be skeptical to purchase a product with German text. If possible the category manager prefers to have English text on the label of foreign products as it is considered to be more neutral text. He also states that even though customers are skeptical about products with foreign label, there is still high demand on foreign products in the Swedish nutritional market since these products often have attributes that Swedish products lack.

4.3.2 Customer Relationship Management

“"Our business plan has gone from focusing on prices to quality, service and being truly perceived by the consumers as an own-brand and not as a reseller."” (Nu3, 2016)

The company strives in enhancing their brand value in Sweden, as the brand is not highly recognized in Sweden. This is done through an external public relationship bureau in Sweden. Other marketing strategies are SEM, SEO, affiliate, ads in social media, collaboration with bloggers, newsletters and mail. SEM and SEO are the most profitable marketing strategies to attract and acquire customers to their website.

“We focus on the classic online marketing channels, SEM (our biggest), SEO, affiliate, display, social media and collaborate a lot with bloggers.” (Nu3, 2016)

However, the country manager argues that bloggers and social media are becoming more and more important for the company, since these two marketing channels have a spill-over effect onto the traffic of customers to Nu3. For instance, when a person sees Nu3 on a blog and click on the
link, it increases the traffic to the Nu3 homepage and also improves SEO by the terminology of Google’s ranking algorithm. Another benefit of blogs is that it increases word-of-mouth marketing, as non-customers who read the blog post will speak to other non-customers about Nu3. In essence, the country manager claims that social media and blogs are good marketing tools by enhancing the brand value in the long-term perspective in Sweden. The company’s strategy in order to keep customers on the website, is to improve the front-end and back-end design with more focus on simple visualization of the products than merely text. They have several retaining strategies and one of these are creating knowledge about the company’s products, by describing the health benefits of products such as Goji bears in the blogs and catalogs. Another retaining strategies consists of having a competent customer service and membership. This means that only experts about nutrition consulting are working in the customer service department. Furthermore, Nu3 membership also enables the customer to determine from where he can receive a cashpoint program. This means, when a customer buys a product, he receives a certain amount of cashpoints, which can be used to reduce the price of future products that the customer might purchase. Another way to retain customer is through sales promotions on for instance their webpage or via newsletters. Lastly, the company tries to extend customer lifetime with providing recommendation on their website when purchasing a product.

4.3.3 General

“When you get a spill-over effect such as with the Mecenat-card, you achieve the most efficient market strategy.” (Nu3, 2016)

According to the country manager one of the most efficient marketing strategies for acquiring customers to Nu3 is when the strategy has a spill-over effect onto other customer segments, when targeting a specific customer segment. Thus he argues that in order for a company to grow, more investment should be placed on channels with spill-over effects, e.g. working with bloggers or Mecenat. He also claims that the most unsuccessful strategies for acquiring customers have been through offline channels such as flyers and ads in newspapers. He is confident saying that in the future, the market competition will increase and more companies will become e-commerce companies. He claims that the most successful strategy will be having a more unique product portfolio compared to their competitors in order to gain market shares.
4.4 Apoteket Hjärta

4.4.1 Strategy

Apotek Hjärta’s vision is to be the future apothecary and to become the Swedish health-leading actor on the market by providing every customer with better health and greater well-being (Hjärta, 2016). According to the business developer, the nutritional market consists often only of companies that are either online or offline business. One factor that makes the company unique is that they have a mixed strategy between offline and online business. The offline concept for the apothecary is more focused on the service, the product knowledge and the interior design.

“The store is designed into the smallest detail. We adjust the shelves four times per year. For instance, Flux stood in the bottom and since it has gain popularity it now stands on the top of the shelves.” (Apostek Hjärta, 2016)

For instance, the interior design is well planned in terms of shelves, where the best-selling products are placed on eye-level, and the products with lowest price are placed at the bottom part of the shelves. In addition, the store has two desks, one for prescription medicines and one for other products. Normally there are more employees who are responsible for selling non-prescription medicines in stores than prescription medicines. These employees are expected to have a three-year education in pharmaceutical studies, meanwhile those responsible for prescription medicine need to finalize 5 years’ studies. The customer service requires good product-knowledge. When new products are introduced, the headquarter sends a description of the product and the employees must be prepared to provide correct product knowledge to the customer. Apoteket Hjärta online strategy is more focused on lower prices and faster delivery. The apothecary offers the same products but with lower prices on their web and the customers could also order the same product online with home delivery.

