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## **Marketing Plan of JC International Freight Forwarding Company**

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Master in Applied Management

Supervisor:  
Luis Martins, Invited Professor,  
ISCTE-IUL

October 2024



**BUSINESS  
SCHOOL**

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Department of Marketing, Operations and General Management

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## **Abstract**

This study presents a strategic framework for improving the marketing strategy of JC International Freight Forwarding Company in response to the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic and increasing Sino-American trade tensions. Utilizing PESTEL and SWOT analyses, it identifies key macro-environmental factors alongside the company's internal strengths and weaknesses. The research rigorously applies STP positioning and the 4P marketing mix to assess and refine strategic initiatives related to product offerings, pricing models, distribution channels, and promotional tactics. Integrating expert interviews and customer feedback ensures a customer-centric perspective, enhancing satisfaction and strengthening market competitiveness. The findings underscore the necessity for JC to embark on digital transformation, diversify its core business routes, and enhance talent development strategies. The study concludes with a comprehensive set of actionable recommendations, including budget considerations and KPI targets, aimed at fostering sustainable growth and expanding market reach. This holistic approach provides a solid foundation for JC International Freight Forwarding Company to navigate the complexities of the global freight industry and achieve long-term success.

**Keywords:** International Freight forwarding Agent, Marketing Strategy, Improvement, 4C Theory, Sales Volume

**JEL Classification:** M1, M3

## Resumo

Este estudo apresenta um quadro estratégico para otimizar a estratégia de marketing da JC International Freight Forwarding Company em resposta aos desafios colocados pela pandemia de COVID-19 e o aumento das tensões comerciais sino-americanas. Utilizando análises PESTEL e SWOT, identifica os principais fatores macroambientais juntamente com os pontos fortes e fracos internos da empresa. A pesquisa aplica rigorosamente o posicionamento STP e o mix de marketing 4P para avaliar e refinar iniciativas estratégicas relacionadas a ofertas de produtos, modelos de preços, canais de distribuição e táticas promocionais. A integração de entrevistas de especialistas e feedback dos clientes garante uma perspectiva centrada no cliente, aumentando a satisfação e fortalecendo a competitividade do mercado. Os resultados ressaltam a necessidade da JC embarcar na transformação digital, diversificar suas rotas de negócios principais e aprimorar estratégias de desenvolvimento de talentos. O estudo conclui com um conjunto abrangente de recomendações acionáveis, incluindo considerações orçamentárias e metas de KPI, destinadas a promover o crescimento sustentável e expandir o alcance do mercado. Esta abordagem holística fornece uma base sólida para a JC International Freight Forwarding Company navegar pelas complexidades da indústria global de frete e alcançar sucesso a longo prazo.

**Palavras-chave:** Transitários Internacionais, Estratégias de Marketing, Melhoria, Teoria 4C, Volume de Vendas

**JEL classification:** M1, M3

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# 1. Introduction

In the context of globalization, the outbreak of the COVID-19 has had a profound impact on the global economic system, especially in the field of international trade and logistics. The Chinese manufacturing industry has shown strong resilience, despite frequent global supply chain disruptions, soaring transportation costs, container shortages, and other issues, the manufacturing industry has quickly regained its vitality in foreign trade. However, the freight forwarding industry is facing even more severe challenges. The interruption of the global supply chain has caused serious setbacks to its operations, especially the shortage of container supply, which directly restricts the efficiency of goods circulation, drives up transportation costs, and severely compresses the industry's profit margins, further increasing the pressure on enterprise operations. In the international trade system, freight forwarding is an indispensable part. Especially in the Chinese market, the competition in this industry is fierce, with both competition between local companies and strong participation from international shipping giants such as Maersk and ZIM. These multinational corporations have formed significant competitive advantages through their vast shipping resources and control over end-to-end supply chain logistics. At the same time, the freight forwarding industry must also face continuous changes in policies and regulations, dynamic fluctuations in market demand, and the impact of emerging technologies. Policy adjustments require companies to maintain a high level of sensitivity in compliance management to avoid potential risks. The ever-changing market demand requires enterprises to have stronger flexibility and be able to quickly respond to diverse customer needs. The application of new technologies such as big data, the Internet of Things, and artificial intelligence is accelerating the reshaping of freight forwarding business models and operational processes. Enterprises must quickly adapt to these technological changes to improve service efficiency and optimize customer experience.

Technological advancements have propelled the freight forwarding industry from traditional models towards digitization, intelligence, networking, and platformization. The improvement of information transparency has made shipping resources no longer the core competitive advantage of enterprises, and customers' choices are more diversified, making it easier to obtain market information and compare the service quality and prices of various agents. In the future, freight forwarding business will gradually transition to a platform based operation model, attracting customers through low-cost basic services and forming new profit models by providing differentiated value-added services. By meeting basic needs and

providing personalized solutions, freight forwarding companies can significantly improve customer satisfaction and loyalty, and build long-term competitive advantages.

This thesis takes JC International Logistics Company as a case thesis to systematically analyze its marketing strategy for freight forwarding business. After the economic crisis, the industry as a whole fell into a slump, and JC Company faced severe challenges such as shrinking market share, management turnover, and talent loss. The current marketing strategy of the company overly relies on price competition. With the widespread application of big data and digital technology, price transparency has increased, and the traditional strategy of attracting customers with low prices is difficult to continue. JC Company urgently needs to adjust its marketing strategy, explore new markets, and rebuild market share. To break free from dependence on price competition, companies must actively explore new growth points and achieve improvements in service quality and market competitiveness. This thesis aims to provide effective marketing strategy recommendations for JC Company, helping it explore new markets, regain market share, and enhance market competitiveness. At the same time, the thesis also provides reference for the development model of local branches of state-owned enterprises, and has universal guiding value.

This thesis focuses on the main challenges faced by JC Company in the marketing field, exploring how to improve service quality through precise market positioning and address the weaknesses of existing market thesis and customer management systems. The company currently has obvious shortcomings in unclear market positioning, outdated marketing models, lack of effective customer management systems, incomplete training mechanisms, and insufficient visualization of logistics supply chains. This thesis will use the 4C marketing theory to optimize strategies, clarify target customer groups, and use market segmentation, target market selection, and positioning analysis to help the company enhance its competitive advantage. Through comprehensive external environment analysis, including PEST, industry analysis, competitor analysis, Porter's Five Forces model, and consumer behavior analysis, combined with in-depth analysis of the internal environment, this thesis proposes a practical and feasible marketing mix improvement plan to provide JC Company with a systematic marketing optimization strategy.

Through in-depth analysis of JC International Logistics Company, the aim is to provide practical and feasible marketing strategy recommendations to promote the company's sustainable development in the freight forwarding industry. The case thesis not only provides effective strategic adjustment suggestions for the company, but also provides practical

guidance with reference value for other freight forwarding enterprises. Especially in the current complex and ever-changing global economic situation, these strategic recommendations have significant theoretical and practical implications.

### (1) Methodology

#### Thesis Subject

This study focuses on JC International Logistics Company as a core case, conducting an in-depth analysis of its marketing strategies and proposing targeted optimization recommendations. In the face of global trade wars and the impact of the pandemic, JC has relied on its traditional marketing strategies, which urgently need adjustments to adapt to the new market environment.

#### External Environment Analysis

Using the PEST analysis tool, this study examines the macro environment in which JC operates. Political, economic, social, and technological factors constitute the primary external forces currently affecting the company's market performance. Through this analysis, these external factors reveal the various challenges and opportunities JC faces.

#### Internal Environment Analysis

A SWOT analysis is employed to study JC's internal strengths and weaknesses, and to explore the opportunities and threats it faces in the global market. This analysis provides an important basis for subsequent strategic adjustments, particularly highlighting the company's shortcomings in market positioning and product services.

#### Market Segmentation and Positioning

The STP analysis method helps clarify JC's segmented markets, target market selection, and market positioning in the global market. Combined with the 4Ps theory, this study analyzes in detail the company's current situation and issues related to product, price, channel, and promotion strategies, revealing its dilemma of over-reliance on price competition.

#### Qualitative Interviews and Field thesis

Through interviews and field thesis, this study gathers deep insights into market changes from several industry executives. Combined with qualitative analysis, the study summarizes the practical problems JC faces in customer relationship management and channel management, and proposes targeted improvement suggestions.

#### Data Analysis

In terms of data analysis, the study relies on publicly available financial data and internal operational data, combine with survey results, to deeply analyze JC's market performance and

operational results over the past few years. This analysis provides a solid data foundation for optimizing the marketing strategies proposed in this thesis.

## (2) Structure of the Content

### Chapter 1: Introduction

This chapter introduces the thesis background and significance of the thesis. Under the context of globalization, the COVID-19 pandemic has had a profound impact on the global economic system, particularly in the fields of international trade and logistics. Despite the resilience shown by China's manufacturing sector, the international freight forwarding industry is facing significant challenges. Issues such as global supply chain disruptions, rising freight costs, and container shortages have severely compressed profit margins in the freight forwarding industry, increasing operational pressures on companies. Using JC International Logistics Company as a case study, this chapter identifies the company's unclear market positioning and over-reliance on price competition in its marketing strategy. The thesis aims to provide effective recommendations for JC's marketing strategy adjustments.

### Chapter 2: Literature Review

This chapter reviews theories and thesis related to the freight forwarding industry and marketing, focusing on key issues such as meeting customer needs and improving service quality. First, it explores how the freight forwarding industry responds to market changes and meets the diverse needs of customers. Second, it analyzes strategies for enhancing service quality within the industry, and discusses academic thesis related to marketing theories, such as the 4C marketing theory. Additionally, the chapter introduces the thesis content and technical approach, and explains the main thesis methods used in this thesis.

### Chapter 3: thesis Methods

This chapter details the thesis methods employed in the thesis. Using JC International Logistics Company as a case study, the study applies PESTE analysis, SWOT analysis, STP analysis.

### Chapter 4: Marketing Plan

This chapter is the core of the thesis, providing a comprehensive analysis of JC's current marketing strategies and proposing optimization solutions. First, through external environment analysis tools such as PESTE analysis, industry analysis, competitor analysis, and Porter's Five Forces model, the market opportunities and threats faced by the company are assessed. Then, based on the SWOT analysis, directions for improving the company's marketing strategy are proposed. The chapter focuses on market segmentation, target market

selection, positioning, and offers recommendations for optimizing the 4P marketing mix (product, price, place, promotion). Finally, it presents an implementation plan and specific execution measures for the marketing strategy.

#### Chapter 5: Conclusion

This chapter summarizes the thesis findings of the thesis, outlining the recommendations for JC International Logistics Company in terms of marketing strategy adjustments, including market positioning, service quality enhancement, and price strategy optimization. Through in-depth analysis of the external environment and internal operations, specific suggestions for the company's future development are proposed, providing practical value for small and medium-sized freight forwarding companies. Additionally, the chapter points out the limitations of the study and suggests directions for future thesis, particularly in areas such as technological innovation and digital transformation.

## **2. Literature Review**

The international freight forwarding industry plays a crucial role in global trade, serving as a bridge connecting producers and consumers. It not only promotes efficient flow of goods, but also supports global economic growth. With the acceleration of globalization, the operational complexity and market demand of this industry are also constantly increasing. Especially in the context of the China US trade war and the global pandemic, the international freight forwarding industry is facing unprecedented challenges and opportunities, which makes in-depth thesis on its operational models and market strategies particularly important. This thesis aims to explore the profound impact of the China US trade war and the pandemic on the international freight forwarding industry, with a focus on analyzing JC Company's response strategies and its positioning in the market. Through systematic theoretical analysis and empirical thesis, this thesis not only reveals the shortcomings of JC Company in market positioning, channel management, and risk control, but also proposes practical and feasible improvement suggestions. The significance of the thesis lies in providing theoretical guidance and practical reference for the international freight forwarding industry, helping related enterprises to formulate more effective strategies in complex market environments, enhance competitiveness and adaptability.

### **2.1 Analysis of the Impact of the China US Trade War and Global Pandemic**

The trade war between China and the United States and the global pandemic have had a profound impact on the international freight industry. Since 2018, the tension in China US trade relations has intensified, with both sides continuously implementing tariffs and sanctions policies, which directly affect the stability of the global supply chain. The trade war has forced many companies to reassess their market strategies, especially in terms of import and export business. As a key link in this chain, the freight forwarding industry is facing dual pressures of fluctuating demand and rising operating costs, resulting in serious challenges to the overall business.

At the same time, the outbreak of the global pandemic has further exacerbated this situation. Due to lockdowns and restrictions, shipping companies and freight forwarding enterprises have experienced a sharp decline in transportation capacity and a sharp decrease in market demand. According to Li (2008) thesis, a decrease in customer satisfaction will result

in greater operational risks for businesses. In this context, many freight forwarding companies must quickly adjust their strategies to adapt to the new market environment and ensure the continuous operation of their business.

Despite facing numerous difficulties, some studies have shown that the pandemic has also brought new opportunities for the international freight forwarding industry. In PZB's (1985) thesis, it was stated that successful entry into the market was achieved through flexible operational models and innovative technological means. Therefore, in-depth exploration of the impact of the China US trade war and the pandemic on the international freight industry, especially the response strategies for specific companies, has important theoretical and practical significance for the future development of the industry.

In terms of related thesis, existing literature has explored the operational models and market strategies of the international freight industry. Kotler (2012) emphasized the importance of marketing management in the constantly changing market environment and proposed that enterprises need to make flexible adjustments according to changes in the external environment. PZB (1985) pointed out that improving service quality is the key to gaining competitive advantage in the industry. Li (2008) analyzed the impact of marketing strategies on corporate performance and believed that the ability to adapt to market changes is a key factor for corporate success. These studies provide important theoretical foundations for this thesis, helping to better understand the impact of the China US trade war and global pandemic on the international freight forwarding industry.

## **2.2 Theoretical Framework and Application thesis on Marketing Strategies in the International Freight Forwarding Industry**

The development of the international freight forwarding industry is influenced by various factors, therefore the construction of a theoretical framework is crucial. This thesis will use PEST analysis, SWOT analysis, STP theory, and 4Ps theory to provide theoretical support for a deeper understanding of market dynamics.

PEST analysis refers to an analytical tool that evaluates the impact of the external environment on a company from four aspects: political, economic, social, and technological. Political factors such as the US China trade war and policy changes in various countries have significantly affected the operational strategies of the freight industry. Economic factors include global economic fluctuations, changes in logistics costs, etc., which directly affect the profitability of enterprises. Social factors such as changes in consumer demand and social



responsibility affect marketing strategies in the market. Technical factors encompass the application of information and automation technologies, which play an important role in improving efficiency and reducing costs (Spekman et al. 1998).

SWOT analysis helps companies gain a comprehensive understanding of their positioning in the market by identifying their strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. Based on the situation of JC Company, its competitiveness in European and American routes can be analyzed by identifying external threats (such as sanctions) and internal advantages (such as rich experience). Lou (2021) pointed out that the rational use of SWOT analysis can help enterprises formulate more accurate strategies.

STP theory (segmentation, target market selection and positioning) and 4Ps theory (product, price, location, promotion) are classic frameworks in marketing. The STP theory emphasizes precise marketing targeting different customer groups, and JC Company should select target markets based on market segmentation to develop corresponding marketing strategies. Wang (2021) pointed out that in a rapidly changing market environment, flexible application of STP theory can effectively enhance a company's market responsiveness.

The 4Ps theory provides a systematic marketing strategy design framework for enterprises. By optimizing product portfolio, pricing strategy, distribution channels, and promotional methods, JC Company can better meet customer needs and enhance market competitiveness. The selection of modern logistics and marketing strategies (2019) emphasizes the importance of flexibly adjusting the 4Ps in dynamic markets to ensure that enterprises remain invincible in fierce competition.

### **2.3 Analysis of the Current Situation and Development Trends of the International Freight Forwarding Industry**

The international freight forwarding industry is undergoing profound changes, and its current situation and development trends are not only influenced by the global economic situation, but also driven by technological progress and changes in market demand. In recent years, the dual impact of the China US trade war and the global pandemic has made the industry environment more complex, requiring companies to adapt to constantly changing market conditions. According to Guan's (2021) thesis on Y Logistics Transportation Company, the international freight forwarding industry must strengthen its sensitivity to market dynamics in an increasingly competitive environment in order to adjust its strategies in a timely manner.

