

From Flowers to Strategy: A Swot-Based Business Development Analysis of Queency Florist

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Abstract: Increasing competition in the creative industry requires florist businesses to adopt adaptive and sustainable development strategies. This study aims to analyze internal and external conditions and formulate business development strategies for Queency Florist using SWOT analysis integrated with the IFE, EFE, IE, and Grand Strategy matrices. A qualitative descriptive method was employed, with data collected through observation, in-depth interviews with the business owner, and documentation. The results indicate that Queency Florist's main strengths lie in product quality, creative design, and customer service, while weaknesses are related to limited digital marketing and financial management. The IFE score of 2.57 and the EFE score of 2.86 place the business in Cell V of the IE matrix, suggesting a hold and maintain strategy. The Grand Strategy Matrix positions the firm in Quadrant II, indicating that market penetration and product differentiation are the most appropriate strategies. This study highlights the importance of strengthening internal capabilities and optimizing digital marketing to enhance competitiveness and business sustainability.

Key Words: SWOT Analysis; IFE; EFE; Grand Strategy; Florist Business

Introduction

Over the past decade, both global and national business environments have become increasingly dynamic and uncertain. Market globalization, rapid digital transformation, and evolving consumer preferences have significantly intensified competitive pressures, particularly for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). SMEs are no longer confined to local competition; instead, they must compete with firms that possess superior technological capabilities, innovation capacity, and operational efficiency. In such an environment, the absence of a well-formulated and adaptive business strategy substantially increases the risk of declining competitiveness and threatens long-term business sustainability.

Within the strategic management literature, organizational performance and sustainability are strongly influenced by the degree of alignment between internal resources and external environmental conditions. The resource-based view (RBV) asserts that firms can achieve sustainable competitive advantage by effectively leveraging internal resources that are valuable, rare, difficult to imitate, and non-substitutable (Barney, 1991). However, internal strengths alone are insufficient if firms fail to anticipate and respond to external opportunities and threats. Consequently, comprehensive internal and external environmental analyses are widely recognized as essential foundations for robust and contextually relevant strategy formulation (David & David, 2017).

One of the most extensively utilized frameworks for strategic environmental analysis is the SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) analysis. This framework facilitates a structured evaluation of internal capabilities and external market conditions. Gürel and Tat (2017) emphasize that SWOT analysis is particularly suitable for SMEs due to its flexibility and practical applicability under conditions of limited resources. Recent empirical studies further demonstrate that integrating SWOT analysis with quantitative strategic tools, such as the Internal Factor Evaluation (IFE) and External Factor Evaluation (EFE) matrices, enhances analytical rigor and supports more objective strategic decision-making (Leliga et al., 2019; Puyt, 2023).

During the past decade, a growing body of national and international research has examined the application of SWOT-based strategic analysis within SME contexts. These studies consistently indicate that SMEs adopting systematic and integrated strategic analysis tend to exhibit stronger competitive performance and greater resilience in highly competitive markets (Shubbani, 2022; Manalu, 2023). Nevertheless, much of the existing literature remains methodologically limited, as many studies focus primarily on identifying internal and external factors without extending the analysis toward comprehensive strategic positioning using the Internal–External (IE) Matrix and the Grand Strategy Matrix.

Queency Florist, an SME operating in the florist industry, represents a relevant empirical context for examining these strategic challenges. Preliminary observations suggest that Queency Florist possesses notable internal strengths, particularly in product quality, design creativity, and customer service. However, the business also faces several structural limitations related to innovation management, digital promotion, and financial administration. Simultaneously, external market opportunities remain substantial due to increasing demand for floral products and the expanding role of digital platforms in consumer purchasing behavior. These conditions underscore the necessity of a comprehensive and integrative strategic analysis to support sustainable business development.

