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MODERN MECHANISMS FOR ENSURING THE COMPETITIVENESS OF ENTERPRISES IN THE CONTEXT OF STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT

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Abstract

The purpose of this article is to systematize and integrate contemporary mechanisms that enable enterprises to build and renew competitiveness within the strategic management process. The study is based on an integrative review of foundational strategic-management theory and recent peer-reviewed research on dynamic capabilities, digital transformation, artificial intelligence (AI), business-model innovation, ecosystem orchestration, organizational resilience, and sustainability. The analysis shows that enterprise competitiveness is increasingly determined not by possession of isolated resources, but by the speed and quality with which management senses environmental change, reallocates resources, converts data and technology into customer value, coordinates external partners, and renews the business model. The article proposes an Integrated Strategic Competitiveness Mechanism (ISCM) consisting of six interdependent blocks: strategic sensing and dynamic capabilities; digital and AI-enabled intelligence; customer-value and business-model innovation; ecosystem orchestration; organizational resilience and strategic risk management; and sustainable human-capital and governance capabilities. A performance architecture combining market, financial, innovation, agility, digital, resilience, and sustainability indicators is also proposed. The findings provide a conceptual basis for diagnosing competitive positions and translating strategic intent into measurable renewal programs. The proposed mechanism is particularly relevant for enterprises operating in volatile, technology-intensive, and emerging-market environments, where competitive advantage is temporary and must be continuously recreated.

Keywords

strategic management, enterprise competitiveness, dynamic capabilities, digital transformation, artificial intelligence, business-model innovation, organizational resilience, sustainable competitive advantage.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Competitiveness has always been a central problem of strategic management, but its economic content has changed substantially. In relatively stable markets, enterprises could defend advantage through scale, cost leadership, differentiation, protected distribution, or control over scarce assets. In contemporary markets, however, technological discontinuities, platform competition, fragmented customer journeys, geopolitical risk, ecological constraints, and rapidly diffusing knowledge shorten the useful life of any single advantage. The managerial problem is therefore no longer limited to choosing an attractive position; it increasingly concerns the organizational ability to renew that position before competitors, substitutes, or new technologies make it obsolete. This shift makes competitiveness a dynamic outcome of strategy formulation, resource orchestration, organizational learning, and continuous transformation.

Classical strategic-management theory provides two complementary foundations for this view. Porter (1985) explains competitive advantage through superior value creation and a firm's position in its industry and value chain. The resource-based view, in turn, emphasizes valuable, rare, difficult-to-imitate, and non-substitutable resources as sources of sustained advantage (Barney, 1991). Dynamic capability theory extends these approaches by showing that, under high environmental dynamism, the decisive issue is not merely what resources a firm owns, but how effectively it senses opportunities and threats, seizes opportunities through investment and strategic choice, and transforms or reconfigures its resource base (Teece, Pisano, & Shuen, 1997; Teece, 2007). This capability-oriented interpretation is especially important for modern enterprises because digital technologies and knowledge assets can be acquired by many firms, while the organizational routines required to convert them into economic value remain unevenly distributed.

Digital transformation further changes the logic of competition. It is not equivalent to automating existing processes. Research describes digital transformation as an organization-wide process in which digital technologies trigger substantial changes in value propositions, operations, customer experience, organizational structures, and business models (Vial, 2019; Verhoef et al., 2021). Warner and Wäger (2019) demonstrate that successful digital transformation requires an ongoing process of strategic renewal based on digital sensing, digital seizing, and transforming capabilities. Recent empirical work also shows that dynamic capabilities strengthen enterprise agility and that the alignment of

information technology with business strategy is an important transmission mechanism (Al Jabri et al., 2024). Thus, technology becomes competitively relevant only when it is embedded in strategic priorities, organizational routines, and a coherent architecture of value creation and value capture.

Artificial intelligence intensifies this requirement. AI can improve forecasting, personalization, process optimization, product design, risk detection, and strategic decision support, but the acquisition of algorithms or computing infrastructure alone does not create a durable advantage. Costa Climent, Haftor, and Staniewski (2024) argue that competitive value emerges when AI is deliberately positioned within a business-model architecture and connected with mechanisms that create and appropriate economic value. This observation is consistent with a broader strategic principle: technologies are enabling assets, whereas advantage depends on complementary capabilities, proprietary data, organizational learning, customer relationships, governance, and the speed of recombination. Consequently, enterprises need a mechanism that integrates digital and AI investments with strategy rather than treating them as isolated functional projects.