The current situation of the industry shows a high degree of market concentration and fierce competition. Yan(2018) pointed out that many large logistics companies have rapidly

expanded their market share through mergers and acquisitions, cooperation, and other means, forming a market structure dominated by several logistics giants. This trend has forced small and medium-sized enterprises to seek survival space by improving service quality and innovation capabilities.

In the competitive market landscape, the application of technology has become the core driving force. Hu(2021) analyzed WF Company's development strategy, emphasizing the important role of information technology and data analysis in improving operational efficiency and customer experience. Modern logistics enterprises not only need to meet basic transportation needs, but also need to provide personalized services through intelligent means to enhance customer stickiness. In addition, Xu(2019) pointed out that with the rise of cross-border e-commerce, international freight forwarding companies need to deeply integrate with e-commerce platforms to optimize supply chain management.

In terms of case analysis, Chai(2018) pointed out in his thesis on international logistics management that successful international freight forwarding companies often have strong network resources and good customer relationships. For example, some companies enhance their competitiveness by establishing diversified transportation channels and flexible pricing strategies to quickly respond to market changes. This model provides valuable experience for industry development, especially in the face of global economic uncertainty.

## **2.4 Market Strategy and Practice**

### **The Evolution of Enterprise Marketing Strategies**

The marketing strategy of the international freight forwarding industry has gone through multiple stages, gradually transitioning from traditional models to digitalization and informatization. In the early days, enterprises mainly relied on face-to-face communication and customer relationship maintenance, emphasizing service quality and reputation (Liu Xiaohong et al., 2008). However, with the advancement of globalization and rapid development of information technology, marketing strategies have gradually integrated more data analysis and market positioning concepts. Schwaben's Philip Kotler (2003) pointed out that modern marketing should not only focus on the product itself, but also pay attention to changes in customer needs and dynamic adjustments in the market environment.

The focus of enterprise marketing strategy is gradually shifting towards precision and personalization. Data driven decision support enables enterprises to better understand customer needs and develop strategies that align with market trends (Wang Yonggui, 2011).

This change not only enhances customer satisfaction, but also creates a larger market share for the enterprise.

#### Case thesis 2: JC Company

Since its establishment in 2012, JC Company has rapidly gained market share through its industry experience and excellent operational capabilities. However, facing the challenges of the China US trade war and the global pandemic, the company needs to make significant adjustments to its marketing strategy. Wang (2021) analyzed the adaptability of LC Logistics Company in complex market environments and pointed out that flexible market strategies are the key to the survival and development of enterprises.

JC Company initially adopted traditional marketing strategies, but as the market environment changed, this strategy gradually showed limitations. Especially in the process of information transformation, JC failed to integrate new technologies in a timely manner, resulting in a decline in market competitiveness. Schwaben's Philip Kotler et al. (2003) emphasized that in rapidly changing markets, businesses must have the ability to respond quickly to changes in the external environment.

JC Company needs to re-examine its marketing strategy and optimize its market layout in the current market environment, especially in the development of European and American routes. Zhu and Zhang (2019) pointed out that enterprises should continuously adjust their products and services based on market feedback to enhance competitiveness. Through cooperation with advantageous shipping companies, JC can achieve cost control and resource integration, thereby enhancing its market positioning.

At the specific implementation level, JC Company should strengthen employee training and incentive mechanisms to improve team execution and service quality. This process not only requires the support of management, but also the joint participation of all staff. Ultimately, by optimizing market strategies and practices, JC Company will be able to stand undefeated in the fierce market competition.

## **2.5 Thesis Direction**

### Application of Emerging Technologies in Freight Forwarding

The application of emerging technologies has significant potential in the international freight forwarding industry, especially artificial intelligence, big data, and blockchain technology. Gong (2020) pointed out that artificial intelligence can optimize logistics routes, predict potential problems during transportation, and thus improve logistics efficiency. With the development of data analysis technology, enterprises can more accurately grasp market

trends and enhance the scientific and flexibility of decision-making. The use of big data can help enterprises analyze customer needs in depth and develop more personalized service strategies.

The introduction of blockchain technology provides the possibility to improve the transparency and trust of the supply chain. Through blockchain, cargo tracking information can be more accurate and reliable, enhancing customers' trust in the enterprise. Future thesis should further explore how to effectively integrate these emerging technologies to optimize the operational efficiency and service quality of freight forwarders.

#### Limitations and improvement suggestions of the two studies

This thesis has limitations in data acquisition and sample selection, mainly reflected in its short time span and reliance on internal data from JC Company. To enhance the comprehensiveness of the thesis, it is recommended that future studies expand their data sources, including richer case studies and industry surveys, to obtain more representative data. In addition, the thesis by Cao et al. (2021) shows that attention should also be paid to long-term development trends in order to comprehensively capture industry dynamic changes.

Further thesis can focus on how to deeply integrate with e-commerce platforms, and explore the entire supply chain from ordering to delivery. This will provide new ideas for the digital transformation of the freight forwarding industry. Meanwhile, Wei's (2021) thesis shows that attention should be paid to changes in the international market and how to use intelligent logistics platforms to enhance the sustainable development capabilities of enterprises in global competition. Through these improvements, future thesis will be able to more comprehensively reveal the current situation and future development direction of the international freight forwarding industry.

This thesis takes the actual situation of JC Company as the thesis object, deeply analyzes the marketing problems in the context of the international freight forwarding market, and develops feasible marketing optimization strategies through a combination of theory and practice to solve the current marketing bottlenecks of the company. This thesis focuses on exploring the STP theory and applying it to JC Company's freight forwarding business, analyzing the existing problems in market positioning and the underlying reasons behind them. In Chapter 5, guided by STP theory, we helped the company develop a scientific and systematic market positioning strategy.

The STP theory occupies an important core position in JC Company's marketing strategy. It not only helps the company accurately identify market development opportunities, but also

provides strategic decision-making basis for the company. Through detailed market segmentation, the company can gain a deep understanding of the characteristics of each segmented market, combine its resource advantages, select the most suitable target market, and implement targeted marketing actions.

This thesis discusses in detail JC Company's market segmentation strategy based on transportation direction, customer industry, and customer nature. In terms of transportation direction, the company is divided into eight major trade routes including Southeast Asia, Japan, South Korea, Europe, Australia, New Zealand, the Middle East, India, Pakistan, South America, North America, and Africa; At the industry level, customers are divided into key areas such as chemical products, solar energy, semiconductors, coil steel, and agricultural products; According to the nature of the customers, they are divided into peer customers and direct customers, with direct customers further divided into import and export traders and product manufacturers. In addition, the subdivision of freight payment methods includes CIF business and FOB designated goods business.

JC Company has significant competitiveness in brand advantages and professional logistics services, especially in the eastern Zhejiang region. With the significant advantage of operating self operated Japanese and Korean routes at Ningbo Port, it has established a certain market influence. However, the current freight forwarding business of the company mainly relies on the diversified development of various industries and the solicitation of goods by marketing personnel, and the systematic and scientific marketing strategy is still insufficient. By segmenting the market, JC Company can improve marketing efficiency more targetedly and achieve precise business expansion.

### **3. Methodology**

This thesis adopts a diversified research methodology to ensure a comprehensive and in-depth analysis of JC International Freight Forwarding Company's marketing strategy, thereby providing solid theoretical and practical support for its optimization plan. The research methods applied in this study include literature review, comparative analysis, field investigation, SWOT analysis, and experience summarization, while also incorporating summary classification analysis to segment the customer base for more targeted marketing insights. These methods collectively ensure that the analysis is rigorous, practical, and aligned with the company's strategic objectives.

#### **(1) Literature Review**

The literature review forms the foundation of this thesis. By systematically reviewing a wide range of domestic and international literature related to international freight forwarding, logistics management, marketing strategies, and customer segmentation, this research establishes a strong theoretical framework. Sources of literature include academic journals, industry reports, and research papers extracted from databases such as CNKI, ensuring the authority and timeliness of the data. This review not only offers a solid academic background but also identifies gaps and opportunities in current marketing practices, providing necessary theoretical support for empirical analysis.

#### **(2) Comparative Analysis**

The comparative analysis method is used to evaluate JC Company's marketing strategy by comparing it with those of its key competitors in the industry. Through horizontal comparison with industry benchmarks, the strengths and weaknesses of JC Company's marketing approach are highlighted, offering insights into areas for improvement. This method employs both quantitative and qualitative data to assess the performance of major market participants and to clarify JC's positioning in the highly competitive freight forwarding industry.

#### **(3) Field Investigation and In-Depth Interviews**

Field investigation plays a critical role in understanding the operational status and customer needs of JC Company. This study conducted on-site visits and in-depth interviews with key stakeholders, including senior management, marketing personnel, and a selected group of customers. The in-depth interviews aimed to gather firsthand data on customer experiences and satisfaction, which provides valuable input for improving the company's marketing strategies.

#### Investigation Design:

**Survey Targets:** Senior management at JC Company, marketing team members, customer service staff, and selected clients representing different market segments (Europe, America, Southeast Asia).

**Sampling Method:** A purposive sampling method was used to select interviewees who have extensive knowledge of the company's operations and customer relationships. Customers were selected based on their transaction history with JC Company, ensuring a balance between long-term clients and newer customers.

**Sample Size:** A total of 20 management personnel, 10 employees from the marketing and customer service teams, and 10 key customers.

**Data Collection Period:** The data collection was conducted over a three-month period, from May to July 2024.

**Data Collection Techniques:** Semi-structured interviews were employed to allow for flexibility and deeper exploration of key themes. Questions covered topics such as customer satisfaction, service quality, marketing effectiveness, and opportunities for improvement.

The qualitative data obtained from these interviews were analyzed through thematic analysis, allowing for the identification of recurring patterns and insights that informed the strategic recommendations.

#### (4) Summary Classification Analysis

Summary classification analysis was introduced to segment JC Company's customer base, aiming to enhance targeted marketing. This method groups customers with similar characteristics and behaviors into distinct segments, allowing the company to develop more precise and effective marketing strategies.

The segmentation is based on variables such as transaction size, payment behavior, geographical location, and service preferences. By categorizing customers into summary classifications, JC Company can tailor its marketing approach to meet the specific needs of each group, improving customer retention and satisfaction.

The application of summary classification analysis provided insights into:

High-value customers with strong payment histories and long-term contracts.

Price-sensitive customers who are more prone to switch service providers based on cost.

Customers in emerging markets such as Southeast Asia, who have specific needs but may offer lower transaction volumes.

#### (5) SWOT Analysis

The SWOT analysis method was used to systematically evaluate JC Company's internal strengths and weaknesses, as well as external opportunities and threats in the market. By analyzing both the internal operations and external environment, this method provided a comprehensive understanding of the company's market position and its potential for growth. The results of the SWOT analysis served as the foundation for formulating targeted marketing strategies aimed at optimizing JC Company's performance.

#### (6) Experience Summarization

The experience summarization method was employed to analyze JC Company's past successes and failures in the market. Specific cases of successful operations, as well as those that faced challenges, were reviewed and compared. Through this analysis, the study extracted key lessons that can guide future strategic decisions. This approach ensures that the company's marketing strategies are not only theoretically sound but also practically applicable, taking into account real-world challenges and opportunities.

#### (7) Data Analysis Techniques

The data collected from customer transaction records and market performance metrics were analyzed using summary classification analysis, employing summarization and classification methods to categorize customers. The qualitative data obtained from the interviews were analyzed through thematic analysis to identify common themes, which were then linked to the company's strategic objectives.

#### (8) Conclusion

By applying a combination of literature review, comparative analysis, field investigation, summary classification analysis, and SWOT analysis, this thesis developed a scientifically grounded and practically relevant marketing optimization plan for JC Company.

These methodologies ensure that the study not only captures the theoretical aspects of marketing strategy but also incorporates practical insights gained from firsthand data, allowing JC Company to better navigate the challenges and opportunities in the global freight forwarding market.



## **4. Marketing Plan**

### **4.1 Executive Summary**

This chapter aims to design a comprehensive and forward-looking marketing plan for JC Company's freight forwarding business, focusing on five aspects: market positioning, customer management, cost control, convenience improvement, and communication optimization. Based on the specific operational situation of JC Company, this thesis will propose a series of targeted optimization plans aimed at enhancing its comprehensive competitiveness in the fierce market competition and further promoting the continuous improvement of the company's marketing performance. In addition, this thesis will analyze the expected effects of optimizing marketing strategies through before and after comparisons to ensure the feasibility and operability of the plan, thereby providing strong support for company decision-making.

### **4.2 External Situational Analysis**

To gain a deeper understanding of JC Company's external operating environment in the current macroeconomic environment, this thesis adopts the PEST analysis framework to comprehensively explore the external factors that affect the development of the enterprise from four key dimensions: politics, economy, society, and technology. These factors play a crucial role in market expansion and business decision-making.

#### **4.2.1 PESTEL Analysis**

PEST is a framework used to analyze the external macro environment of a company. By comprehensively analyzing the four major factors of politics, economy, society, and technology, the main factors affecting the development of enterprises have been determined. This overview of macro factors has a certain guiding role in the development direction and business decision-making of enterprises. The specific analysis content may vary depending on industry characteristics and corporate factors, but generally consists of the four categories mentioned above.

This analysis method is called PEST analysis. The political environment refers to the political system and institutional framework, as well as the attitude of the government,

including the stability of the political environment, the strength of government regulation, taxation, and other aspects. The economic environment is composed of factors such as gross domestic product, inflation rate, resident income level, interest rate level, and market supply and demand. In the social environment, the two most relevant factors are population and culture. Among them, population factors are related to population size, structure, regional distribution, and income status. The technological environment refers to new development trends such as innovation oriented new technologies, new processes, and new materials. This is not only a specific invention and creation, but also demonstrates new directions and trends.

#### **4.2.1.1. Political and Legal Context**

With the rapid development of China's processing and manufacturing industry, especially in the context of increasing frequency of foreign trade in recent years, the international freight forwarding industry is facing unprecedented market opportunities and challenges. The foreign trade situation in China is entering a new stage. With the further promotion of global economic integration and the rapid growth of import and export trade demand, it has brought huge development potential to the freight forwarding industry. However, despite strong market demand, the relevant laws and regulations in the freight forwarding industry are still relatively lagging behind, resulting in a certain degree of lack of effective regulatory mechanisms and a relatively "anarchic" state in the industry. For a long time, the freight forwarding industry in China has been facing the challenges of incomplete systems and inadequate law enforcement, which not only pose obstacles to the standardized operation of the industry, but also result in a lack of clear legal basis for enterprises to handle disputes and legal affairs.

With the gradual expansion of foreign trade scale, the country's attention to the logistics industry is also significantly increasing. Especially in the context of China's increasingly globalized foreign trade, the country's standardized management and development of the freight forwarding industry have gradually been incorporated into the legal track. In 2001, the China International Freight Forwarders Association established the Freight Forwarders Legal Working Committee, marking the industry's move towards a more legal and standardized direction. The establishment of this committee provides legal support and protection for the freight forwarding industry, helping to resolve legal disputes that have long plagued the industry. In addition, a series of laws and regulations have been introduced in recent years to further regulate the pricing behavior of the container freight market. This not only protects the

legitimate rights and interests of consignees, shippers, and agents, but also significantly improves the transparency and fairness of the maritime market.

By strengthening policy supervision and improving the legal framework, China's freight forwarding industry has gradually moved away from the state of "anarchy" and towards a healthier path of rule of law. This not only provides clearer market rules for companies such as JC, but also lays a solid legal foundation for their competitive position in the international market. The continuous improvement of policies and laws provides strong guarantees for the market expansion and risk control of enterprises, enabling JC Company to further expand its market share and enhance its competitiveness with the support of policies.

#### **4.2.1.2. Economic Context**

China's economic development has achieved remarkable achievements in the past few decades, especially since the reform and opening up, the foreign trade industry has become an important engine driving China's economic rise. With its huge manufacturing capacity and efficient production system, China has quickly become a core link in the global supply chain. Since entering the 21st century, China's foreign trade vitality has significantly increased, and it has become one of the world's largest exporting countries, occupying a pivotal position on the international economic and trade stage. This economic background provides a broad market space for the development of the freight forwarding industry, especially driven by the rapid growth of import and export business. The demand for container freight continues to rise, and the market demand for container booking agency services is also showing explosive growth. However, despite strong market demand, the domestic container booking agency business started relatively late, and the overall development of the industry is relatively lagging behind.