4.4.2 Customer relationship management

The typical customer is a woman over 40 years old and to acquire customers to their offline business, Apoteket Hjärta uses campaigns that correlate with suppliers marketing. This means, when a supplier such as the brand Scholl has a TV-commercial about nail file, Apotek Hjärta coordinates its discount campaign for the same product at that time.

“Now we see that Scholl is introducing a nail file on the television so we know that we will sell more nail files from Scholl.” (Apostek Hjärta, 2016)
In addition, they also use fliers and posters in order to attract customers to the stores. Their marketing strategy for online business is primarily managed by the headquarter, where their strategy for acquiring customers to the online page is through tv-programs such as Let’s Dance and sponsorship as from Unicef.

“The marketing strategy that Hjärtat has to attract customers to Hjärtat’s website is by sponsoring different tv-programs such as Let’s Dance. The idea is to attract customers through popular programs.“ (Apotek Hjärtat, 2016)

In order to keep customers loyal to the store they focus on interior design, sales promotions and personal service. According to the business developer, customers in general go to apothecary’s chains because they trust the product quality as apothecary’s have strict limits on their product standards. In order to retain and extend the lifetime of customers, the company offers a membership where the organization can follow up the customers buying habits and provide discounts on similar purchase products made by the customers. In addition, if a customer goes to a store he can ask the employee to make a purchase order on a product that isn’t in the standard assortment. Another strategy to create loyal customers is through a cashpoint system. In order to retain and to extend the customers lifetime on their website, a special membership package and discount system are offered. When the customer has added certain products to his purchase basket but he hasn’t completed the order, the company sends an email to the customer with discount codes for those products.

4.4.2.1 Market and product portfolio
The business developer claims that nutritional market is facing a positive future with more focus on ecological, slimming and vitamins. She says that before there were very few brands of vitamins at Apotek Hjärtat, but now there are several shelves of vitamins and this is a continuous trend. According to her, there is a need to diversify Apoteket Hjärta product portfolio to meet the different preferences from customers and successfully compete with other companies.

“First and all, the price is the most important factor. Secondly, product knowledge as when the customer comes to the store and ask for a product that could reduce the risk of vitamin deficiency and if the employee don’t know the answer, we have a lost a customer. As the customer expects an expert service. Thirdly, if possible the product should be ecological. “(Apotek Hjärtat, 2016)
In addition, she claims that the market is very price sensitivity and the primary attribute of a successful nutritional product is the price. The secondary attribute is the customer service product knowledge, as customers have different objectives with taking certain products. For instance, one customer might want to lose weight under a very short time and if the sales person doesn’t know of the suitable product than they have lost that customer. Third attribute is ecological, due to the increased trend of those products. Furthermore, their product portfolio stretches anything from prescription medicines, non-prescription medicines to other products such as beauty and nutritional products. However, she claims that due to different preferences and locations, different stores have different product portfolios. For instance, near hospitals, the product portfolio consists mainly of medicines and in malls the focus is more commercial than at hospitals. In accordance to the business developer, one of the advantages of selling online is the better marginal on the products compared to products in offline stores at Apoteket Hjärtat. In addition, they have their own brand Hjärtat, which has better margins. One of their strategies in order to increase revenue and profit is through utilizing the market’s high price sensitivity by putting their own-brand product near a similar product. As often when the customer has a choice of two products, they often choose the cheapest one, i.e. the own-brand Hjärtat. In accordance to the business developer more than 50 percent of the customers that are introduced of the own-brand product switch from the non-own-brand product to the own-brand product.

4.4.3 General

“There are customers that want to feel the product before purchasing them (but they are getting fewer). The problem is that these customers goes to the store and then purchase the products online for a better price and successively this will make the offline stores to vanish.” (Apotek Hjärtat, 2016)

Many customers prefer to feel the product before purchasing them. A common behavior is to feel the product in an offline store and then purchase the product in the online store. Building upon this, the business developer argues that one of the drawbacks of having an offline store are the higher costs that comes with stocking products on physical shelves in comparison with products in an online store. Thus she argues that cost leadership is perhaps not a successful offline strategy, but rather that personal service with high product knowledge should be in the center of a successful offline strategy. For online business, she argues that product differentiation with selling point of fast delivery is the most successful strategy for an e-commerce company.
4.5 Summary
The following figures in this section are illustrations of the findings from Gröndals Apotek’s, Nu3’s and Apotek Hjärtat’s interviews. These summaries will be compared in more detail in the next section.