At the same time, competitiveness increasingly depends on organizational resilience and sustainability. Disruptions in supply chains, energy markets, finance, labor, regulation, and cybersecurity can quickly eliminate performance gains achieved through efficiency alone. Evidence from medium and large enterprises shows that adaptive capability and structured risk-management orientations contribute to competitive advantage in both normal and crisis conditions (Eichholz, Hoffmann, & Schwering, 2024). Liu and Zhang (2024) further find that organizational resilience supports sustainable competitive advantage through strategic formulation and resource-integration capabilities. Sustainability is likewise moving from a compliance issue to a strategic capability: sustainability-oriented dynamic capabilities can strengthen both corporate sustainability and sustained competitive advantage (Bari, Chimhundu, & Chan, 2024). The modern enterprise must therefore optimize simultaneously for efficiency, adaptability, innovation, stakeholder legitimacy, and continuity.

A further shift concerns the locus of competition. Many firms no longer compete as isolated organizations; they participate in business ecosystems consisting of suppliers, complementors, platform owners, technology partners, universities, customers, and public institutions. Ecosystem orchestration research identifies strategic design, relational coordination, resource integration, technological leveraging, and innovation as interdependent practices that help industrial firms preserve advantage in the digital era (Shen, Shi, Parida, &

Jovanovic, 2024). This means that strategic management must include not only internal resource allocation but also the capability to mobilize resources beyond organizational boundaries.

Despite these advances, the literature often examines dynamic capabilities, digital transformation, resilience, sustainability, AI, business-model innovation, and ecosystems as separate streams. Managers, however, need an integrated architecture that explains how these mechanisms interact within the strategic-management cycle and how their effects can be monitored. Accordingly, the purpose of this article is to develop a coherent mechanism for ensuring enterprise competitiveness by synthesizing contemporary strategic-management research. The study addresses three questions: (1) which mechanisms most directly convert strategic resources and environmental information into competitive outcomes; (2) how should these mechanisms be integrated into a continuous strategic-management process; and (3) which performance indicators can be used to diagnose the strength and renewal of competitiveness? The article's contribution is a structured Integrated Strategic Competitiveness Mechanism that links strategic sensing, digital intelligence, business-model renewal, ecosystem orchestration, resilience, and sustainability to a measurable performance architecture.

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study uses a structured integrative literature review and conceptual synthesis. This method is appropriate when a research problem spans several established theoretical streams and the objective is to construct a higher-level explanatory framework rather than estimate a single causal coefficient. The analytical foundation combines resource-based theory, dynamic capability theory, strategic positioning, digital-transformation research, business-model innovation, organizational resilience, ecosystem orchestration, and sustainability-oriented strategic management.

Sources were selected purposively from peer-reviewed journal literature and foundational strategic-management works. Priority was given to studies that directly examined the relationship between organizational capabilities and competitiveness, competitive advantage, agility, innovation performance, resilience, or value creation. Recent studies published mainly in 2023-2024 were used to capture emerging mechanisms related to AI, digital business-model innovation, IT-business alignment, ecosystems, and sustainable dynamic capabilities. Foundational works were retained when they defined constructs that remain necessary for interpretation, including competitive advantage, the resource-based view, and dynamic capabilities.

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The synthesis followed four analytical steps. First, recurring competitive mechanisms were coded according to the managerial task they perform: sensing, choosing, mobilizing, transforming, coordinating, protecting, or measuring. Second, mechanisms with overlapping functions were consolidated into broader capability blocks. Third, causal logic was mapped from environmental signals and strategic decisions to resource reconfiguration, value creation, execution, and competitive outcomes. Fourth, a measurement architecture was developed to connect each mechanism with observable leading and lagging indicators. The resulting model is conceptual and is intended for subsequent empirical testing in industry- or country-specific settings.

To avoid treating competitiveness as a single financial variable, the study adopts a multidimensional definition. Enterprise competitiveness is understood as the firm's relative ability to create superior customer value, achieve productivity and financial performance, innovate faster than relevant rivals, adapt to environmental change, preserve operational continuity, and maintain stakeholder legitimacy. This definition allows strategic-management mechanisms to be evaluated not only by short-term profitability but also by their contribution to renewal capacity and the durability of performance.

3. RESULTS

The synthesis indicates that modern enterprise competitiveness is produced by an interacting system rather than by one dominant factor. Six mechanisms repeatedly emerge as strategically significant. Their combined effect can be represented as an Integrated Strategic Competitiveness Mechanism (ISCM), in which strategic sensing initiates a cycle of choice and resource reconfiguration, digital and AI capabilities increase information-processing and innovation speed, business-model mechanisms convert capabilities into customer and economic value, ecosystem orchestration expands the accessible resource base, resilience protects strategic continuity, and sustainability and human-capital mechanisms support legitimacy and long-run renewal.