In this context, the government realizes the need to regulate market order and improve industry operational efficiency through policy measures. In 2009, the Ministry of Transport implemented the international container liner freight rate filing system, aiming to regulate market price behavior and solve the problems of "zero freight rates" and "negative freight rates". This has played an important role in regulating market competition, improving service quality, and protecting customer rights and interests. The introduction of this system has made pricing behavior in the industry more transparent, reduced unfair competition, and promoted the healthy development of the market. Subsequently, in 2010, China further implemented the Non Vessel Operating Common Carrier (NVOCC) fare declaration system, which provided a

strong regulatory tool for industry pricing behavior through mandatory price declaration requirements.

The implementation of these policies not only creates a favorable external environment for the sustainable development of the industry, but also provides new development opportunities for freight forwarding enterprises such as JC Company. Under the regulation and support of policies, the pricing behavior of enterprises has become more reasonable and transparent, market competition has become more orderly, and customer trust has also been improved. At the same time, with the promotion of the container liner freight rate filing system, JC Company is able to conduct business in an increasingly standardized market environment, thereby further enhancing its market competitiveness and brand reputation. Although the industry still faces challenges such as container shortages, policy support provides strong guarantees for enterprises to maintain steady growth in the market..

#### **4.2.1.3. Socio-Cultural Context**

At present, the significant improvement in people's living standards has played a positive role in promoting the development of trade economy, while also driving the growth of import and export trade volume. As the world's largest "processing plant", China has successfully attracted many internationally renowned brands to establish joint ventures in China with its abundant and cheap labor resources. For example, Tesla chose to establish a super factory in Shanghai by the end of 2019.

This joint venture production model has greatly promoted the development of China's foreign trade, making products labeled as "Made in China" increasingly popular in the international market. The prosperity of import and export trade naturally promotes the vigorous development of freight forwarding business. Cross border communication has become the mainstream trend of current world economic development. The economic interaction and learning between countries not only enhance mutual understanding, but also greatly promote the integration of global culture and trade. In addition, with the improvement of citizens' quality of life, more and more Chinese, as important global commodity consumers, are becoming more enthusiastic about imported goods from Japan, South Korea and Southeast Asia.

As the mainstream mode of global cargo transportation, container shipping has injected strong momentum into the development of container freight forwarding business due to the sustained strong demand in the Chinese market. The global dissemination of Chinese culture

has also had a positive impact on foreign trade and freight forwarding industries, and the unique Chinese style has attracted more international trade events to be held in China. Meanwhile, the social environment also provides strong support for the development of these two industries. The government has provided strong support for container shipping and freight forwarding services at the policy level, and a stable social environment has laid a solid foundation for the prosperous development of the freight forwarding industry.

#### **4.2.1.4. Technological Context**

The progress of container freight forwarding business is closely related to the development environment of China's market economy. Although China's economic development is rapidly approaching that of world leading countries, there is still a significant gap in the technological level of domestic container freight forwarding enterprises compared to developed capitalist countries. This gap is not only reflected in the hardware facilities of logistics tracking, but also particularly prominent in software technologies such as marketing strategies and management models. In brand marketing activities, the timeliness and difficulty of obtaining information for this business often lead to information asymmetry, which becomes an obstacle to logistics company brand marketing. This further highlights the crucial role of the information technology environment in the long-term development of enterprises, as it is an indispensable component of modern enterprise soft power.

#### **4.2.2 Sector Analysis**

The freight forwarding industry is a highly diversified competitive field, covering three major logistics forms of sea, land, and air transportation, and extending to multiple related service links. In this competitive market environment, JC Company, as an early entrant in the industry, has achieved significant advantages in brand influence and asset size, firmly holding a leading position in the industry. However, the competitive situation in the market is becoming increasingly complex, with multiple levels of competitors gradually occupying market share, forming a multidimensional competitive landscape.

The first type of competitor is large state-owned freight forwarding companies. Large state-owned enterprises have strong resource backgrounds and extensive customer bases, which enable them to compete with international giants in multiple business sectors and become the main force in the domestic market. However, with the widespread application of

FOB goods export model, the second type of competitors, namely international logistics giants such as Sinovac and foreign-funded enterprises such as Deutsche Bahn, are gradually increasing their penetration rate in the Chinese market. These global logistics companies, relying on advanced technology and well-established international networks, continue to enhance their market share and gradually form strong competitive pressure on state-owned enterprises.

Private freight forwarding enterprises are the third important force in the market. They are usually small in scale, but rely on keen market insight and highly flexible decision-making mechanisms to achieve considerable market share in specific international freight forwarding business segments. The core competitiveness of such enterprises lies in their fast response and highly targeted service model, which can quickly adjust their strategies in the international market with changing customer demands, thus occupying a considerable market position.

What cannot be ignored is the fourth category of competitors composed of shipping companies such as MSK and CMA. These large shipping companies not only control sea transportation resources, but also rely on their strong route resources and customer base to establish a full chain service model from sea transportation to land and air transportation through their wholly-owned logistics companies. These companies utilize their controlled cabin space and pricing power to efficiently manage their cargo sources, thereby providing customers with one-stop solutions. This vertical integration model greatly weakens the market competitiveness of traditional international freight forwarding companies, leading to the loss of some important customers and unprecedented challenges for other competitors in the industry.

### **4.2.3 Competitor Analysis**

JC Company inevitably faces fierce competition from peers in the process of expanding its market business and cooperating.

In order to better address this challenge, it is necessary to conduct in-depth analysis of its main competitors. Through on-site thesis and horizontal comparison, we can comprehensively understand the advantages and limitations of various competitors, providing effective basis for optimizing JC Company's market strategy.

The freight forwarding companies under the shipowner have unique market competitive advantages. These companies can leverage the shipowner's resource network to quickly connect with existing customers and meet their business needs. Due to relying on the shipping

resources of the parent company, the development cost of such enterprises is relatively low, with strong financial strength and well-equipped personnel in relevant departments. Compared with independent freight forwarders, these affiliated enterprises of ship owners have significant advantages in terms of sea freight prices, cabin security, and sales channels, especially in providing direct price competitiveness for large enterprise customers. In addition, the self-operated freight forwarding business of ship owners often obtains stable sources of goods, and their large-scale container transportation capacity makes them dominant in the sea freight demand of international large-scale projects. However, the limitation of such enterprises is that they can only promote the services of their parent company's ship owners and cannot choose external route resources. This limitation to some extent limits its operational flexibility, but it is not enough to weaken its overall competitiveness in the market.

JC Company's main competitors include foreign freight forwarder D Company and private freight forwarder J Company. As a German-owned freight forwarding enterprise, D Company has become a typical competitor of JC Company in the field of foreign freight forwarding with its strong global network and high-quality customer resources.

The advantage of Company D lies in its profound global resource background and stable foreign customer base. Many domestic customers have designated D company as their designated freight forwarder due to foreign consignees, which allows them to avoid participating in fierce market competition and focus on maintaining relationships with existing customers. However, due to the relatively weak local resources of D Company in China, its business still relies on cooperation with local enterprises such as JC Company in certain regions, especially in specific markets such as the Japan Korea route, forming a relationship of both competition and cooperation. This competitive relationship may become increasingly common in future development, indicating the complexity of competition and cooperation in the freight forwarding industry.

Private freight forwarding company J has occupied a place in the market with its flexible market response and keen decision-making ability. Compared with foreign freight forwarders, private enterprises usually pay more attention to business segmentation and localized operation, focusing on the key links of international freight forwarding business. This enables J Company to demonstrate greater flexibility in service details and customer relationships. Although its resources and scale are far from large state-owned or foreign-funded enterprises, its efficient business strategy gives it strong competitiveness in specific markets.

With China's accession to the WTO, more and more domestic products are entering the international market, and designated freight forwarders are playing an increasingly important role in the global supply chain. The freight forwarder designated by the foreign consignee is usually responsible for a series of export processes, including booking, towing, customs clearance, and inspection.

Although the port fees of designated freight forwarders are relatively high and their service quality may not be as flexible as domestic enterprises, their advantage lies in long-term stable cooperative relationships. At the same time, local freight forwarding companies, as the backbone of the local market, provide flexible and low-cost services for small and medium-sized enterprises with rich local resources and container shipping experience.

Table 4-1 Comparative Analysis of JC Company and Competitors

Company	Type	Employee Count	Main Business	Vision	Strengths	Weaknesses
JC Company	Comprehensive Freight Forwarder	80	Sea, air, rail, road transport; customs brokerage; bonded warehousing	To become a leading global freight forwarding enterprise, providing comprehensive logistics services	Strong local customer base; flexible response to market changes; significant penetration in Ningbo market; strong performance on Japan-Korea routes	High reliance on competitive pricing; slow pace in market expansion; low level of internationalization



D Co mpany	Foreign -owned Intern ational F reight F orward er	150	Global logistic s, supply chai n managemen t, multimodal t ransport	To become the leading compr ehensive logist ics service pro vider globally by 2025	Extensive glo bal network; high-quality c ustomer resou rces; advance d technology support; high customer loya lty; strong fin ancial backin g from foreig n ownership	Limited domesti c resources; reli ance on local fir ms for some ser vices; higher pri cing; less flexibi lity
J Co mpany	Private Freight Forwar der	120	Domestic tran sport, internati onal freight fo rwarding, inte grated logistic s services	To evolve into a leading flexi ble and diversi fied freight for warding enterp rise in China, f ocusing on ex panding cross- border busines s	Flexible busin ess operation s; quick mark et response; c ompetitive in domestic e-co mmerce and c ross-border e- commerce log istics	Limited internat ional network; p rimarily serves s mall to medium -sized enterprise s; lacks global s ervice capacity; vulnerable to int ernational mark et fluctuations

Source: JC Company internal information

Although these enterprises lack global network resources, their localization advantages make them competitive when facing small and medium-sized customers.

Since the outbreak of the pandemic, large production enterprises have faced policy pressures and fluctuations in international demand, leading many to choose to lay off employees and reduce expenses in response to market uncertainty. As a light asset investment field, the logistics industry has attracted a large number of new competitors to enter the market, and these new entrants often quickly seize customer resources through "price wars". This situation has intensified the intensity of market competition and brought new challenges to JC Company, forcing it to pay more attention to innovation and flexibility when formulating marketing strategies.

#### 4.2.4 Porter's Five Forces Analysis

##### (1) Bargaining Power of Suppliers

**High Bargaining Power:** In the international freight forwarding industry, suppliers consist mainly of shipping lines and airlines, with companies like Maersk Line and Mediterranean Shipping (2M alliances) dominating the market. These shipping giants dictate the prices for shipping and cabin space, leaving freight forwarders with limited negotiation power.

**Rising Costs:** International shipping costs have surged recently, making it difficult for freight forwarders to maintain their margins. Freight forwarders are largely price-takers, earning service fees based on rates set by these dominant suppliers.

**Vertical Integration:** To compound the issue, many of these shipping companies have started offering their own freight forwarding services, creating direct competition and further reducing the bargaining power of traditional freight forwarders.

##### (2) Bargaining Power of Buyers

**Moderate to High Bargaining Power:** Buyers, such as manufacturing companies and import/export firms, can exert significant pressure on freight forwarders due to the availability of various competitors and alternative logistics solutions. The low switching cost for customers to move between different freight forwarders heightens their bargaining power.

**Price Sensitivity:** As freight forwarding service fees are typically added on top of the transport costs, customers are price-sensitive and will look for the most cost-effective solution. This creates intense price competition within the freight forwarding market.

**Impact of Rising Costs:** As shipping and trucking costs rise, freight forwarders are often forced to pass these additional costs onto the buyer. If prices become too high, buyers may seek alternative logistics solutions, such as direct contracts with shipping companies or in-house logistics management.

##### (3) Threat of New Entrants

**Low to Moderate Threat:** The freight forwarding industry in China has a relatively low entry threshold, making it accessible to new players. New entrants, particularly carriers and manufacturing companies establishing their own third-party logistics services, have increased in recent years.

**However, Rising Costs and Complexity:** Despite the ease of entry, new entrants face significant challenges, such as rising transport costs, complex international regulations, and growing demand for advanced digital solutions. Additionally, the experience and established

relationships that traditional freight forwarders possess with shipping lines, customs, and local fleets provide them with a competitive edge, at least in the short term.

Policy and Resource Constraints: The phasing out of old vehicle fleets, aging drivers, and tightened regulations in trucking create operational challenges for both new and established players, potentially deterring new entrants.

#### (4) Threat of Substitutes

Moderate to High Threat: The biggest threat comes from shipping companies offering their own end-to-end logistics and freight forwarding services, as seen with major players like Maersk and Mediterranean Shipping. This direct competition from suppliers who previously only provided transportation services is a significant substitute threat.

Technological Disruption: Additionally, technological platforms that allow shippers to directly book space or negotiate rates with shipping lines can further diminish the value of traditional freight forwarders. This is especially true as customers increasingly seek streamlined, digital solutions for managing their logistics needs.

#### (5) Industry Rivalry

High Rivalry: The freight forwarding industry is characterized by fierce competition among companies, both domestically in China and internationally. Traditional freight forwarders face pressure not only from other forwarders but also from shipping lines offering similar services and from in-house logistics operations of large manufacturing firms.

Cost Pressure: As trucking and shipping costs rise, profit margins for freight forwarders are compressed, forcing many to compete on price, further intensifying rivalry.

Fragmentation and Differentiation: Although the industry is fragmented, leading to intense price competition, some freight forwarders are able to differentiate themselves through specialized services, better technology, or superior customer service. However, the growing entry of larger, well-capitalized players into the space increases the competitive pressure.

Conclusion: Freight forwarders operating in China face significant challenges due to the high bargaining power of suppliers, intense industry rivalry, and the threat of substitutes from integrated logistics providers. While the entry barrier remains low, rising operational costs and shrinking profit margins create obstacles for both new entrants and existing players. To remain competitive, freight forwarders may need to invest in technology, build stronger customer relationships, and explore niche markets where they can provide added value beyond basic logistics services.

#### 4.2.5 Consumer Analysis

In recent years, the freight forwarding industry has faced multi-level market competition, especially as new entrants quickly seize the market share of traditional freight forwarders with their unique inherent advantages. Large logistics service providers and express delivery companies are rapidly entering the international freight forwarding market, bringing about a new competitive landscape. For example, SF Express officially entered the international freight forwarding field by acquiring DHL's supply chain business in China in 2019. This measure not only strengthens SF Express's global logistics capabilities, but also provides its customers with more comprehensive and integrated international logistics solutions. At the same time, the rise of digital freight forwarding companies, such as new platforms like "Where to Ship," is redefining the game rules of the industry. These companies have used advanced Internet technology and automated management systems to weaken the advantages of traditional freight forwarders relying on human networks, and have brought a more efficient and transparent service model with technological innovation. It is expected that these new entrants will pose a serious challenge to existing freight forwarding companies.

With the rapid advancement of technology, especially the deep application of artificial intelligence and big data technology, the prices in the freight forwarding industry have gradually become more transparent, and the competition for differentiated services has become increasingly fierce. Customers are no longer satisfied with a single supplier and usually choose multiple freight forwarders as logistics service providers to precisely optimize their supply chain system. For large enterprises, their purchasing power and bargaining advantage are more significant. They usually bypass the intermediary agency link and directly sign long-term contracts with shipping companies or airlines to ensure the minimization of logistics costs. In this context, the traditional profit model of freight forwarding enterprises is facing challenges. Many times, freight forwarding companies are forced to act as agents in the import and export process, charging a small amount of agency service fees, resulting in a compression of profit margins.

To cope with the increasing bargaining power of consumers and market changes, freight forwarding companies must make strategic adjustments. By expanding value-added services in the supply chain and providing more customized and specialized logistics solutions, freight forwarding companies can effectively improve service quality and customer satisfaction, thereby maintaining their core competitiveness and market share. This can not only alleviate

market pressure from new entrants, but also further promote the growth of corporate profits and achieve sustainable development of the enterprise.