4.5.1 Business Environment – Customer’s Demand

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Business Environment - Customer's Demand</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gröndals Apotek</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>- High customer service standard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- <strong>Products:</strong> Ecological vitamins, popular brand, cheap.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Nu3</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- High customer service standard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- <strong>Products:</strong> Nutrients protein, ecological, plain design, high-quality and cheap products.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Apotek Hjärtat</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- High customer service standard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- <strong>Products:</strong> Cheap, detailed product description.</td>
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Table 1. Summary of Gröndals Apotek’s, Nu3 and Apotek Hjärtat’s findings about customer’s demand.
4.5.2 Integrated Control – CRM Strategies

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Integrated Control - CRM Strategies</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gröndals Apotek</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Select:</strong> Women between 20-30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Acquire:</strong> Posters and fliers in the local area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Retain:</strong> Providing a personal customer service, advices from customers about new products, sales promotions via social media, membership card for regular customers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Extend:</strong> Customer recommendations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Nu3</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Select:</strong> Women between 20-40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Acquisition:</strong> SEM, SEO, affiliate, ads in social media</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Retain:</strong> Providing an expert customer service, plain website, health info on blogs and catalogs, Cashpoint program, sales promotions, newsletter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Extend:</strong> Recommendations on their homepage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Apotek Hjärtat</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Select:</strong> Women over 40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Acquire:</strong> Coordinating marketing campaigns with suppliers, fliers, posters, tv-programs and sponsorship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Retain:</strong> Loyal programme, membership, interior design, customer advices, email with sales promotions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Extend:</strong> Recommendations on their homepage</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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*Table 2. Summary of Gröndals Apotek’s, Nu3 and Apotek Hjärtat’s findings about CRM-strategies.*

4.5.3 Strategic Theme, Competitive Advantages and Developments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategic Theme, Competitive Advantages and Developments</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gröndals Apotek</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Strategic Theme:</strong> Differentiating from competitors by personal and expert customer service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Competitive advantages:</strong> One desk concept</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Developments:</strong> Swish, implement e-business and financial goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Nu3</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Strategic Theme:</strong> Providing high quality and cheap products in Sweden and providing an expert customer service.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Competitive advantages:</strong> Selling unique and cheap products in Sweden due to their foreign connections. Chatt bubble on their page.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Developments:</strong> Blogs, social media, unique product portfolio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Apotek Hjärtat</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Strategic Theme:</strong> Differenting from competitors by expert customer service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Competitive advantages:</strong> Online and offline business</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Developments:</strong> Paying with an app called SEQR</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 3. Summary of Gröndals Apotek’s, Nu3 and Apotek Hjärtat’s findings about strategic theme, competitive advantages and developments*
4.6 Differences and similarities
The nutrition market seemed to have a high price sensitivity among their customers where the three companies that was a part of this study have a primary focus on selling cheap products to customers. In addition, customers seem to demand a broad selection of products and this is notable for all the companies, since it is an increased trend and all have a diverse product portfolio. The companies want also to offer high quality customer service including high product knowledge to their customers. If the employees do not know the products, then it’s easy to lose the customers. That is why the companies require from their customer service organization to be experts. For example, at Gröndals Apotek you need to have a least a master in pharmacy. Apotek Hjärta had a least a bachelor degree. While Nu3 only hires experts with nutritional knowledge.

