



Introduction

My summer at adidas was an incredible experience- an opportunity that I'm extremely proud to share with my friends, peers, and mentors at UNC and Alpha Sigma. To put it in perspective, over 9,000 applications were submitted for the summer internship and 56 interns were selected from this pool across all positions. Knowing this is, in part, what motivated me to do my best work and leave as much impact amongst my team throughout the summer.

What I've Learned

In my ASF mid-summer report, I covered a number of topics I'd been able to get exposure to and I'm going to follow a similar approach in this. From high-level finance to breaking down the business model canvas, I hope to be able to articulate and reflect on some of my learnings from the latter portion of my internship.

adidas SWOT Analysis

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Global presence• History and center focus on sport and the athlete• Dominance in soccer products and marketing• Underdog mentality• Unique athlete endorsements and celebrity assets	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lack of alignment across global markets• Outsourced production which leads to misalignment in production and manufacturing

Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gaining market share in promising markets like Asia and the U.S. • Digital commerce accounts like amazon, ebay, adidas.com • Leveraging lifestyle products (originals) to market performance and other vertical's products 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Going to deep on originals and relying on hype products which can prove to be hurtful and unsustainable • Competitive marketplace • Significant supplier power taking away from adidas control over product

The matrix above highlights the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats that adidas is currently experiencing. Many of the points I've listed have been discovered through my conversations with employees along with research into the company, performance, the marketplace, and high-level trends.

Whenever I travel internationally, I always see a shift in emphasis in brands. In America, you see nikes on almost everyone's feet. As you travel outside of the U.S. though, you begin to find that adidas has a stronger hold on the global marketplace. I believe this is one of adidas's greatest strengths. Their ability to segment the globe into geographical markets, and then connect with consumers at the local level is hard to come by with many company's. I think in the past, this reach often led to problems for the company, but with new leadership we've been able to leverage it and use it to our advantage. Another strength of adidas is their history in sport. The adidas mantra is that through sport, we have the power to change lives. With several verticals within the company, there often seems to be confusion about how to market specific products or controversy over what direction different business units are headed in but whenever things get too questionable, our focus on sport allows teams to make the best decisions.

Adidas has a real opportunity to be the best sports brand in the world. Actions I think senior leaders at the company should prioritize include the following:

- Investing in resources for growing business units and verticals that are important to win the consumer in various markets (basketball, e-sports)
- Prioritizing diversity within the company so that employees reflect the target consumer
- Fueling resources and technology innovation on digital accounts like Amazon and eBay

I think the above actions would positively impact the company's culture, consumer engagement, and overall performance in the marketplace. I would also begin placing an emphasis on style across all verticals. Since adidas is a sport company at heart, aesthetics often take a backseat in performance based products. I think that although performance should always be the priority in those categories, aesthetics should hold

more weight during creation. The reason why I take this stance is because it's the natural direction adidas is headed when you analyze our consumer's path to purchase. The average adidas consumer is conscious of what they're wearing. Originals has been thriving in recent years because of this and creates hype around other verticals within the brand as a result.

adidas Key Activities

- *Sales-* The vertical that I was on this summer, global sales, is a critical part of adidas and is the medium that allows products to be sold to retailers and the consumer. Known as Global Sales, key tasks for sales accounts at the company include pre-lines, strategic account planning, and the actual process of showcasing and selling products for upcoming seasons.
- *Marketing-* Marketing is a very integral activity of adidas, and allows products to be brought to life through advertising and activation. Whether it's through leveraging athletes or celebrities signed to the brand to post products on their feet, marketing allows consumers to engage with products and identify them in a certain light.
- *Innovation-* Under adidas's recent initiative, 'Creating the New', adidas has prioritized innovation in all realms in the company. Specifically, the Future department is in charge of developing products that are years away. It's essentially the third box in the Three Box Solution. Our Future teams were responsible for creating Boost, Futurecraft, and other products and technologies that have allowed adidas to remain at the forefront of the marketplace.

adidas Key resources

- *Manufacturers-* Manufacturers are a key resource for adidas. As a company with vast product offerings, adidas is often incapable of producing and sourcing all materials alone. An example of outsourced manufacturing is Continental producing the soles on specific Ultra Boost products, something that would take extra resources if done within adidas.
- *Human capital-* Employees at adidas are a key resource for the company and senior leaders are beginning to prioritize their well being more and more. Being the main driver for company performance and success, employees are seen as one of the most important resources at adidas.
- *Distribution Network-* Something adidas is particularly skilled in is establishing and maintaining an efficient distribution network. Being a global company, it's easier than other brands to get products from Western Europe to the United States or other markets for product distribution.