**4.3 Internal Situational Analysis**

JC International Freight Forwarding Company is a first-class freight forwarding enterprise approved by the Ministry of Commerce and the Ministry of Transport of China, with a registered capital of 5 million yuan. It is a non vessel operating common carrier (NVOCC) approved by the Ministry of Transport, founded by practitioners with years of experience in the international logistics agency industry.

The company is located in the beautiful coastal city of Ningbo and has a large number of domestic and foreign agency service outlets. The company mainly undertakes import and export cargo transportation agency services such as sea, air, and land transportation, covering goods solicitation, booking, international customs clearance, LCL, unpacking, customs declaration, insurance, and other related short and medium distance transportation agency services, as well as providing transportation consulting services.

We have maintained long-term and good cooperative relationships with multiple shipping companies such as COSCO, MSC, YML, SITC, etc., and have strong competitiveness in terms of freight rates on some international advantageous routes.

The following table shows the changes in the number of corporate customers over the past 5 years:

From the overall data analysis in the table above, it can be found that JC Company has had 1103 sea freight customers, 149 air freight customers, 100 railway customers, and 427 sea rail intermodal customers in the past five years from 2019 to 2023 since its establishment in 2012.

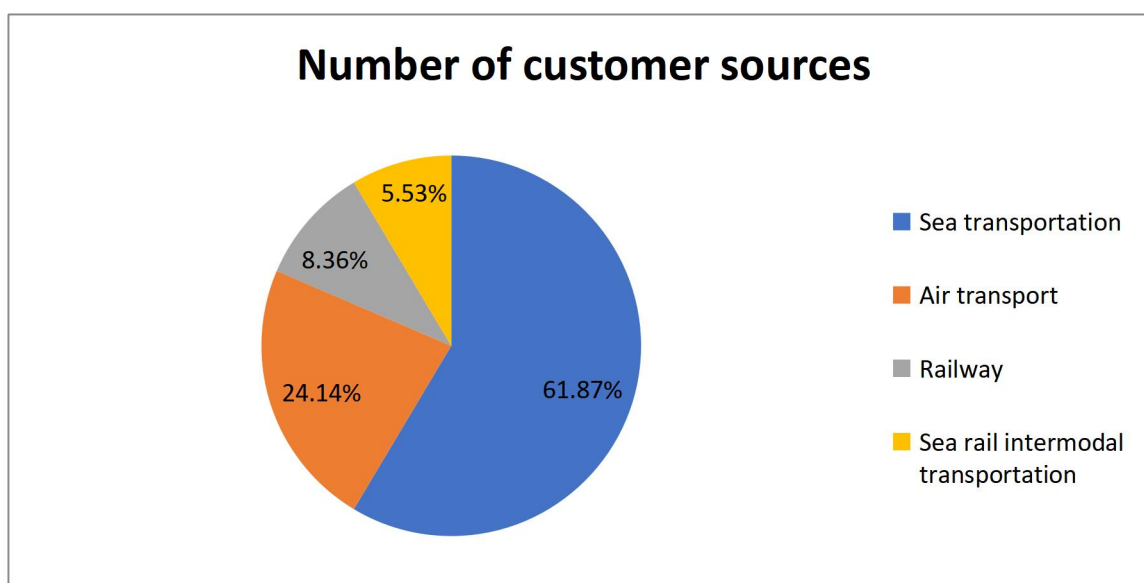
#### 4-2 changes in the number of corporate customers form2019-2023

Project	Source of tourists	Proportion %	2019	2020	202	202	202
					1	2	3
Sea transportation	1103	61.87	203	270	219	165	247
Air transport	149	8.36	26	33	18	33	39
Railway	100	5.63	15	17	21	21	26
Sea rail intermodal transportation	427	24.14	54	66	95	105	111
<b>Total</b>	<b>1779</b>						

Source: JC Company internal information

The total number of customers is 1779. As shown in the following figure:

4-1 Customer Type Proportion Chart in 2023



Source: JC Company internal information

As can be clearly seen from the above figure, sea freight accounts for 61.87% of the company's customer base, while sea rail intermodal transportation accounts for 24% and 14% of the company's customer base, air freight accounts for 8.36% of the total customer base, and railway accounts for 5.63% of the customer base, respectively.

Therefore, JC Enterprise's current main business is still focused on maritime marketing, which is the core business of the enterprise.

This thesis elaborates on JC Company's market design business from the perspective of maritime marketing, and uses induction and classification methods to sort it out.

Figure 4-3 Profit margin data of JC Company from 2018 to 2023

Country of origin	Specific route	Related countries	Main ports	Golden Age Period
	Middle East route	Dubai, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait Pakistan, Iran	Dubai, Dammam, Riyadh, Karachi, Abbas	2012-2013
	African route	Nigeria, Algeria, Ghana	Lagos, Algiers, Tema	2013-2015
	European routes	Netherlands, Germany, United Kingdom, Russia, France, Italy	Rotterdam, Hamburg, Belfast, Novorossiysk, Foss, Genoa	2012- Until today
	US Canada Line	California, Washington New York, Texas, Canada	Los Angeles, Long Beach, Seattle, New York, Chicago, Houston, Vancouver, Toronto, Montreal Cosedo, Buena Vista, Buenos Aires	2012- Until today
Chinese ports	Central South America route	Dominican Republic, Colombia, Argentina	Bangkok, Singapore, Ho Chi Minh City, Port Klang	2012- Until today
	Southeast Asia	Thailand, Singapore, Malaysia, Vietnam	Bangkok, Singapore, Ho Chi Minh City, Port Klang	2012- Until today

Source: JC Company internal information

#### 4.3.1 Characterization of the company

As shown in the figure, from 2018 to 2019, JC Company's revenue and profit maintained significant growth. In 2019, the company's revenue reached its peak, reaching 220 million yuan, with a gross profit of 30 million yuan. However, starting from 2020, there has been a

varying degree of decline in revenue, with revenue dropping to 180 million yuan and gross profit dropping to 28 million yuan in 2020, a slight decrease from 2019. In 2021, this trend continued with a further decline in revenue to 160 million yuan and a decrease in gross profit to 22 million yuan.

Although the revenue slightly rebounded in 2022, reaching 190 million yuan, the gross profit only slightly increased to 23 million yuan, failing to recover to the level of 2019. By 2023, the company's revenue will once again decline to 170 million yuan, and gross profit will further decrease to 20 million yuan, setting a five-year low.

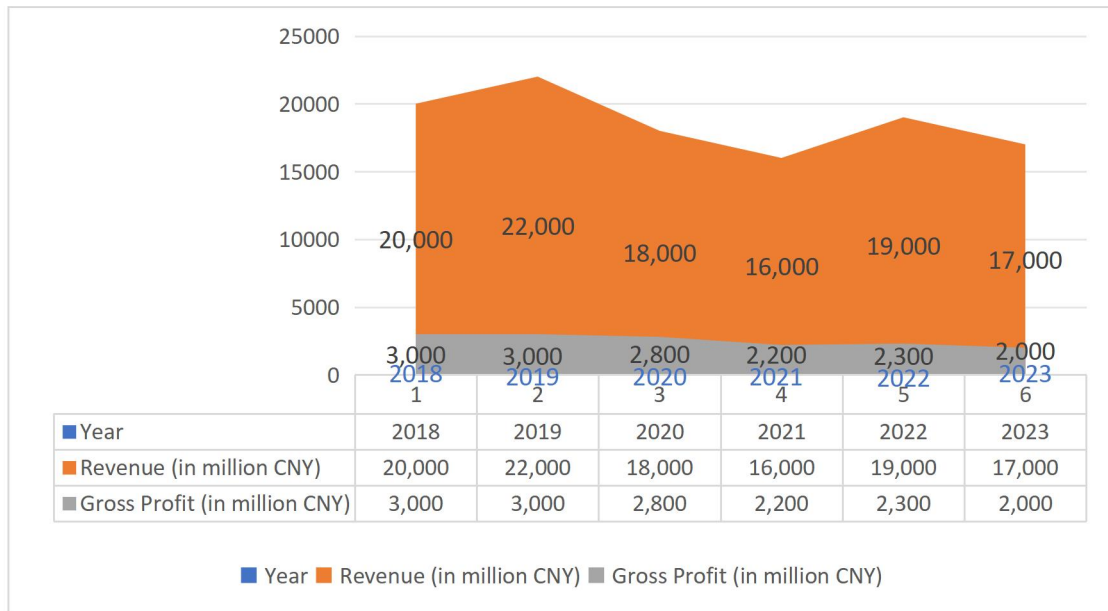
Based on this trend analysis, it can be seen that JC Company is currently facing many challenges in its business development process, especially in terms of improving profit margins. Although the revenue has rebounded in some years, due to the significant increase in container freight rates and air transportation costs, the company's advance costs have increased, resulting in profits not being able to increase in sync with the revenue. This phenomenon reflects that the company has failed to effectively control costs while expanding its business scale, especially in the context of high transportation costs, resulting in a continuous decline in profit margins. The gross profit margin in 2023 is only the lowest level in five years.

From the graph, it can be seen that JC Company's gross profit margin showed a fluctuating downward trend from 2018 to 2023. The gross profit margin was 13.17% in 2018, which decreased to 11.26% in 2019 and further dropped to 10.19% in 2020. Data source: JC Company's data compilation

In 2021, the gross profit margin slightly rebounded to 10.14%, but rebounded again in 2022, reaching 11.26%. However, by 2023, the gross profit margin will sharply decline again, dropping to 9.16%, the lowest point in nearly six years. This trend indicates that although the company's revenue has increased in some years, the profit level has not improved synchronously.



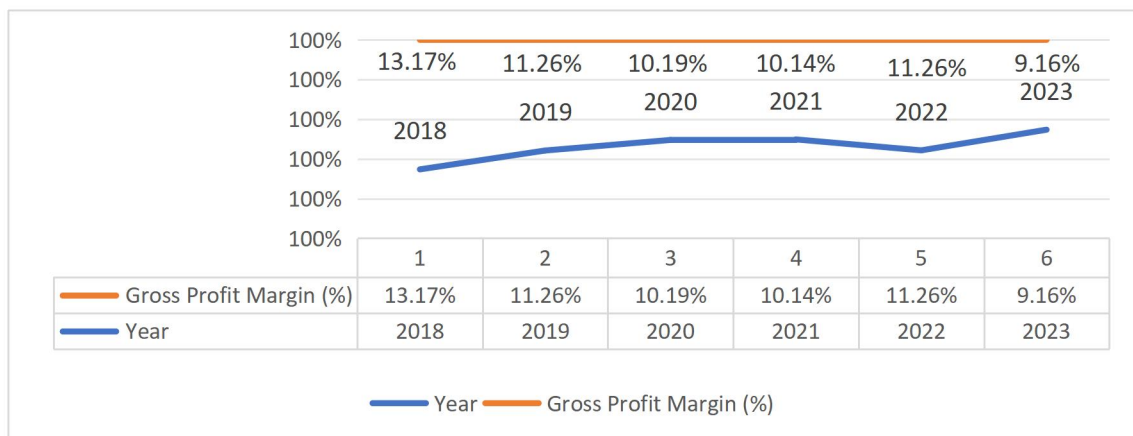
Figure 4-2 JC Company's Revenue and Profit from 2018 to 2023



Source: JC Company's internal information

Especially in 2023, although revenue has rebounded, air transportation costs have significantly increased in the first half of the year, and container export freight rates have remained high in the second half, resulting in an increase in the company's advance costs and a decrease in profits, failing to maintain the growth rate of previous years.

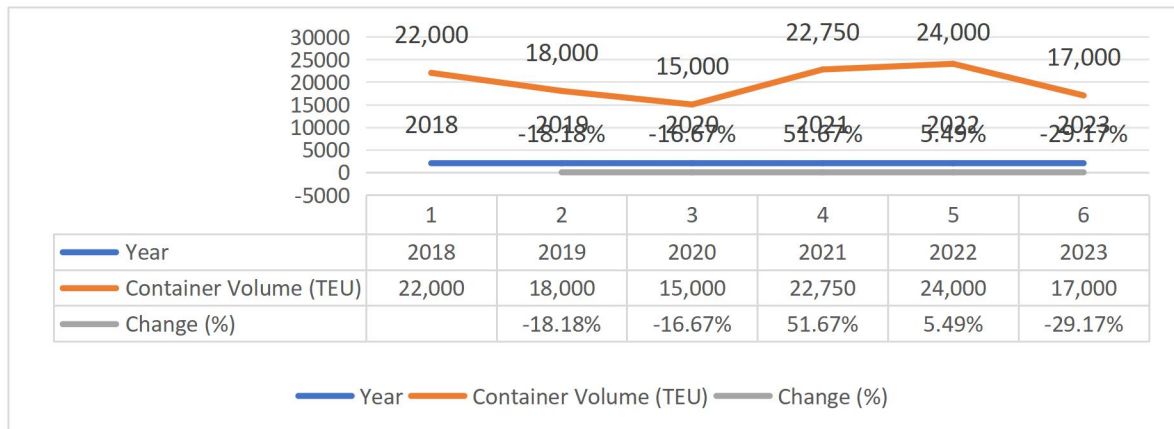
Figure 4-3 Profit margin data of JC Company from 2018 to 2023



Source: JC Company's data compilation

The figure shows significant fluctuations in the volume of JC Company's sea freight import and export containers from 2018 to 2023. In 2018, the company's import and export container volume was 22000 TEU, which decreased to 18000 TEU in 2019 and further decreased to 15000 TEU in 2020.

Figure 4-4 Statistics of JC Company's Import and Export Container Volume by Sea from 2018 to 2023



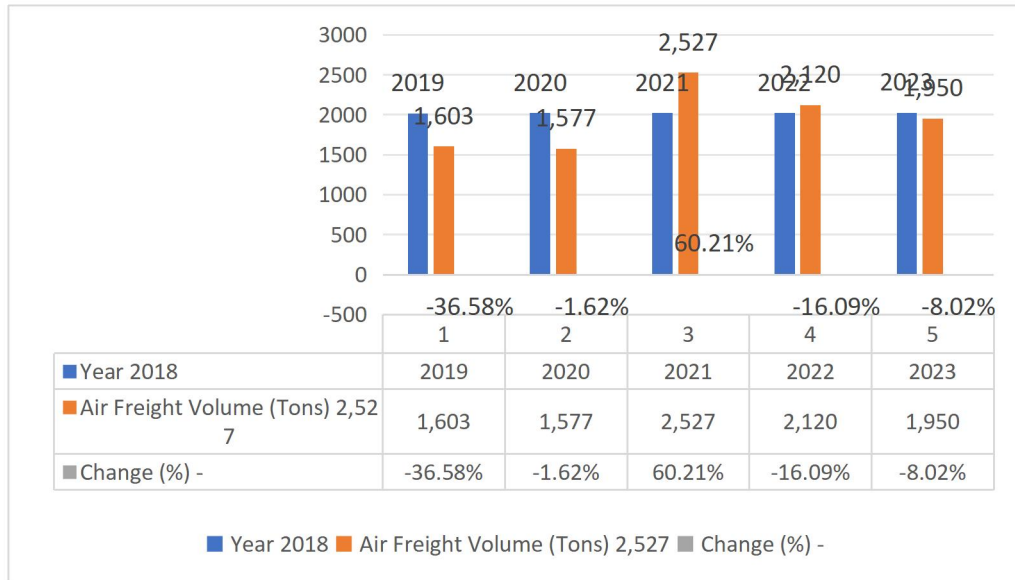
Source: JC company's data compilation

However, in 2021, the company achieved a breakthrough growth in business volume, with container volume increasing by approximately 51% month on month to reach 22750 TEUs. In 2022, the container volume continued to grow slightly to 24000 TEUs, but in 2023, the business volume declined again to 17000 TEUs, approaching the level of 2019. The main reason for this change is that JC Company lost a major customer with an average annual turnover of about 5000 TEUs.

The figure shows the statistical table of JC Company's air freight import and export tonnage from 2018 to 2023. As shown in the figure, JC Company's air freight business reached a phase high in 2018, with an air freight tonnage of 2527 tons. Afterwards, the air freight business began to decline in 2019 and 2020, with the air freight tonnage dropping to 1603 tons in 2019 and further dropping to 1577 tons in 2020. Nevertheless, the air freight volume rebounded in 2021, with a 72% increase compared to 2020, and the air freight tonnage reached a new high of 2527 tons.