3.1. Strategic sensing and dynamic capabilities

The first mechanism is the institutionalization of strategic sensing and dynamic capabilities. Competitive enterprises continuously scan customer behavior, competitors, technologies, regulation, cost structures, labor markets, and ecosystem changes; they then translate these signals into decisions before the information loses value. Dynamic capabilities give this process an action logic: sensing identifies opportunities and threats, seizing commits resources to promising options, and transforming reconfigures assets, routines, and

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organizational boundaries (Teece, 2007). Empirical evidence confirms that specific dynamic capabilities contribute differently to competitiveness. In tourism SMEs, sensing and integrating capabilities were particularly important for competitiveness during turbulence (Al Dhaheri et al., 2024). The managerial implication is that environmental analysis should not remain a periodic planning exercise. It should become a repeatable management system connected to scenario analysis, strategic dashboards, experimentation budgets, and explicit trigger points for resource reallocation.

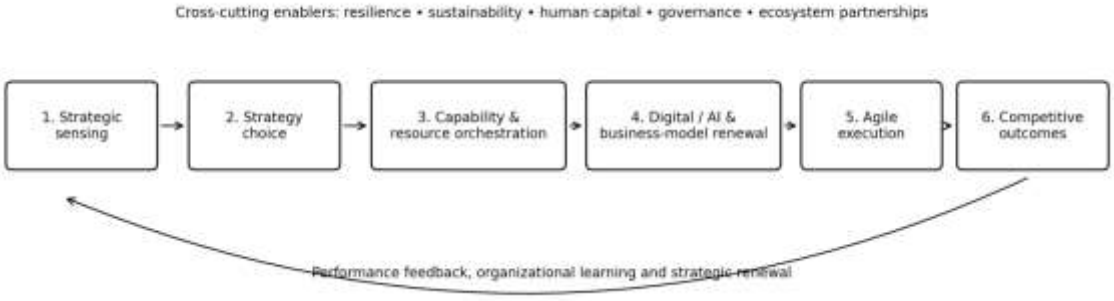

Figure 1. Integrated Strategic Competitiveness Mechanism within the strategic-management cycle

3.2. Digital and AI-enabled strategic intelligence

The second mechanism converts data, digital infrastructure, analytics, and AI into strategic intelligence and execution capability. Its central principle is business-technology alignment. Digital investments create strategic returns when they improve decision quality, reduce response time, deepen customer knowledge, automate scalable routines, or enable new value propositions. The relationship between dynamic capabilities and enterprise agility is strengthened when digital transformation and IT alignment are present (Al Jabri et al., 2024). Likewise, digital capability supports digital business-model innovation, and several dimensions of that innovation are positively related to SME competitiveness (Fang et al., 2024). For management practice, this implies that every major digital initiative should be linked to a strategic value driver, an accountable process owner, a data-governance rule, and a measurable competitive outcome. AI should be governed as a portfolio of use cases with differentiated objectives: cost productivity, revenue growth, risk reduction, personalization, innovation acceleration, or strategic foresight.

3.3. Customer-value and business-model innovation

The third mechanism is continuous renewal of the customer value proposition and the business model. Operational efficiency is easy to imitate if competitors have access to similar technologies; a more defensible advantage arises when a firm redesigns how it creates, delivers, and captures value. Business-model innovation

can change target segments, pricing logic, channels, complementarity among products, service intensity, data monetization, switching costs, or partner roles. Research on AI-enabled business models shows that the value of AI depends on how its use is embedded in the business-model architecture and activated through themes such as novelty, efficiency, complementarity, and lock-in (Costa Climent et al., 2024). The practical mechanism therefore combines customer discovery, value-proposition testing, rapid prototyping, portfolio management, and disciplined scaling. Strategic management should require evidence of customer willingness to adopt and pay, not merely evidence that a technology functions technically.

3.4. Ecosystem orchestration and open resource access

The fourth mechanism expands competitiveness beyond internal assets. In technology-intensive industries, no single enterprise can efficiently own all knowledge, channels, infrastructure, complementary products, and specialized human capital required for innovation. Ecosystem orchestration enables the firm to access these resources through alliances, platforms, suppliers, universities, start-ups, public organizations, and customers. Shen et al. (2024) identify five recurring orchestration practices: strategic design, relational practices, resource integration, technological leveraging, and innovation practices. In strategic terms, the enterprise must decide where to own, where to partner, where to standardize, and where to build interfaces that allow complementary innovation. Key managerial instruments include partner portfolios, shared roadmaps, data-sharing agreements, co-innovation processes, joint KPIs, intellectual-property rules, and mechanisms for resolving dependency risk. Effective orchestration can improve innovation speed and reach while reducing the capital burden of internal development.