The typical customer for all the three companies is woman. However, the companies target women in different age groups. For example, Gröndals had the youngest customers and Apotek Hjärta had the oldest customers. In order to acquire their customers, they use different strategies. Nu3 primary focus on online channels such as SEM, SEO, ads in social media. Where SEM was Nu3’s main marketing strategy. While Gröndals Apotek and Apotek Hjärtat focus more on offline channels such as posters, fliers and events. All three companies are involved in social media to retain customers. They use for instance sales promotions on Facebook. In addition, all three companies offered membership benefits to get stronger customer relation and this was Apotek Hjärtat’s main marketing strategy. However, Gröndals Apotek did not have the typical membership card, they provided a card for their most loyal customers. The company also provides an extraordinary service by request from customers to order products they want. This is also something Apotek Hjärtat offer for their customers. In addition, the companies offered discounts for their members. Both Nu3 and Apotek Hjärtat have initiated loyalty programs such as a cashpoint program. Nu3 emphasized that in order to retain customers on their website they are developing their homepage with more focus on visuals over text. All three companies use sales promotions through email in order to extend their membership. Apotek Hjärtat and Nu3 also provide the customers with the latest news about their products through their weekly newsletters. However, Apotek Hjärtat has a computer system where it can notice a purchase that has not been fulfilled, and send an email with voucher code of those products. In addition, both Apotek Hjärtat and Nu3 could through their recommendation system know the purchase patterns and recommend suitable products when customers visited the pages.
Both Apotek Hjärtat and Gröndals have similar product portfolios (medicine, non-medicine and other products) which primary focus on medicines. Nu3 focuses on other products that stretches from beauty, health, nature, slimming and sport products. All three companies are adapting their product portfolio to the market demands. For instance, ecological products are increasing in demand and as such these products has become important for all three companies. For Nu3, ecological products sell more than non-ecological products. Building upon this, all three companies have similar view that a winning concept for a successful nutrition product should be ecological and good price. One of the reasons that they mentioned price is due to the high competition and price sensitivity in the market. Thus their price setting target is to be lower than their competitors. Apotek Hjärtat also offers its online business with lower prices than its offline business to meet the competition. In addition to ecological and good pricing, Nu3 stated that a successful product should also include high quality, Gröndals Apotek mentioned the popularity of the brand and Apotek Hjärtat mentioned product knowledge as another attribute for a successful product. Both Apotek Hjärtat and Nu3 have their own-brands that they try to sell more than their own products. As their own-brand products have better margins they strive to enhance their brand.

The companies have different kinds of competitive advantage, where Gröndals Apotek distinguishes itself with a one desk concept compared to Apotek Hjärtat’s two desk concept. As a local company they have closer relationship to their local customers and this could enhance a greater customer loyalty. This is opposite to Nu3 that is as a multinational company with larger network of stakeholders. This means that they could get cheaper and more unique products that are not present in Sweden. Nu3 also has a chat service at its website that other companies lack. Apotek Hjärtat’s competitive advantage is that they sell both online and offline. This is important because there is still a demand of being offline but at the same the industry is going towards an increased focus on online business. Thus they get a wider span of customer acquisition.

Both Gröndals Apotek and Hjärtat want to reduce the cost of handling cash by implementing a pay-per-phone system. Gröndals Apotek will soon implement a system where one can purchase products through Swish and they plan implementing an e-business for their products. Apotek Hjärtat has already their own app, SEQR, where one can purchase products and get home delivery. Nu3 tries to develop a more unique product portfolio and strives to enhance their brand.
through spill-over channels such as blogs and social media. Nu3 also works on improving its website, going from text to more visual presentation.

The following summary table of the differences and similarities between the companies were constructed in order to have a clear overview over online, offline and combined strategies before discussing the benefits and drawbacks of those strategies in order to get a clear picture of how an integrated strategic framework in section 5.2 strategic framework might look as.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Summary</th>
<th>Gröndals Apotek</th>
<th>Nu3</th>
<th>Apotek Hjärtat</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Price Sensitivity</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Product Differentiation</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customer Service</td>
<td>Very Important</td>
<td>Very Important</td>
<td>Very Important</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customer Selection</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- customers gender</td>
<td>Women</td>
<td>Women</td>
<td>Women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- customers age-group</td>
<td>20-30</td>
<td>30-40</td>
<td>&gt;40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customer Acquisition</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- focus on online channels</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Partly Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- focus on offline channels</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Partly Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customer Retention</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- membership</td>
<td>Partly Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- loyal programmes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- sales promotions</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customer Extention</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- cross-sale</td>
<td>Partly Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Product Portfolio</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- range</td>
<td>Broad</td>
<td>Broad</td>
<td>Broad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- best product</td>
<td>Ecological, good profit margin, popular brand</td>
<td>Ecological, plain design, high quality and good price</td>
<td>Ecological, price and product-knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- own-brand</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competitive Advantage</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>One-Desk</td>
<td>Concept, strong CRM</td>
<td>MNC with larger network of stakeholders, unique products</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Online and offline business</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development</td>
<td>Swiss, e-business</td>
<td>Spill-over channels, unique products, improve their website</td>
<td>SEQR</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 4. Summary of the analysis of the differences and similarities between the companies*
5 Discussion
The discussion aims in discussing the findings in relation to the theory in order to assess how e-business might be best integrated into a strategical framework.