Social Impact

Something I found extremely appealing about adidas is their recent initiatives around sustainability and social impact. adidas has been spearheading a number of sustainability initiatives within the company and within products. An example of this is the popular partnership with Parley. Parley allows adidas to produce products made of 100% recycled waste in our oceans. Each pair of Parley Ultra Boosts prevent approximately 11 plastic bottles from the possibility of entering our oceans. This creation of awareness and revolutionizing product sustainability as to why adidas has become successful and popular among many demographics, specifically younger ones. adidas has committed to only using recycled plastic in all products by 2024, further showcasing the commitment toward sustainability and social impact. As I begin narrowing in on companies I'd like to work for post-graduation, initiatives like these are very important to me as they reflect my passion for social impact.

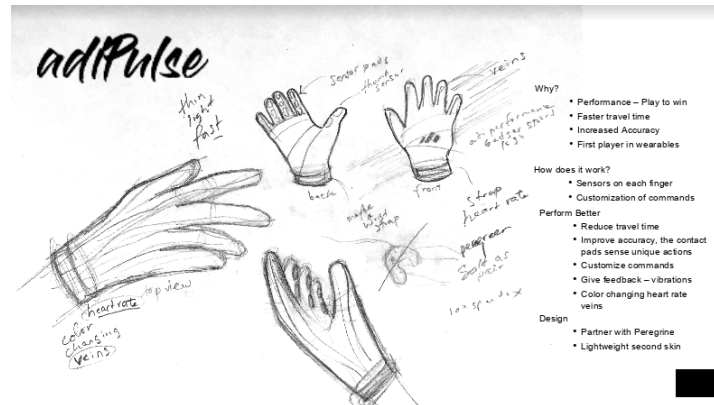
Mentorship

My line manager, Dan Schiller, has been an incredible influence on me. He started at adidas less than a year ago and comes from the CPG industry, he's fairly new to the sporting goods and apparel industry as well as the Amazon account. Nonetheless, I've seen him compare and contrast situations with his previous experience and innovate where necessary. Because of this, I've seen him grow and lead the Amazon team in a dynamic way. He's also very personable and goes out of his way to make people smile and connect with them. I think this is very important, as the industry is based off of relationships. I think an area for improvement could be organization. I often feel like there isn't much structure to how and when things are done. Also in meetings and conversations, we often bounce from one topic to another rather than tackling one and moving on to the next. Overall though, I've had an amazing and challenging summer, thanks in part to Dan.

2-Day Hackathon

One of the most challenging yet exciting points of my internship was a 2-day hackathon competition among the intern class. Interns were randomly distributed into teams of 5-6 and given the objective to create a gaming product, service, or experience that would allow adidas to enter the gaming industry. My team really struggled

throughout the entire first day to select an idea despite having numerous ones to choose from



Sketches and function breakdown for our product, adiPulse.

After much conversation we created a gaming glove called adiPulse- a product that adidas could create and not be astray from who the brand is. We conducted extensive user research and surveys, analyzed finances and drew projections, created marketing campaign plans, and finally presented our findings on the second day to the intern class, judges, and line managers. We unfortunately weren't selected as the winning team, but the experience was absolutely worth it. I was able to build stronger relationships with other interns while collaborating cross-functionally and dive deep in a completely new workstream in a concentrated time-frame.



My hackathon team.

Closing Thoughts

My internship experience was incredibly unique from what I've been exposed to at UNC. With finance and consulting being the main points of emphasis in my circles, it was awesome being able to experience business, sports, and culture in action. I think the internship was extremely valuable because I feel so much closer to knowing what I'm passionate about and would like to pursue in a career. Being able to make several strong relationships with individuals in my intern class also meant a lot to me and contributed to why I rated my experience so high. At adidas, I've been able to network extensively, which has helped grow my understanding of the company's verticals of operation and culture. I've also been able to travel and experience the West Coast, which I really enjoyed. Doing this has expanded my horizon and I'm now extremely interested in pursuing opportunities outside of the standard ones I would have been on track for.