3.5. Organizational resilience and strategic risk management

The fifth mechanism protects the continuity of competitive value creation under disruption. Resilience is not equivalent to holding excessive slack; it is the capacity to anticipate, absorb, adapt, and reconfigure while preserving critical functions. Evidence indicates that risk-management orientation and the planning role of budgeting can strengthen adaptive capability, which in turn supports competitive advantage (Eichholz et al., 2024). Liu and Zhang (2024) show that resilience contributes to sustainable competitive advantage through strategic formulation and resource-integration capabilities. For strategic management, resilience should therefore be designed into the operating model through scenario-based planning, diversified critical suppliers, cyber resilience, liquidity buffers, modular processes, succession and skills depth, crisis decision rights, and rapid

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reallocation protocols. Resilience metrics should be included alongside efficiency metrics so that cost optimization does not unintentionally create strategic fragility.

3.6. Sustainable human-capital and governance capabilities

The sixth mechanism combines human capital, governance, and sustainability. Digital tools and strategic plans cannot generate advantage without people capable of interpreting information, redesigning processes, collaborating across functions, and implementing change. Competitiveness therefore depends on skill architecture, leadership quality, incentives, knowledge sharing, and organizational culture. At the same time, sustainability increasingly affects access to capital, supply chains, customer preference, regulation, employer attractiveness, and reputation. Bari et al. (2024) conceptualize sustainability-oriented dynamic capabilities as a pathway to both corporate sustainability and sustained competitive advantage. The strategic implication is to integrate environmental and social objectives into investment criteria and operational decision rules rather than manage them as a separate reporting stream. Governance must also define accountability for AI, data, cybersecurity, ethics, strategic risk, and stakeholder commitments, because unmanaged externalities can rapidly destroy competitive value.

3.7. Performance architecture for measuring strategic competitiveness

The six mechanisms require a common measurement system. A firm that observes only revenue and profit detects competitive decline too late because these are lagging indicators. The proposed architecture combines leading indicators of renewal capacity with lagging indicators of realized market and financial outcomes. A Strategic Competitiveness Index (SCI) can be expressed conceptually as $SCI_t = \Sigma(w_j \times z_{jt})$, where z_{jt} is the normalized score of competitiveness dimension j at time t and w_j is its strategic weight, with $\Sigma w_j = 1$. Weights should not be assumed to be universal; they can be determined through executive priorities, analytic hierarchy process, entropy weighting, or empirical estimation. The value of the index is diagnostic: it makes trade-offs visible and allows management to distinguish temporary financial success from genuine renewal capability.

Table 1. Strategic competitiveness mechanisms and recommended indicators

Mechanism	Core managerial instruments	Illustrative indicators

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Mechanism	Core managerial instruments	Illustrative indicators
Strategic sensing & dynamic capabilities	Competitive intelligence; scenarios; trigger-based resource allocation; experimentation	Speed from signal to decision; share of resources reallocated; forecast accuracy; strategic option pipeline
Digital & AI intelligence	Data architecture; analytics; AI use-case portfolio; IT-business alignment; automation	Digital revenue share; decision cycle time; automation rate; AI use-case ROI; data-quality score
Business-model & customer-value innovation	Customer discovery; value-proposition testing; pricing and channel redesign; innovation portfolio	New-offer revenue; customer retention; time-to-market; price realization; innovation conversion rate
Ecosystem orchestration	Partner portfolio; co-innovation; platform interfaces; shared roadmaps and KPIs	Partner-sourced revenue; external innovation ratio; ecosystem time-to-scale; dependency concentration
Resilience & strategic risk	Scenario planning; supplier diversification; cyber and liquidity buffers; crisis protocols	Recovery time; critical-supplier concentration; cyber incident severity; liquidity coverage; continuity score
Sustainability, human capital & governance	Skills strategy; incentives; knowledge sharing; ESG integration; AI/data governance	Critical-skill coverage; employee productivity; learning velocity; resource intensity; compliance/ethics incidents

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Mechanism	Core managerial instruments	Illustrative indicators
Competitive outcomes	Integrated strategic dashboard and review cadence	Relative market share; margin vs. peers; ROIC; customer lifetime value; productivity; growth quality

4. DISCUSSION

The proposed mechanism reframes competitiveness from a static condition into a renewal process. This interpretation reconciles strategic positioning with resource-based and dynamic-capability perspectives. Positioning remains important because an enterprise must choose where and how to compete; resources remain important because execution depends on differentiated assets and knowledge; and dynamic capabilities explain how the enterprise renews both position and resource configuration as the environment changes. The practical consequence is that strategic management should not end with a multi-year plan. It should operate as a closed-loop system in which sensing, choice, investment, execution, measurement, and renewal occur at different cadences but remain connected.