The research gap addressed in this study lies in the limited availability of empirical research that simultaneously integrates SWOT analysis with the IFE, EFE, IE Matrix, and Grand Strategy Matrix within the context of florist SMEs. Addressing this gap is critical to generating a holistic understanding of strategic positioning and producing actionable strategic recommendations grounded in empirical evidence. Accordingly, this study aims to analyze the internal and external conditions of Queency Florist, determine its strategic position, and formulate appropriate business development strategies to enhance competitiveness and long-term sustainability.

Method

This study employed a qualitative descriptive approach to obtain an in-depth understanding of the strategic conditions of Queency Florist. This approach was selected because it allows for a comprehensive exploration of business phenomena based on actual operational conditions and managerial practices. The object of the study was Queency Florist, while the research subjects included the business owner and individuals directly involved in daily operations.

The data used in this study consisted of both primary and secondary sources. Primary data were collected through direct observation of business activities, in-depth interviews with the business owner, and discussions related to strategies that had been implemented. Secondary data were obtained from internal business documents and supporting literature, including academic books and peer-reviewed journal articles relevant to strategic management and SME development.

Data analysis was conducted through several systematic stages. The first stage involved identifying internal and external factors influencing the business based on empirical findings. The second stage involved constructing the Internal Factor Evaluation (IFE) and External Factor Evaluation (EFE) matrices by assigning weights and ratings to each identified factor. In the third stage, the total IFE and EFE scores were mapped into the Internal–External (IE) Matrix to determine the firm's strategic position. The fourth stage involved formulating strategic alternatives using the Grand Strategy Matrix.

The results of these analyses were subsequently synthesized through SWOT analysis by combining internal and external factors to generate alternative strategies, including SO, ST, WO, and WT strategies. Each strategic alternative was formulated by considering the firm's internal capabilities and the external environmental dynamics faced by Queency Florist. The strategic position of the business was then determined through quadrant mapping, which aimed to identify the most appropriate strategic orientation—whether aggressive, diversification-oriented, turnaround, or defensive. The resulting strategic recommendations were designed to be realistic, applicable, and aligned with the firm's competitive conditions.

Results and Discussion

Internal Factor Evaluation (IFE) Analysis

The Internal Factor Evaluation (IFE) analysis was conducted to identify and evaluate the key internal strengths and weaknesses influencing the performance and competitiveness of Queency Florist. Internal factors were identified through direct field observations, in-depth interviews with the business owner, and a review of internal documents related to operations, marketing, and business management. These factors were subsequently structured into the IFE matrix by assigning weights and ratings to reflect their relative importance and impact on business performance.

Table 1. Internal Factor Evaluation (IFE) Matrix of Queency Florist

Internal Factors	Weight	Rating	Weighted Score
Strengths			
Consistent quality of floral arrangements	0.15	4	0.60
Creativity and innovation in floral design	0.14	4	0.56
Customer loyalty	0.13	4	0.52
Personalized and responsive customer service	0.12	3	0.36
Local market reputation	0.11	3	0.33
Weaknesses			
Limited digital promotion	0.12	2	0.24
Dependence on specific suppliers	0.11	2	0.22
Simple financial management system	0.12	2	0.24
Total	1.00		2.57

The results of the IFE matrix calculation indicate that Queency Florist obtained a total weighted score of 2.57, suggesting that the firm's internal condition is categorized as moderate to above average. This score implies that the firm's internal strengths outweigh its weaknesses, although several internal aspects still require improvement to enhance competitiveness and ensure sustainable business development.

The strongest internal factors of Queency Florist are reflected in the consistent quality of floral arrangements and creative and innovative design capabilities, which achieved the highest weighted scores in the IFE matrix. These findings indicate that differentiation based on creativity and product aesthetics constitutes a core strategic capability of the business. From the perspective of the resource-based view, such creative competencies represent valuable and difficult-to-imitate resources that can serve as a foundation for sustainable competitive advantage (Barney, 1991). In addition, customer loyalty and personalized service demonstrate the firm's ability to establish long-term relationships with customers, which contributes positively to revenue stability and brand reputation.