5.1 Strategic framework

5.1.1 Business environment and the nutritional market
The business environment on the Swedish nutritional market could be determined as being very high price sensitive, as all three companies compete with low prices on their products. In addition, the customers seem to demand that the stores have a broad product assortment and this is also reflected into all the companies’ product portfolio. The main difference between the apothecary companies and Nu3’s product portfolios is that Nu3’s portfolio beside vitamins and mineral supplements also contains sport bars. In comparison, the best-selling brand at Gröndals Apotek was Mittval, a multivitamin brand. While at Nu3, protein and nutrients belong to the top 2 best-selling products groups and omega 3 was the top forth product group.

5.1.2 Integrated Control and internal strategies for CRM
One of the common factors in table 4 was that the companies’ customer selection were women and in order to acquire them, the companies used different channels. For instance, Nu3 as a primary e-commerce company focused more on online channels such as search traffic and blogs. The benefits of using SEM and SEO is that it increases traffic volume to the website, but it can also hurt the design of the websites due to increased backlinks (Chaffey, 2009). However, if one also uses blogs as a source of backlinks, one should reduce the number of backlinks on the website and instead increase them on a third-page website such as a blog. This was something Nu3 did and as previously mentioned SEM and SEO were the two largest acquisition channels and blogs was a good spill-over effect channel. Thus one could argue that if one acquired customers through online channels, one should perhaps use SEM and SEO and take into account that the website design might be compromised. But in order to remedy this, one can use for instance blogs. Gröndals Apotek and Apotek Hjärtat focused more on offline channels such as posters and tv-commercial for acquiring customers. One of the benefits of using posters is that you can place your posters in strategic areas to get customers interested (Fill, 2009). Gröndals Apotek placed their posters at universities, but other appropriate places are for instance near fitness centers and health-stores. The nutritional market customers seem to be very interested in health-oriented subjects and products. However, one of the drawbacks of using posters is that it may be difficult to show the message that the company is health-oriented. Other means to spread
company’s health oriented image could be TV-commercials. TV-commercials address a wide range of customers and thus the message should show the consumer benefits of using the company’s products. As previously stated, the customers are very health-oriented and looking for unique products at a bargaining price and as such we recommend that the tv-commercial reflect these criteria’s. However, we don’t recommend all types of nutritional companies to use this method because it is very expensive and targeting is less efficient than online channels (Chaffey 2009). Depending on the company’s financial background and where the company is in its maturity stage, tv-commercial would probably be more successful when the company is financially strong and well-established than vice versa. In order to retain customers all companies used sales promotion and loyal program but in different ways. Building upon this, we argue that a sales promotion and loyal program should be part of the retention strategies regardless of a firm’s size as the customers seems to be price sensitivity and both Gröndals Apotek and Apotek Hjärtat have shown an increase in their profits in the recent years. Which indicates the benefits of sales promotions and loyal program in terms of sales boost has outweigh the risk of declining profits (Kazmi and Batra, 2008, Buttle 2009). Furthermore, all three companies used cross-sale as an extension strategy. Nu3 and Apotek Hjärtat used cross-sales by displaying recommendation products on their home pages and Gröndals Apotek and Apotek Hjärtat encouraged their customers to ask what products they wanted directly to its staff. Which indicates that cross-sale in terms of recommendation system might be a sufficient extension strategy for both online and offline nutritional market.