However, in 2022 and 2023, the air freight business has once again shown a continuous two-year downward trend, reflecting the impact of intensified market competition and rising costs on JC Company's business.

Figure 4-5 Statistics of JC Company's Air Freight Import and Export Tonnage from 2018 to 2023



Source: JC Company's data compilation

The current JC company shows signs of insufficient competitiveness in the freight forwarding business, mainly due to its failure to accurately assess the business situation when formulating marketing strategies. To further explore the competitive environment in which JC Company operates, re plan marketing strategies, and improve the current situation, this thesis will objectively evaluate the actual challenges and opportunities of JC Company's freight forwarding business using Porter's Five Forces model analysis.

Company Background and Development :JC Company was founded in 2012 and has been operating in the international shipping market for 12 years, covering multiple countries and regions around the world, including Abbas in Iran, Dubai in the United Arab Emirates, and Riyadh in Saudi Arabia on Middle Eastern routes; The UK, Poland, the Netherlands, and Russia on European routes; And the western and eastern regions of the United States. We have established a good overseas agency network in Southeast Asia, including Thailand, Ho Chi Minh City in Vietnam, Singapore, Malaysia and other regions, and maintain good cooperative relationships with COSCO, YML, Haizhongfeng, and Yixing shipowners.

Existing marketing strategy

As a leading private enterprise in the Ningbo region, JC Company once held an important position in the freight forwarding market due to its outstanding performance and good market reputation. However, since the outbreak of the pandemic in 2020, the market environment has undergone significant changes, and the uncertainty of the external

environment and the loss of internal teams have had a considerable impact on the company. However, with the overall improvement of the freight forwarding industry and the continuous promotion of business innovation within JC Company, the company's business is gradually showing signs of recovery.

#### Market segmentation and target customers

At present, JC Company has not made a clear distinction in market segmentation, and its main marketing targets are enterprises with import and export needs. Relying on the abundant resources of the headquarters, the marketing team actively develops traditional freight forwarding business customers. However, in terms of target market positioning, JC Company focuses on import and export enterprises within Zhejiang Province, and customer resources mainly come from the social networks of marketing personnel, which limits the company's customer development potential. Although the marketing department has attempted to divide departments based on business types, in actual operations, most employees still rely on personal relationships to expand customers, lacking a systematic market thesis and customer management mechanism.

#### Cost and Service Strategy

JC Company mainly relies on self operated routes for cost competition, but due to the lack of information sharing among its subsidiaries in supplier procurement, procurement costs remain high and economies of scale cannot be achieved. In addition, JC Company also lacks in the visualization of its logistics supply chain. Customer logistics feedback mainly relies on manual querying of third-party websites, which fails to achieve end-to-end visual tracking and affects the convenience of services and customer experience.

#### Communication and Customer Relations

Currently, JC Company mainly communicates with customers through marketing and customer service personnel in daily business, lacking an effective customer relationship management system. In the actual import and export trade process, freight forwarders not only need to ensure the safety and timeliness of container shipping, but also need to deal with uncontrollable factors in international shipping, such as natural disasters, ship accidents, etc. This type of risk undoubtedly increases the pressure for traders and ship owners to share economic responsibility. Therefore, improving communication efficiency with customers and strengthening customer relationship management systems have become urgent issues that JC Company needs to address.

#### Summary and Suggestions

Overall, JC Company needs to develop a more scientific market positioning strategy by re planning its target market, improving service quality, and strengthening customer management to enhance its competitiveness in the freight forwarding industry. To ensure the healthy and stable development of the company, JC Company should actively respond to external challenges, optimize internal management processes, flexibly adjust marketing strategies, and achieve sustainable growth.

#### **4.3.2 Mission, vision and values**

Mission - JC Company's mission is to promote the smooth operation of global trade and achieve employees' career dreams and development goals by providing excellent customer value. Our mission is not only to be the executor of logistics services, but also to be the builder of international trade bridges, guided by innovation and responsibility, to promote the continuous growth of the company and help promote global economic connectivity.

Vision - JC Company's vision is to enhance its competitiveness in the global logistics market through continuous innovation and optimization of services, striving to become a leader in the international freight industry. We are committed to establishing a global logistics network covering more countries and regions, meeting customers' diverse needs for logistics services, and providing efficient and convenient logistics solutions. At the same time, JC Company always puts environmental protection and social responsibility first, actively promotes the development of green logistics, and achieves the common sustainable development of the company and society.

Values - JC Company is based on honesty and professionalism, providing efficient logistics services, committed to meeting customers' various needs, and winning their trust and recognition. We constantly explore new service models and technological means to improve service quality and efficiency, and promote innovative development in the industry. We face industry challenges together with customers, partners, and employees, build close cooperative relationships, and seek win-win development. In addition, JC Company actively fulfills its social responsibility, pays attention to environmental protection and public welfare undertakings, and is committed to contributing to the sustainable development of society.

#### **4.3.3 Choose different ship owners based on customer characteristics**

JC Company's direct upstream is the shipowner, as various factors such as port, loading time, shipping schedule, direct or transshipment, and price are intricately linked to the upstream company's shipowner. This means that the correct information about resource quality and conditions provided by upstream will be transmitted to relevant customers through freight forwarders for them to make choices.

Therefore, a satisfactory price, coupled with an excellent voyage and high-quality destination port service, is clearly the most ideal solution in the minds of customers, and also a part of the factors that enable customers to quickly obtain payment. Otherwise, when the consignee at the destination port and the consignor at the originating port pay for the goods based on the shipowner's arrival notice, this type of cabin is urgently needed by traders. Under the same sea freight price conditions, ship owners with shorter voyages are undoubtedly the most advantageous. So, what are the customer's preferences? Therefore, customers who can accept unified ship owners for a long time are classified as one category, which facilitates efficient management of JC Enterprise's unified customer service.

The ultimate goal of running a business is to gain more profits through cooperation. Due to the unique operational modes of relevant ports, such as international customs clearance or dual customs clearance at the port of origin and destination, customers with excellent ideas will propose specialized and customized requirements for specific routes or countries.

Table 4-3 Selection of Different Shipowners Based on Customer Characteristics

Shipowner	Customer characteristics
MSC、MSK	There are many customers exporting to Europe, America, South America, and long-distance shipping routes
COSCO、EMC、CMA、OOCL	There are many customers on export routes to Europe, America, the Middle East, and India Pakistan
YML、HMM	There are many customers on export routes to Europe, America, and the Red Sea

Source: Internal information of JC Company, 2023

In this way, low internal consumption, high efficiency, cost coordination, or reasonable personnel allocation can be achieved to achieve high profits.

On the contrary, if one is only focused on making profits from their clients and finds the work boring, costly, low profit, time-consuming, and time-consuming, then they should give up appropriately. It is worth noting that when choosing clients for cooperation, one also needs to consider their potential personal conditions and relevant educational backgrounds.

Table 4-4: Customer Characteristics Based on Different Professional Background

Customer characteristics	
Customers who adhere to the concept of profit sharing management	Pay attention to the perception of cooperation, cherish each other's efforts, have a relatively high corporate culture, and seek partners for the future of their own enterprise without frequently changing freight forwarders
Customers who only want to make money on their own	They are particularly concerned about prices, only want to make money on their own, do not want to cooperate to make money, are afraid of taking risks themselves, will avoid risks, and transfer risks to freight forwarders. The person in charge has a narrow vision, weak corporate culture, and often changes freight forwarders
Cost oriented customers	Customers who only want to ship their goods out as long as they don't lose money need to have in-depth communication and weigh the pros and cons.

Source: Internal information of JC Company, 2023

**4.3.4 Interview analysis**

Based on interviews conducted with senior executives at JC International Freight Forwarding Company, industry experts, and direct customer feedback collected through field research, this thesis provides a comprehensive understanding of the opportunities and challenges that JC Company currently faces. The findings highlight key trends within the international freight forwarding industry, especially in the post-pandemic landscape, and present a detailed view of JC Company’s internal environment and strategic positioning.

(1) Overview of Interviews

Interview Participants:

Senior Executives at JC Company - These include individuals such as CEO Yang Jin and Sales Manager Li, who hold a deep understanding of the company's strategic direction and day-to-day operations.

Industry Experts - Experts from the logistics and shipping industry, including external consultants and senior professionals with extensive experience in market trends, contributed to broader industry insights.

Direct Customers - Key customers who regularly work with JC Company across different market segments (Europe, America, Southeast Asia) provided valuable input regarding their experiences and expectations.

#### Interview Process:

Duration: Interviews were conducted over a three-month period (from May to July 2024), and each interview lasted between 1-3 hours.

Methodology: Semi-structured interviews were employed, focusing on the strengths and weaknesses of JC's operations, customer satisfaction, the impact of industry changes (such as pricing transparency), and potential growth areas for the company.

Purpose: The objective of these interviews was to gather qualitative data to better understand the internal and external factors influencing JC Company's market position, especially in light of the post-pandemic economic landscape. The interviews also sought to explore ways to enhance operational efficiency and customer retention.

## (2) Key Findings from Interviews and Field Research

### Opportunities and Market Trends

The global freight market has experienced significant shifts due to the pandemic, particularly in terms of pricing strategies by major shipping lines. JC Company has established solid, long-term partnerships with international shipping companies such as MSC, COSCO, and YML, which positions it well on key shipping routes. However, with shipping lines increasingly adopting network-based e-commerce platforms for pricing, freight rates have become highly transparent. This shift has posed challenges for traditional freight forwarding companies like JC, as profit margins are squeezed due to price transparency.

Sales Manager Li noted that while JC remains competitive on its core European and American routes, it faces growing competition from emerging players. The pandemic recovery has introduced many new competitors into the market, making it harder for established companies to maintain their profit margins. JC needs to capitalize on new market



opportunities—particularly in Southeast Asia, a region highlighted by both Li and industry expert Yang as having strong growth potential.

Several interviewees emphasized that JC should focus on enhancing its service offerings on Southeast Asian routes, given the region's rapid economic expansion and its relatively untapped potential in terms of logistics services. In addition, government support for expanding trade in this region presents an excellent opportunity for JC to increase its market share by 5% over the next two years.

### (3) Challenges and Areas for Improvement

Despite JC Company's established customer base and strong presence in maritime shipping, it has not sufficiently diversified its services across air and rail transport, placing it at a competitive disadvantage in those segments. Senior managers pointed out during interviews that this lack of diversification limits JC's ability to capture new customer segments, particularly those looking for multimodal transport solutions.

Furthermore, CEO Yang emphasized that JC is still heavily reliant on traditional marketing models, which limits the company's ability to compete with emerging digital players in the logistics market. The rise of e-commerce platforms in the logistics industry has not only increased competition but also transformed customer expectations regarding service transparency, speed, and flexibility. Several customers expressed dissatisfaction with the lack of real-time tracking and comprehensive information systems, particularly when compared to competitors who offer advanced digital solutions.

Therefore, JC must prioritize digital integration and improve its information management systems to enhance visibility and customer satisfaction. Improving real-time logistics tracking, optimizing internal processes, and leveraging big data to offer customized services are key steps that the company needs to undertake.

### (4) Strengths and Competitive Advantages

Despite these challenges, JC Company's strengths lie in its highly flexible, customer-tailored services and its robust local resource network. The company has a history of providing personalized services to long-term clients, particularly on its core European and American routes. Many customers, during their interviews, praised JC's responsiveness and ability to handle complex logistical problems with tailored solutions, which sets the company apart from competitors who offer more standardized services.

In addition, JC's close relationships with major shipping lines and its ability to negotiate favorable rates for customers also remain core competitive advantages. As noted by Sales

Manager Li, JC's ability to consistently secure competitive pricing on key routes has allowed it to maintain long-term contracts with larger clients. However, to sustain and expand this competitive advantage, JC must focus on improving its customer relationship management (CRM) system to ensure that customers receive consistently high-quality service.

#### (5) Strategic Recommendations

**Digital Transformation:** JC Company must accelerate its digital transformation efforts. This includes investing in a robust logistics management platform that can offer real-time tracking, streamline communication with customers, and provide data-driven insights to improve operational efficiency. By offering more transparent and efficient services, JC can strengthen its value proposition, especially in the competitive Southeast Asian market.

**Targeted Market Segmentation:** Based on the insights gathered from the interviews, JC must adopt a more refined marketing approach, focusing on the different needs of customers across its core routes (Europe, America) and emerging markets (Southeast Asia). By using summary classification analysis to distinguish high-value customers from price-sensitive ones, the company can tailor its services and marketing strategies more effectively.

**Employee Training and Development:** To enhance internal processes and customer service, JC must invest in talent development. This includes providing more comprehensive training programs for its marketing and operational teams, ensuring that employees are equipped with the skills necessary to navigate complex logistical challenges and provide high-quality service.

**Diversification of Services:** Finally, JC must prioritize the diversification of its logistics services. Expanding air and rail transport offerings will not only reduce its reliance on maritime shipping but also attract new customers who are looking for integrated, multimodal transport solutions. This will improve JC's overall market competitiveness and strengthen its long-term growth prospects.

#### (6) Conclusion

The interviews and field research conducted for this thesis provide valuable insights into JC Company's current position and the broader trends within the international freight forwarding industry. While the company has solid foundations—such as strong partnerships with shipping lines and flexible customer service—there are clear areas for improvement, particularly in terms of digital transformation, market diversification, and employee training.

To remain competitive in the post-pandemic market and continue its growth trajectory, JC must focus on these strategic areas, leveraging its strengths while addressing its operational

weaknesses. By doing so, the company can secure its place as a leading player in the international logistics industry, especially as it seeks to expand its presence in emerging markets like Southeast Asia.

#### **4.4 SWOT Analysis**

##### **4.4.1 Strength**

The company's employees have strong professional competence and high personnel quality. The company provides customers with a range of long-term customized ocean shipping marketing services, including customer acquisition capabilities, product selection capabilities, and execution capabilities. In addition, the company has the ability to handle various difficult and miscellaneous problems for customers all year round, fully demonstrating the high professionalism of JC Enterprise employees. Compared to typical small and medium-sized international freight forwarding companies, this enterprise has high-quality employees and requires new employees to have at least a bachelor's degree. It has a professional service team with high quality and good cultural literacy, capable of dealing with various "tough battles".

JC Company has a low asset liability ratio and a good cash flow situation. JC Company is a light asset company that has not made significant investments in hardware equipment. Except for some customers with good credit who deposit money in advance in the company for JC Company's financial control, the company usually does not require customers to pay for goods. Otherwise, customers who prepay the payment will need to make the payment on the billing date requested by the shipowner.

Because the company will clearly indicate the payment deadline and corresponding fines for exceeding the deadline on the form urging customers, in order to ensure the normal operation of daily marketing policies.

##### **4.4.2 Weaknesses**

The company is still in the traditional marketing mode. At present, the company mainly serves domestic self pickup goods. Due to its lack of competitive advantage, its business in overseas markets is relatively limited. In daily operations, the company focuses on serving existing customers and revenue models, but lacks in-depth exploration of overseas market customers and agents. It only focuses on distributing goods to overseas agents without investing more effort in promoting the advantageous routes provided by the company to them.

In addition, in the context of the rise of cross-border e-commerce and the Internet era, the transformation and upgrading of Internet plus traditional enterprises are relatively slow.

The training mechanism is not yet perfect. The new employees of JC Company are currently receiving one-on-one training on relevant workflow and basic industry knowledge. However, in recent years, JC Company has welcomed more and more new major customers with different needs. The traditional training model lacks unified and standardized training content, as well as new regulations for all staff training. This has led to lack of coordination among operational personnel in liaising with major clients, as well as lagging work efficiency and customer service complaints.

#### **4.4.3 Opportunities**

The booming development of new technologies such as big data, logistics information intelligent platforms, and e-commerce has provided innovative ideas and technical support for international freight forwarding companies. At present, the freight rates of several large shipowners are announced on e-commerce networks. Some small and medium-sized ship owners mainly rely on online services, with manual customer service as an auxiliary.