Furthermore, the firm's local market reputation also plays a supportive role in strengthening its internal position. A favorable reputation enhances customer trust and reduces perceived risk, thereby reinforcing repeat purchases and word-of-mouth promotion. These findings are consistent with previous studies highlighting that relational capital and service quality are critical internal assets for SMEs operating in creative and service-oriented industries (Shubbani, 2022; Manalu, 2023).

Despite these strengths, the IFE analysis reveals several internal weaknesses that constrain the firm's strategic flexibility. Limited digital promotion emerged as a key weakness, indicating that the business has not fully leveraged digital platforms to expand market reach and engage a broader customer base. This condition is particularly critical in the context of increasing digitalization in consumer behavior. Additionally, dependence on specific suppliers exposes the firm to potential supply chain disruptions and price volatility, which may affect production continuity and cost efficiency. The simple financial management system further limits the firm's ability to conduct accurate financial planning, performance evaluation, and strategic investment decision-making.

These weaknesses align with prior research suggesting that many creative SMEs possess strong product-based capabilities but face constraints in managerial systems and digital marketing competencies (Gürel & Tat, 2017; Puyt, 2023). Therefore, although Queency Florist demonstrates a relatively solid internal foundation, strategic improvements in digital marketing, supplier diversification, and financial management are necessary to fully capitalize on existing strengths and support future growth.

Overall, the IFE analysis indicates that Queency Florist is internally well-positioned to maintain its current performance level. However, addressing identified weaknesses is essential to enhance internal efficiency, strengthen strategic readiness, and improve the firm's capacity to respond effectively to external opportunities and competitive pressures.

External Factor Evaluation (EFE) Analysis

The External Factor Evaluation (EFE) analysis was conducted to identify and evaluate external opportunities and threats influencing the business performance of Queency Florist.

External factors were identified by examining market conditions, consumer trends, technological developments, and the competitive landscape of the florist industry. The identified factors were subsequently structured into the EFE matrix by assigning weights and ratings to reflect the firm's responsiveness to external environmental conditions.

Table 2. External Factor Evaluation (EFE) Matrix of Queency Florist

External Factors	Weight	Rating	Weighted Score
Opportunities			
Increasing demand for event decoration services	0.18	4	0.72
Growing trend of personalized and customized gifts	0.17	4	0.68
Development of social media and online marketplaces	0.16	3	0.48
Threats			
Intense competition among local florists	0.17	2	0.34
Fluctuation in fresh flower prices	0.16	2	0.32
Availability of substitute products (artificial flowers)	0.16	2	0.32
Total	1.00		2.86

The results of the EFE matrix calculation indicate that Queency Florist obtained a total weighted score of 2.86, suggesting that the firm has a relatively strong ability to respond to external opportunities and threats. This score reflects that the external environment offers considerable growth potential, although competitive pressures and input price volatility remain significant challenges.

The most prominent opportunities originate from the increasing demand for event decoration services and the growing trend of personalized and customized gifts, both of which received the highest weighted scores in the EFE matrix. Changes in consumer lifestyles that emphasize aesthetic value, symbolic meaning, and personalization have driven demand for creative florist products. These findings are consistent with previous studies indicating that creative industries experience substantial growth when firms are able to align their offerings with evolving consumer preferences and experiential consumption patterns (Shubhani, 2022; Manalu, 2023).

In addition, the development of social media platforms and online marketplaces presents an important opportunity for Queency Florist to expand its market reach beyond geographical limitations. Digital platforms enable SMEs to promote products, interact with customers, and build brand awareness at relatively low cost. This opportunity is particularly relevant given the firm's creative product characteristics, which are well-suited for visual-based digital marketing channels.

Despite these favorable opportunities, the EFE analysis also highlights several external threats that require strategic attention. Intense competition among local florist businesses poses a significant challenge, as it can lead to price competition and margin compression if differentiation strategies are not effectively implemented. Furthermore, fluctuations in fresh flower prices expose the firm to cost instability, potentially affecting profitability and pricing strategies. The presence of substitute products, such as artificial flowers, also increases competitive pressure by offering alternative options with longer durability and lower maintenance costs.