Referring these customer relationship management strategies, we recommend that the internal capabilities focus on customer service and internal resources on product differentiation. As previously stated in the business environment, the customers want to have a good customer service and also a broad product assortment for an attractive price, unique, ecological and high-quality products for a bargaining price. This means that in general the CRM-strategies in terms of extending and retaining should mostly focus on enhancing customer service, while the acquiring strategies should rather portray the company as having broad product portfolio with unique, ecological and high-quality products at an attractive price.
5.1.3 Strategic congruence
Since the market has a high price sensitivity, customers are looking for different kinds of products at an attractive price and depending on the company’s market share is, different kinds of generic strategies would be suitable. If a company has a relative large market share and has a well-established brand such as Gymgrossisten or Apotek Hjärtat, then perhaps a differentiation strategy could be the best choice. As large-size companies often have a high customer loyalty, the companies could rather focus on retaining and extending customer lifetime at the company through for instance good customer service with high product knowledge, loyal program, sales promotion and cross-sales than for acquiring new customers. This will lead to a better external and internal fit, as they belong to the top sellers in the business environment and that acquiring customers is more expensive than extending and retaining customers, according to Reichheld and Schefter (2000) study. However, small-size companies such as Gröndals Apotek can have difficulties with acquiring new customers due to competition. A low-cost strategy that focuses on a small market with strong focus on customer service would most likely result in most efficient external and internal fit. As an example, Gröndals Apotek needs to compete with larger companies and it is more expensive for them to get a new customer compared with retaining an existing one in their integrated control of customers. Thus the focus should rather be on retaining and extending customer lifetime through customer service, sales promotions and recommendation system. For mid-size companies such as Nu3, the best-cost strategy would perhaps be the best choice. If a company has a mediocre market share and competes with larger and smaller companies in their business environment, it should also focus on all the parts in the customer life cycle. Acquiring customers through online channels such as SEM and SEO in combination with blogs and through offline channel, posters. It should also try to retain customers by providing sales promotions, customer service and loyal program and extending customers through their recommendation system on the web. Thus strategic congruence for mid-size companies such as Nu3, could perhaps be achieved through targeting a broad market such as becoming a multinational company and providing low prices to their customer and differencing themselves as a high-quality health brand.

5.1.4 Competitive advantage and performance
5.1.4.1 Necessary capabilities for competing on the market
The internal capabilities are a significant factor for a company to provide added value to the customer and gain competitive advantage. The human assets and skills of the company has an impact on how to build and to maintain competitiveness. The skills, knowledge and information
are involved in the internal capabilities. The internal coordination has an important effect on the worker’s motivation, which is one of several important factors for achieving competitive advantage (Mahoney and Pandian, 1992). Given that product knowledge is important for the consumers on the Swedish nutritional market, one way to add value to consumer benefits is by hiring people with expert knowledge about nutritional products. This could for instance be a requirement of at least a bachelor degree in a relevant subject for the nutritional market when hiring new people. Gröndals Apotek had a requirement for all the workers to have a master degree in pharmacy and Nu3 had expertise within nutrition for consulting. Product knowledge was a winning concept for all the companies in order to retain competitiveness and to acquire more customers. The companies had this in common and mentioned the importance of the skills, knowledge and information. However, Gröndals Apotek was very unique among the companies when it came to knowledge. The manager identified the company as a substitute for going to the hospital and claimed the importance of providing quality consulting around the medicine and non-medicine products with its one-desk system. In addition to remain competitive in the nutrition industry, the internal capabilities with product knowledge is something that needs to be addressed as an important factor in order to retain and extend customers in the customer life cycle model.

5.1.4.2 Strategies in order to improve competitive advantage and performance
Companies have different branding strategies, where the geographic location have a significant influence on how the company implement their brand awareness. This is determined by hierarchical structure, which includes the local and the domestic branding at the regional, multiregional and the global level (Townsend et al., 2009). Nu3 has adapted its branding strategy on the Swedish market in order to boost the sales. For instance, the French products have English texts on their front-label to make the customer less uncertain about the products. Research have shown that the global retail brands do have an influence on the customers through different psychological and functional values, which are the different cultural effects (Swoboda et al., 2012). Nu3 targets outperform their competitors by having unique products for example the French products have ingredients the Swedish products do not have, and are cheaper as well.