They have also launched related products for online multi route product combinations, aiming to provide customers with more convenient services. In the future, with the support of these high-tech technologies, the network will be more closely integrated with international freight forwarding services, providing customers with quotes in the first time, creating a technology system that promotes business development, and allowing technology to change traditional marketing models. With the continuous development and openness of the times, the circulation of commercial trade is gradually becoming standardized and transparent. More and more products have been widely circulated to different countries and regions. For international freight forwarding companies, this is a new opportunity to further expand their market. Customers are the cornerstone of a company's development and the fundamental basis for its growth. On the one hand, JC company is currently focusing on self purchasing of goods, supplemented by designated products. At the same time, maintaining existing domestic customers and continuously developing new ones is the strategy for the development of enterprise marketing business.

#### **4.4.4 Threats**

The global economy is in a downturn, and the uncertainty of the development of import and export foreign trade has increased.

Table4-5 SWOT Analysis and Strategic Combinations for JC Company

	Internal Environment	External Environment	SO.	WO.
Strengths (S.)	S1 The company's employees have strong professionalism and qualifications.	S2 The company has a low debt ratio and strong cash flow.	S3 The company has strong competitive advantages in the mainstream markets.	WO1 Expand the transportation market development according to relevant government policies.
Weaknesses (W.)	W1 The company still relies on traditional marketing models.	W2 The employee training mechanism is relatively insufficient.	S3 The company's brand recognition in international markets is relatively low.	WO2 Strengthen cooperation with core customers, and optimize brand building.
Opportunities (O.)	O1 Government supports the development of relevant industries.	O2 Technological environment provides strong support.	ST1 Deeply promote the company's competitive advantages through focused marketing combinations.	WT1 Improve brand and product structure under industry pressure.
Threats (T.)	T1 Increasing integration of resources among companies.	T2 Global economic slowdown, reduced exports, and uncertainties in foreign trade development.	ST2 Learn from competitors' integration strategies and combine resources according to the company's needs.	WT1 Use idle resources and adjust the business structure according to company needs.

Source: Internal information of JC Company, 2023

The trade war between China and the United States, as well as the adherence to the One China principle in mainland Taiwan relations, the Russia Ukraine war, rising oil prices, US sanctions on Iran, and the serious impact on product exports, have led to fluctuations in global product trade imports and exports due to political and economic instability, greatly impacting the survival and development of the freight industry. During the epidemic, the industry shifted from blue ocean markets to red ocean markets, with fierce competition. Despite the unprecedented surge in China's foreign trade exports during the 2021 pandemic, the emergence of international freight forwarding companies has also seized a unique market advantage.

However, with the resumption of work and production in factories in other countries, the pre pandemic state has gradually recovered. In addition, compared to other factories, international freight forwarding is a light asset, and many young people have participated in the independent entrepreneurial wave of this industry. Young people disrupt market order and trigger fierce competition within the market through the "price war".

#### **4.5 Marketing plan objectives**

With the continuous evolution of technology, freight forwarders have both made progress and faced many challenges. The overall market environment drives enterprises towards higher efficiency and broader development space, while also providing customers with more choices. Facing ship owners and international freight forwarders, relying solely on traditional marketing models of freight forwarders is no longer sufficient to meet the needs of current customers. Therefore, how to solve customer pain points and expand new customer sources is a problem that freight forwarders need to deeply consider. At the same time, effectively combining the problems that customers need to solve with JC Company's service selling points is an indispensable condition for it to occupy a favorable position in the maritime market marketing.

Based on the characteristics of shipowner services, it is possible to predict the future market from the above customer segmentation process. For example, MSC, MSK, COSCO, EMC, CMA, and ONE mainly operate on European and American routes. In the process of international shipping, they have strong risk resistance and strong financial strength. Customers choose such ship owners to arrange cargo transportation with a relatively high

safety factor. As for Southeast Asian routes, although the customer capital chain is not as strong as European and American routes, due to the larger population in the region compared to European and American countries, ship owners of European and American routes explore Southeast Asian routes based on market demand. For SITC and YML, due to their long-term operation of Southeast Asian routes, they have a relatively deep understanding of the characteristics of their cooperative customers and will gradually add new service functions according to their needs to stabilize existing customers.

From the perspective of professional background, customers who adopt the profit sharing management concept have a high acceptance rate. However, before choosing a freight forwarder to transport goods, the company usually conducts repeated trade-offs and comparisons among numerous freight forwarders, and analyzes the advantages and disadvantages of several freight forwarders they are interested in. Therefore, the early sales process of freight forwarders requires a lot of effort, otherwise it is difficult to win such customers.

For customers who only want to make money on their own, freight forwarders need to spend a lot of time, and these customers often find it difficult to trust others' advice. A simple task requires a lot of repetitive work, and the marketing process is extremely time-consuming. In addition, these customers have strong liquidity, so in the long run, there is no need to invest too much energy in these low loyalty customers. For clients who need to handle difficult business and are unwilling to accept conventional methods in the same industry, investing some effort in thesis ing and effectively addressing their problems can often yield good benefits.

#### **4.6 Market segmentation, target market, and market positioning**

JC Company's market positioning mainly focuses on European and American routes, supplemented by Southeast Asian routes, while also covering other route businesses. It is crucial to accurately divide the customer hierarchy and combine the company's own advantages to efficiently expand the vacant market and attract the target customer group. This thesis identifies the potential competitive advantages of a company through the following differentiation:

Firstly, there is personnel differentiation. Compared with other large enterprises in the same industry, the market and sales personnel level of large enterprises are uneven. Most experienced salespeople are promoted to directors or management positions in the company

and no longer participate in the negotiation process of specific customer business. Especially in the early days, the concept of salespeople was still stuck in traditional marketing models. For new salespeople, their sea freight marketing strategy mainly focuses on the "price war", like a quoting machine. Currently, JC Company is composed of experienced sales personnel. For large clients, there must be management involvement, while for small clients, if they encounter difficult problems, they also need to assist relevant sales personnel in treating them as case studies to prevent missing any potential customers. Unfortunately, JC Company is still small in scale and its employees are mostly comprehensive talents, resulting in a lack of detailed division of labor.

Secondly, there is cultural differentiation: before the epidemic, the market was sluggish, and coupled with the low entry threshold of the logistics industry, ship owners still rely on manual quotation, and only need to communicate in Chinese in terms of language. However, since the establishment of JC Company, it has realized that the future market will inevitably be networked and informatized. Therefore, the company advocates that all employees should not only work, but also adhere to efficient learning, constantly improve themselves, and hope to apply what they have learned to the process of managing the enterprise in the future.

Once again, there is differentiation in marketing: JC's marketing process includes leveraging professional advantages, referencing competitors' relevant operational models, drawing on their strengths, integrating into the enterprise in a timely manner, and strengthening customer needs.

Provide customized services to meet customer needs and demonstrate JC's professional expertise and efficient service. Even in the face of political or economic market changes, JC can still stand out in the market. In the established target market, customer resources belong to short-term customers, and their demand for products and services is increasing day by day. Therefore, in order to gain an absolute competitive advantage in the industry, JC Company's positioning can be determined as: flexible sales, risk control, and resolving difficulties in the maritime market.

According to the payment characteristics of customers, those who make timely payments pay attention to cooperation and integrity, have strong resistance to risks, and are willing to entrust the transportation and management of goods to professional personnel. In the process of sea transportation, regardless of the product or quantity of the goods, the entire cargo must follow the same workflow; Frequently delaying payments to customers, the company handles affairs with caution. Risk control did not focus on the core, wasting too much time. From a



long-term cooperation perspective, the limited scope makes it difficult for the company to achieve healthy development. So from the above aspects, it can be determined that the target customers are the following categories. As shown in Table 4.6:

Table 4-6: JC Company's Target Customer Classification and Maintenance Strategy

Type	Shipment status	Container quantity	Profit	Customer characteristics	Maintenance efforts
Type A	Stabilize	Many	High	Strong risk resistance, fast payment, good credit, good cooperation attitude, high loyalty	Key maintenance
Type B	Relatively stable	Same as	Same as	The ability to resist risks is average, with good payment, good credit, easy price comparison, and average loyalty	Need to maintain and frequently adjust marketing strategies
Type C	instability	Few	Few	Poor risk resistance, constant price cutting, poor payment ability, and poor loyalty	Don't focus on maintenance, do what you can, don't let him do more comparisons and setbacks

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Source: Internal information of JC Company

The above types of customers are the main target markets for JC Company's marketing. Only by utilizing the service advantages of these markets, meeting customer needs, and obtaining certain profits can we further expand the market, continuously increase the service quality of the enterprise in the market, and make the enterprise stronger and bigger.

**4.7 Marketing mix**

Improvement measures for marketing strategies. By analyzing the marketing environment and market positioning of JC Company's maritime transportation market, it is possible to further

optimize marketing strategies and resolve the relevant problems currently existing in the enterprise. Specifically, analysis and discussion can be conducted from aspects such as product, price, distribution, promotion, personnel, tangible display, and process management. This is of great significance for JC Company to improve service quality and find new profit growth points for a healthy business strategy.

#### **4.7.1 Product**

The company has selected highly credible service products from years of experience in shipping container support service marketing, which has important reference value for the entire marketing team. But with the continuous changes in the overall environment, in order to keep up with the "customer demand" of the market and comply with market trends, the company needs to make accurate predictions in advance for the core advantageous routes of different shipowners, and regularly communicate and evaluate with cooperating units such as container transport fleets, yards, loading yards, and customs clearance agencies.

To control risks while leveraging its effective advantages, regularly provide the most competitive selling points to corresponding customers, continuously develop new service products, and set objective and reasonable service selling points for customers, thereby improving the competitiveness of shipping. Flexible adjustment of product portfolio, container transportation costs and local port charges for each route should focus on striving for the lowest cost and ensuring controllable risks within the validity period, gradually enhancing the survival and development of the enterprise.

The service process covers relevant professional knowledge of "related foreign trade products", which can indirectly provide effective guidance for confused traders. Most of the traders in coastal areas are start-up enterprises in the exploratory stage of product development, including product codes, tariffs, tax refund rates, and declaration elements. They are also in the exploratory stage of determining which route and which country has the highest demand for the product. Therefore, we can provide suggestions for JC Company to help customers have a deeper understanding of the product, smoothly push the product to the market, increase product sales, increase the stickiness between JC Company and customers, and enhance the company's professional competence and brand awareness.

#### **4.7.2 Price**

For shipping ports, when each port corresponds to the same shipowner, the price is usually the same. However, for the same country, city, port, and different terminals, differentiated freight marketing strategies can be implemented based on the nearest different terminals to improve customer acceptance.

For example, Table 4-7 shows different terminals in adjacent ports:

Table 4-7: Classification of Terminals in Different Countries and Adjacent Ports

Country	Wharf	Adjacent Wharf	Sea Freight Price Difference (2022)
USA	Los Angeles	Long Beach	\$200 - \$300
Pakistan	Karachi K Port	Karachi P Port	\$150 - \$250
Poland	Gdynia	Gdansk	\$500 - \$700
China	Shanghai	Guangdong	\$100 - \$200

Source: Internal records of JC Company 2022

Firstly, we can recommend a strategy of low sea freight prices to new customers. Although the global customer base is extremely large, there are not many customers currently cooperating with JC Company in the same port. Therefore, it is extremely important to further explore similar customer groups and switch to the nearest port to obtain recommendations for shipping container sales. For example, if a customer expects to go to Gdansk Port in Poland but is recommended to go to Gdynia Port, as mentioned in the pricing strategy earlier, CMA COSCO, EMC to GDANSK Port, but their sea freight prices are much higher than YML to GDYNIA. The price of a small overweight container will increase by approximately \$500 to \$700 between January and April 2022.

Therefore, for large engineering order customers, this huge difference in sea freight prices can clearly be highly valued by customers. They are willing to recommend a replacement strategy for customers at the destination port, as the customs clearance mode and fees at this destination port are the same. Unless the warehouse and vehicle costs of short distance transportation customers are different, the difference in sea freight costs only

accounts for a small part. Through this sea freight price gap marketing strategy, we can explore new customers.

Secondly, a centralized marketing strategy can be used to give back to existing customers. For long-term cooperative customers, if they encounter a large container volume and use the same port, they can apply for a special price from the shipowner and share the discount with old customers with less container volume. At the same time, they can further apply for price extensions and use their competitive advantage to further promote the marketing strategy of the entire shipping market.

### **4.7.3 Place**

**Optimized Distribution Channel Design:** The company must design effective distribution channels by determining the optimal length (number of intermediaries) and width (number of intermediaries at each level). Proper channel design is crucial for targeting international markets effectively, ensuring cost-efficiency, and maximizing profitability.

**Leveraging Online Channels:** Online marketing and transactions have become essential, especially post-pandemic. JC Company should utilize digital tools like WeChat, enterprise QQ, and email for customer communication, sales, and policy updates. This shift improves efficiency, enhances security, and allows for real-time engagement with customers.

**Maintaining and Expanding Partnerships:** JC should maintain strong relationships with international partners and domestic customers through consistent communication and personalized service. Offering accurate information on ocean freight, shipping schedules, and risk assessments builds trust and loyalty. This proactive engagement can increase customer retention and reduce turnover.

### **4.7.4 Promotion**

**Enhancing Personnel Negotiation Skills:** Sales personnel play a crucial role in international promotion by presenting and negotiating effectively with customers. They not only introduce products but also offer real-time feedback, address customer concerns, and build long-term relationships. To strengthen negotiations, sales teams should be trained in separating people from problems, focusing on mutual interests, and developing solutions that benefit both parties. Key negotiation elements include pricing, service quality, shipment volume, and settlement terms.

**Customer Relationship Building:** Establishing strong interpersonal relationships is essential for long-term business success. Sales personnel should focus on building trust through consistent communication, on-site demonstrations, and personalized service. This allows for immediate customer feedback and strengthens brand loyalty, positioning the company as a reliable partner in shipping solutions.

**Targeted Promotional Efforts:** During holidays, promotional activities such as gift-giving and offering overtime service for urgent shipments can deepen customer relationships. Providing timely updates during the execution of orders enhances the company's sense of responsibility and reinforces customer trust. This strategic, personalized approach to promotion strengthens the company's reputation and boosts customer retention.

## **4.8 Implementation**

Based on the previous thesis on the marketing status, problems, reasons, and optimization plans of JC Company's freight forwarding business, this chapter combines the principles and goals of strategic plan design to develop safeguard measures for the implementation of the plan from multiple perspectives such as manpower, funds, technology, and systems.

### **4.8.1 Implementation principles**

JC Company should always prioritize improving the performance of its freight forwarding business when implementing marketing strategy optimization plans. To ensure the smooth implementation of the strategy and ultimately achieve the expected results, the following key principles need to be followed:

**Systematic and coordinated:** Each department needs to work together, unify goals and actions, avoid acting independently, and ensure that the entire marketing chain operates in an orderly and efficient manner under the guidance of optimization plans.

**The principle of continuous improvement:** The implementation of the plan should be dynamic and constantly adjusted in practice based on market environment and customer feedback to ensure that it always maintains market competitiveness.

**Both risk control and cost optimization are equally important:** it is necessary to improve business efficiency and attach great importance to potential credit risks, market fluctuations, and other factors to ensure that marketing activities achieve maximum profits while effectively controlling risks.

Talent oriented: Enhance the professional level of the business team and ensure that each employee maximizes their effectiveness in optimizing the execution of the plan.

**4.8.2 Implement goals**

The primary goal of implementing the optimization plan is to strengthen the overall management of JC Company's freight forwarding business, ensuring that while improving operational efficiency, losses caused by incomplete processes or human errors are reduced. To achieve this goal, the company will set clear short-term, medium-term, and long-term goals based on strategic direction to ensure the steady development of the enterprise.

JC Company plans to gradually enhance its market competitiveness over the next three years by optimizing marketing strategies, expanding market share, and promoting digital transformation.

Specific goals include:

- Increase overall sales by 20%
- Increase the market share of Southeast Asian routes by 5%
- Reduce customer accounts receivable lag ratio by 10%
- Short term goal (within 1 year)

Optimize marketing strategy: By strengthening employee training, improving existing sales and customer service processes, we plan to increase customer satisfaction by 10% within one year and reduce order delay rates caused by poor information communication.