These threats align with the strategic management literature, which emphasizes that SMEs operating in creative and service-based industries must continuously adapt their strategies to manage environmental uncertainty and competitive intensity (David & David, 2017). Consequently, although Queency Florist operates in an environment with substantial market opportunities, its long-term sustainability depends on the firm's ability to strengthen differentiation, manage supply chain risks, and respond proactively to competitive dynamics. Overall, the EFE analysis indicates that the external environment of Queency Florist is generally favorable. However, maximizing the identified opportunities while mitigating the impact of external threats requires strategic alignment between internal capabilities and external market conditions. The integration of the EFE results with internal analysis provides a critical basis for determining the firm's overall strategic position, which is further examined through the Internal–External (IE) Matrix.

Internal–External (IE) Matrix Analysis

The Internal–External (IE) Matrix was employed to determine the overall strategic position of Queency Florist by integrating the results of the Internal Factor Evaluation (IFE) and External Factor Evaluation (EFE) analyses. This matrix provides a comprehensive representation of the firm's internal strength and external attractiveness, serving as a foundation for identifying appropriate generic strategies.

Table 3. Internal–External (IE) Matrix of Queency Florist

IFE Score	EFE Score	IE Matrix Position	Generic Strategy
2.57	2.86	Cell V	Hold and Maintain

Based on the mapping of the IFE score (2.57) and the EFE score (2.86) into the IE Matrix, Queency Florist is positioned in Cell V, which corresponds to the Hold and Maintain strategic posture. This position indicates that the firm possesses moderate internal strength and operates within a relatively favorable external environment, yet does not exhibit conditions that justify aggressive expansion.

According to David and David (2017), organizations positioned in Cell V are advised to focus on maintaining current performance levels while selectively strengthening internal capabilities. Typical strategic options associated with this position include market penetration and product development, implemented in a controlled and incremental manner. These strategies enable firms to enhance competitiveness without significantly increasing operational risk.

In the context of Queency Florist, the Hold and Maintain position suggests that the firm should prioritize internal consolidation rather than rapid expansion. Although the business benefits from strong creative capabilities and favorable market opportunities, internal weaknesses related to digital marketing, financial management, and supplier dependence indicate the need for gradual strategic improvement. Rapid expansion under such conditions may increase operational complexity and financial risk.

Furthermore, this strategic position highlights the importance of leveraging existing strengths, such as product quality, creative differentiation, and customer relationships, while simultaneously addressing managerial limitations. This finding is consistent with previous

studies emphasizing that SMEs should ensure internal readiness before pursuing more aggressive growth strategies (Ritala et al., 2018; Hitt et al., 2020).

Overall, the IE Matrix analysis confirms that Queency Florist is strategically stable but requires targeted internal enhancements to strengthen its competitive position. The Hold and Maintain strategy provides a realistic and sustainable pathway for the firm to improve performance while managing environmental uncertainty and competitive pressures.

Strategic Alternatives Based on SWOT Matrix

Following the identification of internal strengths and weaknesses and external opportunities and threats, strategic alternatives were formulated using the SWOT Matrix. This matrix integrates internal and external factors to generate four categories of strategies: Strength–Opportunity (SO), Strength–Threat (ST), Weakness–Opportunity (WO), and Weakness–Threat (WT) strategies. The objective of this analysis is to propose strategic options that are aligned with the firm's internal capabilities and external environmental conditions.