Within contingency theory the uncertainty aspect is crucial where the firms are able to foresee changes in their business environment, it could perhaps be changes in trends and customer preferences, as an example. The uncertainty factors will make the firm in need to invest in R&D
without being aware of future demand patterns (Nilsson and Rapp, 2005). Both the so called insiders and outsiders of the business environment are actively involved in the process of the design of the strategy. However, the outsiders will have a larger impact in the formulation of the strategy, whereas the external business environment has significant impact on the firm (Jackson and Strange, 2008). This was found in all the companies, whereas the different managers have confirmed the growing trend in Sweden within the nutrition and ecological products, the increasing demand on ecological products is something the companies are aware of and adapt their business environment to. The healthier people are, the more curious they are of each product and therefore once again the product knowledge is important. Since our society is becoming more transparent with the digitalization of the information for the customers wants to more and more evaluate products. Consumers are often not aware of the quality of the product or the brand and before putting an order they will try to find more information on the product, to make the best choice. (EM Steenkamp et al., 2003). In addition, since the business environment is price sensitive and the customers demand a broad product assortment. We suggest that companies focus on selling products that are unique, price-competitive and ecological.

All three companies where aware of the digitalization and the current external environment changes as the means to improve their business. The two offline pharmacies’ mentioned their long-term goals to implement a platform for payment through an internal app. This was important for Gröndals Apotek since this is a small company compared to Apotek Hjärtat. This was important in order to replace the high costs with cash payment. Weisser (2015) mentioned that many companies had already introduced an app for payment of products. Today in Sweden, Swish is a payment app that is used by both private persons and companies. This tool was for instance mentioned by the manager of Gröndals Apotek as an example to decrease the costs in order to replacing the company Loomis expensive services and Apotek Hjärtat mentioned an app called, Seqr that was already implemented in their cashier system. This could be explained by the external fit concept, where the management decides on strategy that is related to its business environment and this may further reduce the degree of the uncertainty in the long run. The importance of knowledge of the present competitive arena (external fit) is significant in order to create a sustainable competitive advantage (Nilsson and Rapp, 2005).
5.2 Summary of our strategical framework

### Business Environment

**Nutritional market:**
- High price sensitivity

**Customers demand:**
- Broad product assortment
- Ecological, good price, unique products
- Customer service with high product knowledge

### Integrated control and internal strategies

**Online:** Estimating customer’s purchasing patterns and recommending similar products to similar customers

**Offline:** Customer recommendations

Both Online and Offline:
- Sales promotions, customer service and loyalty programs

**Online and Offline:** Women from 20 years and above

**Online:** SEM, SEO in combination with blogs

**Offline:** Posters for all firm sizes, tv commercials for larger firms

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### Strategic congruence for large-size companies

**Differentiation strategy:**
- Focus on Retaining and Extending:
  - Good customer service and loyal program and sales promotions
  - Online and offline recommendation system

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### Strategic congruence for mid-size companies

**Best-Cost Strategy:**
- Focus on Acquiring, Retaining and Extending:
  - Acquiring: SEM, SEO, blogs, posters
  - Good customer service and loyal program and sales promotions
  - Online and offline recommendation system

---

### Strategy for small-size companies

**Low-cost strategy:**
- Focus on Retaining and Extending:
  - Good customer service and sales promotions
  - Online and offline recommendation system
Figure 4. Summary of how e-business strategy might be integrated into the strategic framework that is based on Nilsson and Rapp (2005) model.

Figure five describes how an integrated strategic model might look like in the Swedish nutritional online and offline market by illustrating how the company in general adapts their CRM-strategies in relation to the customer’s demand. In addition, it takes into account how strategic congruence might differ depending on the firm-size and how competitive advantage and performance might be created on the market.
6 Conclusion

In this chapter we begin with conclusions, followed by implications, limitations and lastly recommendations for further research.