Table4-8 Strategic Goals for JC Company: Short, Mid, and Long-Term Objectives

Target Type	Short-Term Goal (Within 1 Year)	Mid-Term Goal (1-2 Years)	Long-Term Goal (Within 3 Years)
Increase total sales revenue			Increase by 20%
Southeast Asia market share increase		Increase by 5%	Increase by 10%
Reduce accounts receivable delay ratio		Reduce by 10%	Reduce by 10%
Improve customer satisfaction	Increase by 10%		

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Reduce order delay rate	Reduce order delay	
Market share increase (Southeast Asia routes)		Increase by 5%
New strategic partnership		Add 2 new partners
Reduce accounts receivable delay ratio		Reduce by 10%
Increase customer loyalty		Increase by 15%

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Source: Internal information of JC Company, 2023

Enhance professional competence: Establish strict assessment mechanisms for new employees and provide more targeted training for existing employees to ensure they can handle complex business problems with higher efficiency. At the same time, ensure that every employee has clear promotion channels to stimulate their enthusiasm and sense of responsibility.

Mid term goal (within 1-2 years)

Expanding market share: On the Southeast Asian route, the company plans to increase market share by 5% by optimizing distribution channels and strengthening customer service, and add at least 2 new strategic partners to the global agency network.

Optimize customer management: Establish a comprehensive customer classification management system, improve the timeliness of accounts receivable collection through credit evaluation and classification, and reduce accounts receivable lag rate by 10%. This will help improve the financial health and cash flow management capabilities of the enterprise.

Long term goal (within 3 years)

Realize digital transformation: gradually implement smart logistics and big data analysis platforms to promote the company's transition from traditional business models to digital transformation. In the next three years, the company will increase customer loyalty by 15% by optimizing supply chain visualization and real-time tracking of logistics status to enhance customer experience.

Market competitiveness enhancement: By integrating company resources and gradually improving competitiveness on key routes such as Europe, America, and Southeast Asia, we

plan to expand our market share globally and create long-term development advantages for the enterprise.

**Risk Management and Division of Labor**

Clarify departmental responsibilities: To ensure seamless integration between departments in marketing, customer service, and other areas, clarify the responsibilities and division of labor for each business department, and prevent the occurrence of shirking responsibility. At the same time, by optimizing workflow, ensure that all business processes are efficient and smooth.

Strengthening risk management awareness: The company will focus on enhancing the recognition and control awareness of credit risks among employees at all levels. By establishing a multi-level risk control mechanism, we ensure effective supervision at every stage of each project from initiation to completion, reducing potential losses caused by credit risk.

JC Company plans to increase its revenue in the Southeast Asian market by 15% within the next two years, gradually expanding its business by optimizing distribution channels and enhancing customer service quality. At the same time, the company will establish a comprehensive customer classification management system to reduce the lag rate of accounts receivable and ensure further improvement of the financial health of the enterprise.

**4.8.3 Annual Marketing Activity Schedule and Budget Estimation**

Developing a clear annual marketing activity schedule is a key step in ensuring the execution of the marketing optimization plan for JC Company's freight forwarding business. By reasonably planning marketing activities at different stages throughout the year, JC Company can accurately grasp market trends, achieve optimal allocation of resources, and maximize benefits. For this purpose, the following detailed marketing activity schedule and budget estimate have been developed, covering the execution plan, funding investment, and performance indicators of various key activities. This table not only helps to enhance the market penetration of the enterprise, but also lays a solid foundation for gradually improving the core competitiveness of the enterprise.

The setting of annual marketing activities should not only target market trends, but also reflect precise positioning of customer groups. Based on the customer lifecycle, carry out differentiated marketing and customer retention measures at different stages. Marketing strategies must be flexible and adaptable, while ensuring the targeting and execution of



activities. The core of this strategy is to enhance the company's market share and brand influence in the global market through optimized budget allocation. The following is the specific arrangement and budget plan for the annual marketing activities:

Table 4-9 Annual Marketing Activity Schedule and Budget Estimate

Time	Marketing Activity	Objective	Budget Estimate	Responsible Department	Key Performance Indicators (KPI)
January	New Year promotion, customer gift distribution	Strengthen relationships with existing customers, enhance customer loyalty	500,000 CNY	Marketing Department	Customer loyalty increased by 10%, customer satisfaction improved to 85%
February	Southeast Asia market promotion, online ads and search engine marketing	Further expand the Southeast Asian market and acquire new customers	300,000 CNY	Sales Department	Southeast Asian market share increased by 1%, new customer count increased by 5%

March	Corporate website and social media updates, launch online campaigns	Increase brand awareness, attract potential customers	200,000 CNY	Marketing Department	Website traffic increased by 15%, potential customer conversion rate improved by 5%
April	Industry exhibition participation and partnership negotiations (Europe and Southeast Asia markets)	Expand international cooperation and increase the number of strategic partners	800,000 CNY	Business Development Department	At least 3 new cooperation agreements signed, 2 new strategic partners added
May	Old customer loyalty program, customized offers	Strengthen relationships with old customers and improve repurchase rate	400,000 CNY	Customer Relationship Department	Repurchase rate of old customers increased by 10%, long-term customer count grew by 5%

June	Market thesis and customer needs analysis	Provide data support for the adjustment of marketing strategies in the second half of the year	100,000 CNY	Marketing Department	Improved accuracy of customer needs data, next marketing strategy formulated
July	Summer promotion, launch discounts in cooperation with partners	Increase customer engagement and drive sales growth	500,000 CNY	Marketing Department	New customer growth rate increased by 10%, sales increased by 5%
August	Online ads and promotion, utilize digital platforms to expand market	Strengthen online channels and attract more potential customers	300,000 CNY	Marketing Department	Online visits increased by 20%, customer conversion rate improved by 5%

September	Mid-Autumn Festival customer care, gift distribution	Consolidate customer relationships, enhance customer loyalty	250,000 CNY	Customer Relationship Department	Customer satisfaction increased by 5%, customer churn rate reduced by 2%
October	Pricing strategy adjustment, launch differentiated service packages	Improve market competitiveness, attract new customers	400,000 CNY	Finance and Marketing Departments	New service package usage increased by 15%, market share increased by 2%
November	Participation in industry summits, promote brand	Increase company industry status and expand market influence	600,000 CNY	Business Development Department	Industry recognition improved, potential customer growth increased by 5%
December	Year-end review and customer appreciation, analyze annual marketing results	Review and summarize annual performance, adjust next year's strategy	500,000 CNY	Marketing Department	Year-end customer satisfaction improved to 90%, customer renewal rate increased by 10%

Source: Internal marketing and financial records of JC Company, 2024

The total annual budget is 4.5 million yuan. Through a multi-channel and phased promotion plan, the company will gradually consolidate its business foundation in the European, American, and Southeast Asian markets, while continuously exploring new market opportunities. To ensure the effectiveness of these marketing activities, each activity will be equipped with clear KPIs for measuring results.

The setting of the activity covers all aspects from customer acquisition, brand promotion to customer relationship maintenance. Through systematic market thesis and customer demand analysis, marketing strategies can be dynamically adjusted based on customer feedback. Each stage of the activity has clear budget support to ensure the implementation of the activity. The rational allocation of funds will enhance the targeting and effectiveness of activities, further optimizing the company's competitiveness in the global logistics market.

On this basis, clear KPIs will be used to continuously monitor the actual effectiveness of marketing activities for each activity. For example, the KPI for New Year promotions and customer gift distribution is to increase customer loyalty, and the success or failure of the activities will be analyzed based on customer follow-up data. Through Southeast Asian market promotion activities, the company's market share will be monitored monthly to ensure effective acquisition of new customers. At the same time, after each large-scale exhibition, the effectiveness of the event's market expansion will be evaluated based on the number of signed cooperation agreements.

The budget estimate and actual investment for each activity are accurately calculated, combined with the company's financial capabilities and market expansion needs, to ensure efficient utilization of resources. By closely coordinating with the marketing department, finance department, and business development department, we ensure the synergy and coordination of activities, laying a solid foundation for the successful implementation of JC Company's marketing strategy.

## **4.9 Guarantee for the Implementation of Marketing Strategies**

### **4.9.1 Human resource guarantee**

Freight forwarding companies provide professional logistics services to customers, and the quality of service is the key to winning customer satisfaction. Therefore, professional talents are an important resource for freight forwarding companies. In order to enhance the core

competitiveness of freight forwarding enterprises, various incentive measures should be taken to attract and cultivate professional talents.

(1) Strengthen the construction of marketing team. Only by assembling a team of components, gathering everyone's strengths, strengthening and deepening cooperation among employees, can we change the current sales model of the company that relies solely on individual efforts, and occupy a favorable competitive position in the market. At present, there is a shortage of professional talents in freight forwarding marketing. Companies should cooperate with relevant universities in a targeted manner, select outstanding students in related majors to intern and strengthen the talent reserve of the enterprise.

(2) Strengthen the professional training of company employees. The company should regularly conduct planned and customized training for employees in different positions to improve their professional competence. And conduct phased analysis and evaluation of each employee's abilities, adjust and allocate them to more suitable positions in a timely manner based on the requirements of each position.

(3) Optimize the salary performance evaluation system. Improve the assessment mechanism, whether it is marketing personnel or operators, the allocation principle must consider whether the employees' efforts match their rewards. The work of marketers can be measured by clear indicators, generally using sales revenue, sales profit, and other indicators as performance evaluation criteria. Their salaries are often linked to these indicators, and the more work, the more rewards, effectively mobilizing the work enthusiasm of marketers. At the same time, enterprises cannot ignore the salary and performance evaluation of operators. It is recommended to divide professional levels based on the professional abilities and knowledge experience of operators, establish a standard evaluation system for the comprehensive quality and skills of professional personnel, and give professional title levels to professional personnel in addition to management positions. Employees with abilities, professional knowledge, and experience should be given higher salaries, which can stimulate and encourage the development of other employees and enhance the skills and professional knowledge required for the overall competitiveness of the enterprise.

#### **4.9.2 Financial security**

After the outbreak of the COVID-19 in 2020, international logistics freight rates continued to soar crazily. International logistics freight rates have doubled, whether in air transport, ship transport or railway transport. Freight forwarders generally have a certain accounting period

with customers, which generally ranges from 30 to 90 days. Freight forwarders need to help customers advance all logistics costs. At present, the high freight rates in the shipping market are a test of the ability of freight forwarders to advance funds, which requires strong funds to ensure the normal operation of current business. In addition, the construction of logistics platforms and the vigorous development of information technology also require a large amount of self investment. JC Company needs to strengthen comprehensive budget management, accelerate the collection of accounts receivable, and reasonably evaluate the cash flow and input-output ratio of each business transaction, in order to ensure the sustainable expansion of the business with limited funds. Sort out customers with complex orders and low profits, conduct unified analysis at the company level, and adjust businesses with high payment risk. Proactively giving up some customers with complex orders, high advance payments, slow collection, and low profits; Make adjustments to flight routes, adjust routes with high operational risks, significant policy fluctuations, and low profit margins; For some high-quality customers who have experienced business fluctuations under the impact of the epidemic, financial support will be provided to customers on the basis of their own financial security to maintain customer relationships; Adjust the customer structure, make targeted adjustments to the accounts receivable structure, and pay attention to the aging management of accounts receivable; We need to adjust the customer structure, strengthen customer credit management, minimize accounts receivable risks, and improve the efficiency of fund utilization.

#### **4.9.3 Technical support**

During the transformation and upgrading process of JC Company from a comprehensive logistics provider to a logistics resource integrator and smart logistics platform provider, its core is digital driving, and smart logistics requires the support of technologies such as AI intelligence and big data. With the development of blockchain technology, smart contracts, digital payments, and massive fragmented transactions have become the new normal of foreign trade. The role of new technologies in logistics operations is becoming increasingly important. In business practice, it is necessary to integrate technology with actual business operations. The development of smart logistics platform business requires information exchange and business collaboration among shipping companies, ports, customs and other institutions. Utilizing information technology to achieve real-time collaborative links between various logistics links, providing customers with accurate logistics status information and full

process visualization tracking services. By developing interfaces and integrating with import and export enterprise systems, collaboration between production and logistics supply chain arrangements can be achieved through production plan sharing; Real time integration between the company's customs system and customs, achieving timely, accurate declaration and efficient supervision of import and export goods; By utilizing technological means and sharing third-party information resources, real-time monitoring and feedback can be provided on the status of goods and the operation trajectory of transportation vehicles, meeting customers' requirements for accuracy and timeliness of logistics information.

#### **4.9.4 Institutional guarantee**

Establish precise rules and regulations, clarify the responsibilities of responsible persons, standardize operational processes, improve incentive mechanisms, ensure the implementation of organizational requirements, and avoid football problems caused by ambiguous rights and responsibilities.

(1) The marketing department shall develop specific new process standards for marketing personnel's marketing activities, including sales indicators, customer visit records, sales reports, and other contents.

(2) The freight forwarding customer service department formulates specific quantifiable standard systems for import and export operations of freight forwarding business, KPI assessment rules, and response time for communication with customers.

(3) Establish a customer classification management system, conduct credit investigations through various channels before accepting new customer freight commissions, and classify customers based on 11 attributes including registered capital, enterprise nature, customer type, establishment time, whether they are new customers, transaction scale, transaction gross profit margin, payment method, whether they have signed a contract, collection control measures, and payment records. After comprehensive scoring, obtain credit scores and credit ratings. Determine the breadth, depth, and duration of cooperation between both parties based on the classification level.

(4) Establish a scientific accounts receivable system to minimize bad debt losses and increase risk resistance as much as possible. There are clear regulations on the payment terms and credit limits of customers. Once overdue, a dedicated person will be sent to collect the payment. For business overdue for more than 180 days, the company's legal personnel will



intervene and issue a formal collection letter, or they can go through the formal legal collection process.

#### **4.9.5 Main Results and KPIs**

JC Company is expected to achieve significant business growth and market share expansion after implementing optimized marketing strategies. Against the backdrop of increasingly fierce competition in the global freight forwarding industry, JC Company strives to improve key business indicators within the next two years through systematic marketing optimization plans. The following will elaborate on the main results and key performance indicators (KPIs) of the project, and further analyze the alignment with the budget.

(1) Expected main results:

① Customer growth

JC Company plans to increase its customer base by 10% within the first year of implementing its new marketing strategy. Through strategies such as differentiated pricing, channel optimization, and online promotion, enterprises will attract and lock in more high-quality customers, especially in the European, American, and Southeast Asian markets. By utilizing market segmentation and precise customer positioning strategies, they will further expand their customer base.

② Market share increase

JC Company will focus on expanding its market for routes to Europe, America, and Southeast Asia, with the aim of increasing its market share by 5%. Enterprises will strengthen the competitiveness of advantageous shipping routes, increase the share of shipping containers, and provide more cost-effective solutions for emerging markets through deep cooperation with major shipowners, ensuring a dominant position in various regions.

③ Revenue growth

JC Company plans to increase its total operating revenue by 20% in the next three years. By deepening the development of major core routes and implementing incentive pricing schemes for new customers, enterprises will rapidly increase their shipping volume and service breadth, thereby effectively improving their revenue levels. Meanwhile, optimized distribution channels will further reduce intermediate links and increase overall revenue.

④ Customer satisfaction improvement

Through optimized service processes and information platforms, enterprises will significantly improve customer satisfaction, with an expected 15% increase in customer satisfaction scores within 12 months of implementation. By combining automated logistics information management and instant customer feedback systems, enterprises will further enhance service transparency and response efficiency, ensuring that customers receive a consistent high-quality experience throughout the entire shipping process.

(2) Key Performance Indicators (KPIs):

① Customer growth rate

First year: 10%

Second year: 15%

Third year: 20%

KPI Goal: Gradually achieve sustained growth in customer numbers through channel optimization and service customization.

② Market share increase

European and American routes: increasing by 3% annually

Southeast Asian routes: increasing by 5% annually

KPI Goal: To increase market share in the fiercely competitive international shipping market through differentiated pricing strategies and efficient services.

③ Revenue growth rate

First year: 5%

Second year: 7%

Third year: 8%

KPI Goal: Through customer expansion and route optimization, gradually achieve a steady increase in operating revenue, with a target of cumulative growth of 20% over three years.

④ Accounts receivable turnover ratio

First year: Improvement to 45 days

Second year: Improvement to 40 days

Third year: Improvement to 35 days

KPI Goal: By strengthening customer credit management, optimizing accounts receivable processes, accelerating fund recovery, and ensuring the sustained and healthy operation of the business.