Table 4. SWOT Matrix of Queency Florist

Internal / External Factors	Opportunities (O)	Threats (T)
Strengths (S)		
Consistent product quality	SO Strategies Utilize creative floral designs to capture the growing demand for personalized gifts and event decorations	ST Strategies Maintain product quality and service excellence to differentiate from competitors
Creative and innovative design	Develop customized floral products aligned with consumer lifestyle trends	Strengthen brand positioning to reduce the impact of substitute products
Customer loyalty	Expand market reach through repeat customers and referral-based marketing	Leverage customer relationships to retain market share amid intense competition
Personalized customer service	Enhance customer engagement via social media platforms	Improve service responsiveness to mitigate price competition
Local market reputation	Strengthen brand image in the local market through digital visibility	Reinforce reputation to maintain customer trust during market volatility
Weaknesses (W)	WO Strategies	WT Strategies
Limited digital promotion	Optimize the use of social media and online marketplaces to increase market exposure	Improve digital marketing capabilities to withstand competitive pressure
Dependence on specific suppliers	Identify alternative suppliers to support business expansion	Diversify suppliers to reduce supply chain risk
Simple financial management system	Improve financial management to support growth-oriented strategies	Strengthen financial control to minimize operational risk

The SO strategies emphasize the utilization of Queency Florist's internal strengths to capitalize on favorable external opportunities. These strategies focus on leveraging creative design capabilities and consistent product quality to respond to the increasing demand for personalized floral products and event decoration services. By aligning internal competencies with evolving consumer preferences, the firm can enhance its market presence and strengthen competitive advantage. The ST strategies aim to use internal strengths to mitigate external threats, particularly intense competition and the availability of substitute products. Maintaining high product quality, strengthening customer relationships, and reinforcing local brand reputation are essential to differentiate the firm from competitors and reduce

vulnerability to price competition. The WO strategies focus on addressing internal weaknesses by exploiting external opportunities. For Queency Florist, improving digital promotion and financial management systems is critical to fully benefit from market growth and digital platform development. These strategies highlight the importance of capability development to support sustainable expansion. Finally, the WT strategies are defensive in nature, designed to minimize weaknesses and avoid threats simultaneously. Diversifying suppliers and strengthening digital marketing and financial controls can reduce operational risk and enhance business resilience under uncertain market conditions.

Overall, the SWOT-based strategic alternatives provide a comprehensive and structured set of strategic options for Queency Florist. When integrated with the results of the IE Matrix and Grand Strategy Matrix, these strategies offer practical and evidence-based guidance for business development and long-term sustainability.

Conclusion

This study aimed to analyze the internal and external strategic conditions of Queency Florist and to formulate appropriate business development strategies using an integrated strategic management framework. By employing SWOT analysis supported by the Internal Factor Evaluation (IFE) Matrix, External Factor Evaluation (EFE) Matrix, Internal–External (IE) Matrix, and Grand Strategy Matrix, this research provides a comprehensive assessment of the firm's strategic position.

The results of the IFE analysis indicate that Queency Florist possesses a relatively strong internal foundation, primarily driven by consistent product quality, creative floral design, customer loyalty, and personalized service. These strengths contribute positively to the firm's competitive position and support differentiation within the local florist market. However, several internal weaknesses, particularly limited digital promotion, dependence on specific suppliers, and basic financial management systems, remain significant constraints that may hinder long-term growth if not addressed systematically. The EFE analysis demonstrates that the external environment offers substantial opportunities, including increasing demand for personalized gifts and event decoration services, as well as the rapid development of digital platforms. Nevertheless, the firm also faces notable external threats, such as intense competition, price volatility of raw materials, and the availability of substitute products. The EFE score suggests that Queency Florist has a relatively strong capacity to respond to these external conditions, provided that internal capabilities are appropriately aligned. The integration of IFE and EFE results through the IE Matrix places Queency Florist in Cell V, indicating a Hold and Maintain strategic position. This position suggests that the firm should prioritize internal consolidation and gradual capability enhancement rather than aggressive expansion. Meanwhile, the Grand Strategy Matrix positions the firm in Quadrant I, highlighting its strong competitive position within a growing market and indicating potential for growth-oriented strategies when supported by adequate internal readiness.

Overall, the SWOT-based strategic alternatives formulated in this study offer realistic and evidence-based guidance for Queency Florist. By leveraging internal strengths, addressing critical weaknesses, and responding proactively to external opportunities and

threats, the firm can enhance competitiveness and support sustainable business development.

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