The synthesis also suggests that modern competitiveness is increasingly complementary rather than additive. For example, digital capability without business-model innovation may produce cost savings but not market differentiation; AI without proprietary data, governance, and process redesign may create operational risk; customer innovation without ecosystem access may be too slow or capital-intensive; resilience without disciplined efficiency may become costly redundancy; and sustainability without strategic integration may remain symbolic. Competitive effects therefore arise from configurations of capabilities. This supports the configurational logic of strategic management: enterprises should diagnose weak links in the capability system instead of simply maximizing one dimension.

A particularly important managerial implication concerns resource allocation. Traditional annual budgeting often locks resources into functions based on historical expenditure. In volatile environments, competitiveness requires a portion of capital and managerial attention to remain reallocable as new signals emerge. The ISCM therefore implies a dual portfolio: resources for exploiting current competitive positions and resources for exploring new technologies, markets,

partnerships, and business models. Strategic review meetings should explicitly compare expected value, uncertainty, option value, and learning generated by each initiative. Projects that do not strengthen a defined competitive mechanism should face a higher burden of justification.

The model is also relevant for emerging-market enterprises. Such firms frequently operate with institutional uncertainty, uneven digital infrastructure, financing constraints, skills shortages, and dependency on external technology providers. Under these conditions, competitiveness cannot be built by imitating the technology spending of global leaders. A more viable sequence is to strengthen sensing and managerial discipline, identify high-value bottlenecks, build interoperable data foundations, select a small set of scalable digital or AI use cases, use partnerships to access missing capabilities, and reinvest realized gains into further transformation. This staged logic reduces the risk of technology-led transformation programs that are disconnected from customer value and economic returns.

The proposed SCI measurement architecture should be used as a management instrument rather than as a universal ranking formula. Industry structure determines which dimensions deserve the highest weight. A digital platform may emphasize network growth, engagement, data quality, and innovation speed; a manufacturer may emphasize cost position, quality, supply resilience, asset productivity, and product innovation; a service firm may emphasize customer lifetime value, talent productivity, digital service adoption, and retention. What is universal is the need to balance realized performance with leading indicators of adaptation. A firm reporting strong current margins but deteriorating innovation, skills, customer loyalty, and resilience may be competitively weaker than its financial statements suggest.

The study has limitations. It is conceptual and does not estimate causal effects for a specific industry or national setting. The proposed mechanisms are derived from an integrative synthesis rather than a meta-analysis with statistical effect sizes. In addition, the relative importance of AI, sustainability, resilience, and ecosystem orchestration differs across sectors. Future research should operationalize the ISCM as a measurement model, test its reliability and discriminant validity, and evaluate its relationship with market share growth, productivity, ROIC, innovation output, and survival. Longitudinal studies would be especially valuable because the core argument concerns the renewal of competitiveness over time rather than performance at a single point.

5. CONCLUSION

Ensuring enterprise competitiveness in the context of strategic management requires more than selecting a generic competitive strategy or investing in isolated technologies. The modern competitive problem is one of continuous strategic renewal. Enterprises must sense change early, convert information into choices, reconfigure resources quickly, embed digital and AI technologies in value-creating business models, mobilize ecosystem partners, preserve resilience under disruption, and integrate human-capital, sustainability, and governance requirements into execution.

The article proposed an Integrated Strategic Competitiveness Mechanism built around six capability blocks: strategic sensing and dynamic capabilities; digital and AI-enabled strategic intelligence; customer-value and business-model innovation; ecosystem orchestration; organizational resilience and strategic risk management; and sustainable human-capital and governance capabilities. These blocks are connected through a closed strategic-management cycle and should be monitored through a balanced set of market, financial, innovation, agility, digital, resilience, and sustainability indicators.

The central managerial conclusion is that competitive advantage should be treated as a renewable asset rather than a permanent outcome. The enterprise that learns and reallocates faster than the rate of environmental change is more likely to sustain superior performance. Accordingly, strategic management systems should be designed not only to control execution of current plans but also to detect when those plans, capabilities, and business models need to be changed. This capability to renew the basis of competition is becoming the defining mechanism of enterprise competitiveness in the digital and strategically turbulent economy.

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