⑤ Customer satisfaction

Goal: Increase to 85% in the first year and reach 90% in the second year

KPI Goal: By optimizing the customer service system, improving customer experience, and achieving sustained improvement in satisfaction.

(3) Budget matching and investment planning:

① Budget for Information Platform Construction

In order to support the upgrade of information management, JC Company will invest 2 million yuan in the development and maintenance of a logistics information management system to ensure the automation and transparency of the freight process. At the same time, the platform will reduce manual intervention and improve data processing efficiency through comprehensive integration with shipping companies, ports, and customs systems.

② Market Promotion and Customer Incentive Plan Budget

We plan to invest 1.5 million yuan annually in marketing activities, including online advertising placement, marketing sponsorship, and new customer incentive programs. Through these precise marketing measures, the company will effectively expand new customer sources and further attract target customer groups through differentiated pricing strategies.

③ Talent introduction and training investment

The company plans to invest 1 million yuan in talent development and recruitment to enhance the capabilities of its marketing and operations teams. By collaborating with higher education institutions and implementing systematic employee training programs, the company will enhance the professional abilities of core employees, improve overall service quality, and adapt to increasingly complex market demands.

④ Risk control and financial health assurance

The company plans to ensure financial health by adjusting its customer structure and accounts receivable policy. It is expected that the proportion of overdue accounts receivable among the newly added customers each year will not exceed 5%. Through scientific credit and account management strategies, the company will reduce potential financial risks, ensure the stability of cash flow and the sustainable development of business.

JC Company's marketing optimization plan is expected to achieve comprehensive business growth in the next three years by matching clear KPIs with detailed budgets. Through precise goal setting and meticulous financial planning, ensure that project execution is both actionable and has room for continuous improvement.

Table 4-10 Key Performance Indicators (KPI) Table

Indicators	First Year	Second Year	Third Year
Customer Growth Rate	10%	15%	20%
Market Share Increase (Europe & America Routes)	3%	3%	3%
Market Share Increase (Southeast Asia Routes)	5%	5%	5%
Revenue Growth Rate	5%	7%	8%
Accounts Receivable Turnover (days)	45 days	40 days	35 days
Customer Satisfaction	85%	90%	90%

Data source: Internal financial and market data of JC Company, 2024

## 5. Conclusions

Since the onset of the China-US trade war and the outbreak of the pandemic, China's international freight forwarding industry has embarked on a new economic model, driven by strong government policy support. However, this has brought both opportunities and threats. JC Company, founded in 2012, initially held a dominant position in the market, thanks to the team's extensive professional experience and its ability to solve complex challenges. However, as international sanctions increased, especially those targeting Iran, JC Company shifted its focus toward European and American routes. In the early stages of this transition, the company struggled to adapt its traditional business model to more networked and information-based platforms, leading to a period of stagnation.

### (1) Main Findings

This thesis analyzed the internal and external environments of JC Company through PEST and SWOT analyses. PEST helped evaluate external factors affecting JC Company, while SWOT identified internal strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. The company's current STP (segmentation, targeting, positioning) strategy was examined, and a 4Ps marketing mix analysis was conducted to understand JC's positioning in product, pricing, promotion, and placement strategies. Data from field research and interviews with industry professionals provided crucial insights into the challenges and opportunities JC faces in the maritime market.

### (2) Key Results

**Market Share Increase:** JC Company has the potential to expand its market share by focusing on core routes such as European, American, and Southeast Asian markets. By targeting untapped customer segments, the company can strengthen its competitive advantage and create more diverse revenue streams.

**Customer Satisfaction Improvement:** Enhancing service quality and investing in technology (e.g., AI, blockchain) can increase customer satisfaction, ensuring smoother operations and transparency.

**Financial Risk Management:** To address cash flow and credit risks, JC should refine its customer credit evaluation processes and optimize its financial resource allocation. The company should also focus on key partnerships with reliable shipping lines to maintain stable pricing.

### (3) Recommendations

Based on the analysis, the following improvements were proposed:

**Expand Core Routes:** JC should focus on European and American routes, supplemented by Southeast Asian routes. By deepening cooperation with key shipping lines (COSCO, MSC, YML, etc.) and negotiating advantageous rates, JC can reduce operating costs and increase profitability.

**Technology Investments:** Digital transformation is crucial for JC's long-term success. The integration of AI-driven logistics systems and blockchain technology will enhance transparency and efficiency across the supply chain.

**Human Resources Development:** Investing in employee training and motivation will strengthen JC's internal competencies and create a more resilient workforce.

### (4) Budget and KPIs

To implement these strategies effectively, JC Company will need an estimated annual budget of 5 million CNY. This includes investments in technology platforms (2 million CNY), marketing and promotion (1.5 million CNY), talent recruitment and training (1 million CNY), and risk management (0.5 million CNY).

The following KPI targets will help JC track its performance:

**Customer Growth Rate:** Achieve a 10% increase in customer base during the first year, and 20% by the third year.

**Market Share:** Increase market share by 5% annually in Southeast Asia, and by 3% on European and American routes.

**Revenue Growth:** Aim for 5% revenue growth in the first year, with 20% cumulative growth by the end of year three.

**Accounts Receivable Turnover:** Reduce turnover days from 45 days to 35 days within three years.

**Customer Satisfaction:** Increase customer satisfaction scores by 15% within 12 months, reaching 90% in three years.

### (5) Conclusion

JC Company's future success will depend on its ability to adapt to a rapidly evolving market, enhance customer service, and embrace technology. The recommendations outlined in this thesis, combined with clear KPIs and budget plans, provide a strategic roadmap to improve operational efficiency, expand market share, and ensure the company's sustainable

growth. Furthermore, the proposed measures can offer valuable insights for other small and medium-sized freight forwarding companies facing similar challenges in the global market.

Limitations of this research include the scope and timeframe of the data collection. Further studies could focus on long-term trends in the freight forwarding industry, particularly how emerging technologies like AI and big data can drive efficiencies and enhance customer experience. Additionally, the integration of cross-border e-commerce should be explored to optimize the logistics chain from order placement to delivery. Future research should aim to provide deeper insights into the digital transformation of the freight industry.

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# Appendix

JC Company Industry Interview thesis Outline Interviewer:

Interviewee: Yang jin

Senior Expert in the Industry Interview Method:

Interview Time: 1-3 Hours

Interview Location: JC Company

Interview Key Points Outline:

1. Please introduce your current company and position
2. May I ask about your years of experience in international logistics
3. What are the opportunities for the international freight forwarding industry under the epidemic?
4. To what extent does the networked platformization of ship owners affect international freight forwarding companies?
5. What is your company's current and core competitive advantage route?
6. Which ship owners do your company cooperate with on advantageous routes? How does your company enhance its influence in marketing?
7. How does your company enhance its influence in marketing?
8. Which are your company's main competitors in marketing?
9. Which port currently has the highest export volume during the epidemic?
10. What are the impacts of cross-border e-commerce logistics on traditional international freight forwarders?
11. What are the advantages of continuously promoting information platforms for international freight forwarding market marketing?

Serial Number	Interview Number	Interview time	Name	Company	Position	Years of service	Interview location	Way
1	JC-1	May 2024	PAUL	Norsen	Chairman	17Year	JC Company	interview
2	JC-2	May 2024	LIN	Dasheng	Chairman	15Year	JC Company	interview

3	JC-3	May 2024	OU	Hongxuan	General manager	20Year	JC Company	interview
4	JC-4	May 2024	ZHU	MSC	Manager	18Year	JC Company	interview
5	JC-5	May 2024	SOBER	De Jong	General manager	16Year	JC Company	interview
6	JC-6	June 2024	LU	Qinghe	Manager	19Year	JC Company	interview
7	JC-7	June 2024	ZHA	Jingda	Chairman	17Year	JC Company	interview
8	JC-8	June 2024	PAN	Huilian	Chairman	16Year	JC Company	interview
9	JC-9	June 2024	HUANG	JC	General manager	18Year	JC Company	interview
10	JC-10	June 2024	ZHENG	JC	Manager	17Year	JC Company	interview

Thesis interview content: JC-1 CEO Paul mentioned that in the face of the global pandemic environment, various ship owners have implemented online e-commerce platforms for quoting, making the fiercely competitive market even more difficult. Customers are also obtaining more and more information about shipping, resulting in a significant decrease in shipping profits. In addition, with the current development of technology, many companies are constantly innovating their marketing strategies, especially in mergers and acquisitions between large enterprises.

JC-2 CEO Lin mentioned that in 2020-2021, the characteristics of international freight forwarding companies are diversification and diversified service features, which makes it difficult for product factories that originally had contracts with ship owners to obtain ship owner's cabin space. Because their previously signed prices were relatively low, ship owners, in order to control cabin space and their own profits, mostly do not release cabin space to these low contract factories, achieving these long-term customers who operate European and American routes. However, the proportion of newly selected related freight forwarders who can obtain ship owner's cabin space is relatively small.

JC -3 Sales Manager OU mentioned that in recent years, both large factories and trade exporters have been greatly impacted. Many product companies find it increasingly difficult to persist as their size increases. This is because the country's control over the epidemic is based on the epidemic situation in the relevant cities, making it difficult to control the effective time and validity period. As a result, these enterprises, which have been operating for many years, have to face tight financial chains and the current survival problems of their employees. In addition, the export volume of products has suddenly decreased significantly. Therefore, even though our company has many container vehicles, they have been idle for a long time.

JC -4 Sales Manager Zhu mentioned that the current European and American shipping routes are a once-in-a-century market opportunity, but the entire sea container transportation will soon return to the state of more than 10 years ago. Therefore, our company has recently added Southeast Asian shipping routes to serve more "customer needs" for future marketing.

JC -5 Sales Manager Sober mentioned that our company has been operating European and American routes for a long time, mainly targeting large enterprises because our US shipping contract prices are relatively competitive in the market, and the net profit of the enterprise is also relatively high.

JC -6 Sales Manager Lu mentioned that it is becoming increasingly common for many shipowners to implement global e-commerce platform pricing trends, and the competition between European and other routes is more diversified. In addition to ocean transportation, there are also more China Europe freight trains for containers. However, when faced with a market where sea transportation is more than 10 times higher than the normal market, customers tend to choose railway transportation because the cost of railway transportation is relatively transparent and uniform, and the delivery time is faster. Compared with air transportation, its price has a competitive advantage.

JC-7 CEO Zhang mentioned that our current market is the South American route. In the past two years, we have been operating less in the European, American, and Southeast Asian routes. Therefore, when the market trend comes, our company's sea freight costs on the South American route are reflected in the bill of lading, which makes it impossible for us to have

high sea freight profits. Additionally, our business volume on other routes is not large, making it relatively difficult for our company to operate. However, due to our long-term operation on the South American route, our company currently has a certain reputation in the market, and compared with our competitors, some customers have already accepted our services.

JC-8 CEO Pan mentioned that international freight forwarding companies currently have stronger competitiveness in the market mainly due to personnel factors, as our company has invested more in the early stage of economic development. Our goal is to recruit more operators and customer service personnel to further provide better detailed services for "customer needs".

JC -9 General Manager Huang mentioned that JC Company's biggest competitors at present are state-owned enterprises, foreign-funded large enterprises, freight forwarders designated by previous customers, and related subsidiaries under ship owners.

JC - 10 Sales Manager Zheng mentioned that JC Company currently has European and American routes as its core routes. Based on the needs of relevant customers in the market and the fact that there are also many new ship owners adding Southeast Asian routes, it is necessary for the company to add Southeast Asian routes as auxiliary routes in the future to increase its market selling points.

## JC Company Direct Customer Interview thesis Outline

Interviewee: Senior direct customer trader interview

Interview Method: Interview Time: 1-3 hours

Interview location: JC Company

Interview outline:

1. Please introduce the duration of your company's trade exports.
2. Please introduce your years of work experience in your company.
3. Please introduce the main ports where your company's products are exported.
4. What are the most satisfactory services provided by your company during cooperation with other international freight forwarding companies?
5. What are the most unsatisfactory aspects of your company's cooperation with other international freight forwarding companies?
6. What do you think are the advantages of JC Company?
7. What do you think are the weaknesses of JC Company?
8. What improvements does your company hope JC Company can make in terms of service?
9. Which route does your company most hope our company can develop as an overseas agent?
10. Would your company be willing to further cooperate with JC Company?

Appendix B.1 Interview List of JC International Freight Forwarding Company and Direct Customers

<b>Serial Numb</b>	<b>Interview Number</b>	<b>Interview time</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Interview location</b>	<b>Industry Years</b>	<b>Way</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>JC-1</b>	May2024	<b>YANG</b>	General manager	JC Company	<b>20</b>	interview
<b>2</b>	<b>JC-2</b>	May2024	<b>CAI</b>	General manager	JC Company	<b>20</b>	interview
<b>3</b>	<b>JC-3</b>	May2024	<b>PAN</b>	General manager	JC Company	<b>20</b>	interview
<b>4</b>	<b>JC-4</b>	May2024	<b>LI</b>	manager	JC Company	<b>16</b>	interview
<b>5</b>	<b>JC-5</b>	May2024	<b>CHEN</b>	General manager	JC Company	<b>15</b>	interview
<b>6</b>	<b>JC-6</b>	June2024	<b>LEE</b>	manager	JC Company	<b>15</b>	interview
<b>7</b>	<b>JC-7</b>	June2024	<b>HONG</b>	manager	JC Company	<b>16</b>	interview
<b>8</b>	<b>JC-8</b>	June2024	<b>XUE</b>	manager	JC Company	<b>17</b>	interview
<b>9</b>	<b>JC-9</b>	June2024	<b>LIN</b>	manager	JC Company	<b>15</b>	interview
<b>10</b>	<b>JC-10</b>	June2024	<b>CAI</b>	General manager	JC Company	<b>20</b>	interview

Thesis interview content:

JC-1 CEO Yang mentioned that our company has been cooperating with JC Company for many years, and overall satisfaction with the cooperation is still very good. In previous years, our products were mainly sold to European and American routes, but after the epidemic, we need to increase Southeast Asian routes. Therefore, we hope that your company can further improve its supporting services in Southeast Asia.

JC-2 CEO Cai mentioned that our company has been able to cooperate with JC company for more than 10 years mainly because your company's integrity in marketing and business operation details and processes are relatively high compared to other peers in the same industry. But due to the outrageous increase in sea freight costs in the past two years caused by the epidemic, we hope that your company can obtain a lower sea freight price during the negotiation process with the shipowner.



JC-3 CEO Pan mentioned that our company has been cooperating with JC Company since its first day of establishment, and the company has been doing better and better. JC Company's strong support is indispensable, but with the development of technology and informatization, new employees of the company in the future need to have a higher cultural level in order to further enhance the future market and occupy a larger share.

JC -4 Sales Manager Li mentioned that JC Company, as our designated international freight forwarding company overseas, has been cooperating with professional personnel for more than 10 years, which has enabled our overseas customers to have fixed business orders and created a good profit space for our company.

JC-5 CEO Chen mentioned that currently the most common cooperation with JC is still on European and American routes, but our company's future international market plan is to increase Southeast Asian routes because the relationship between Southeast Asian countries and China is relatively friendly, and business negotiations are relatively convenient.

JC -6 Sales Manager LEE mentioned: Currently, our product business is expanding into overseas markets. However, due to the impact of the epidemic, in order to improve the stickiness between our company and customers, most of the customers who sell our products overseas require DDP services. Therefore, we need more professional overseas agents to participate in our business in the future.

JC -7 Sales Manager Hong mentioned that in recent years, our company has exported a large amount of food freezers to Southeast Asian countries, and our business cooperation with your company has been quite pleasant every time. Because your company provides professional services that are in place and the operational details are patient, we hope that this route can have more advantages in the future operation.

JC -8 Purchasing Manager Xue mentioned that as our company is a large enterprise, most of the cooperation with freight forwarders requires comparing sea freight prices. The first thing that can be bid for is the lowest sea freight price.

JC -9 Sales Manager Lin mentioned that currently, our company's export volume of small and overweight building materials is relatively high in Gdynia and Gdansk, Poland. In addition, our company also exports many container goods at different ports in China. Therefore, we hope that your company's future sea freight prices can be more competitive.

JC-10 CEO Cai mentioned that there is diversification and uncertainty in the market today, so what JC company needs to do more is how to survive healthily.