6.1 Conclusion

Our target was to study how e-business can be integrated in a company’s strategic framework by investigating how offline and online company’s strategies take the external and internal factors into consideration. We concluded the following:

Referring to the similar customer preferences in the business environment and that all companies (online, offline and combined) had similar strategies for selecting, retaining and extending their customer life cycle. We found that the internal fit strategies for an integrated e-business strategic framework might include common strategies for selecting, retaining and extending customer’s lifecycle. In our case, this meant selecting women from 20 years and above, retaining them through online sales promotions, offering online customer service with high product knowledge and extending them through estimating customers online purchasing patterns and based on that, providing recommendations. For acquiring customers, the online store Nu3, differed from Apotek Hjärtat by using more online marketing channels. As the acquiring strategy was the main differential factor between their acquisition strategies, we found that strategic congruence between e-business and overall strategy may be dependent on firm-size. Apotek Hjärtat uses an integrated strategy that has a lower usage of the classic e-business marketing strategies for acquiring the customers. It implies that perhaps firm-size has a relevant factor for acquiring customers. When a company is large enough as Apotek Hjärtat it has a large customer base, meaning more loyal customers and there is perhaps no need for acquiring new customers through SEM that costs money but rather retaining them through having for instance a good online service. Thus we argue that if e-business is integrated into a large company, then a differential strategy is most likely the appropriate strategy for strategic congruence. The company may differentiate itself from their competitors by having the best online service. Meanwhile if the company is a mid-size firm and competes with larger and smaller firms then a best-cost provider strategy is probably the best choice. The company could use the marketing spending to efficiently spend out equally on all online marketing channels such as SEO, SEM, affiliates. If the company is small-sized, then the customer base is small and as such it will have problems reaching to new customers due to competitive environment. Thus we suggest that if e-business is integrated in a small-sized company, a low-cost strategy is implemented and marketing is conducted through online channels that are low-cost but has some spillover effects such as blogs. Finally, in our case
we found customer service with high product knowledge and competitive pricing to be one of the most important factors to gain competitive advantage on the market. Based on that, we suggest that if e-business is integrated into a company’s strategic framework, these two features, customer service and competitive pricing should be the drivers in the marketing to increase the customer value proposition, e.g. the competitive advantage of the company.

6.2 Implications
The empirical implication is that we have captured a strategical framework that aims at creating strategic congruence between what customers want in relation to the business strategies implemented by the management of the companies. Thus this strategical framework is applicable for different companies that want to improve their customer relationship strategies on both the Swedish online and offline market. The theoretical implication is that we have tried to capture how e-business can be integrated in a company’s strategic framework.

6.3 Limitations
One of the drawbacks with the strategical framework is that it focuses primarily on the customers in both the business environment and the integrated control. Thus one might argue that the model lacks other stakeholder’s impacts, such as distributors and suppliers impact on the integrated control, business environment and strategic congruence. Since these stakeholders also play a significant role in a strategical framework. CRM is not the only strategy that companies use in order to improve their business, they also use supply chain management. Thus another limitation was that supply chain management wasn’t included in the integrated control in order to make the integrated control more representative. However, we didn’t include supply chain management and other stakeholders, as we wanted a clear singular relationship between business environment and integrated control in terms of customer and customer life cycle.

6.4 Recommendations for further research
Based on that our research lacks supply chain management and other important stakeholders than customers in business environment. We recommend that future research can build upon our research by implementing other stakeholders such as supplier in the business environment and supply chain management. This will generate a more valid representation of a joint strategical framework.
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Appendix 1

Interview Questions

Strategy
1. What is your company’s vision and business plan?
2. When new products are launched on the website or store, what strategies are in place in order to attract customers to that page and buy the new product?
3. What strategies are used in order to improve your product portfolio and the nutritional portfolio?
4. What strategies are used in order to improve your internal business process (distribution, delivery and production)?
5. Can you describe three winning concepts for a successful product in both the Swedish?
6. What kind of competitive advantages does the company have over its competitors and how do you utilize these advantages?
7. What kind of competitive advantage does your competitors have over you?
8. Would you describe your products with sustainable competitive advantages?

Customer Relationship Management
1. How do you get customers to the home page or store?
2. How do you get customers to stay at the home page or store?
3. How do you get customers to buy at the home page or store?
4. How do you extend customers buying at the home page or store?
5. Could you explain your marketing strategy and what are the company’s marketing goals?
6. How do you make customers loyal?
7. What are the drawbacks of having an e-commerce in relation to having a shop?
8. What do you believe are the most successful marketing strategies for an e-commerce company?

General
1. Could you describe the company’s organization structure?
2. What strategies are in place in order to add value to the company’s value chain?
3. Can you describe some major events to keep up with the market development?
4. What are your expectation about the nutritional e-commerce market in the future?
5. How does the rapid development in technology affect your business within product management?