

**INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS EXPANSION USING AMAZON'S GLOBAL
E-COMMERCE IN THE BEAUTY PRODUCT CATEGORY**

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Abstract

In this modern age of rapid technological growth and abundant information, e-commerce has become a powerful tool for businesses looking to reach a global audience. Engaging in electronic commerce opens up a world of opportunity to tap into local and international markets ripe for expansion. This study aims to dig deeper into the beauty product preferences of the American populace, which uses Amazon to craft a strategic expansion plan that resonates with people's desires. This research delved into the realm of qualitative analysis by utilizing the innovative TOWS matrix analysis and STP analysis to uncover the desires and inclinations of individuals toward beauty products. To capture the attention of the Amazon e-commerce market, the company should target female consumers between the ages of 12 and 44 who are interested in vegan, eco-friendly products that are chemical-free, prioritize animal welfare, and are looking for high-quality decorative cosmetics. Furthermore, the company should promote eco-friendly products and professional makeup to cater to the growing demand for sustainable options among environmentally-conscious Americans. With a well-thought-out plan, the company has the potential to thrive and expand its business footprint by tapping into the endless possibilities of e-commerce platforms.

Keywords:

Electronic Commerce, Expansion Strategy, Amazon, STP, TOWS, Beauty Product

Introduction

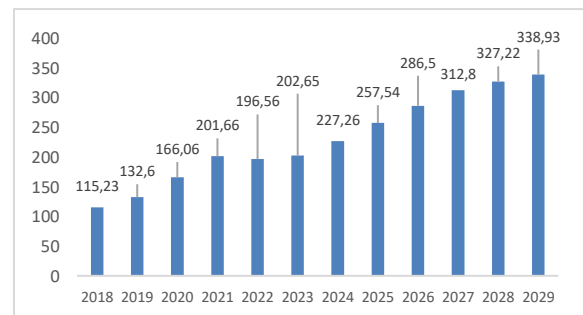
Globalization affords numerous market opportunities, potentials, and business hurdles for companies worldwide, leading to significant advantages such as the widespread availability of knowledge and technology (Aslam et al., 2018; Suprpto, Yosuky, Rachmi, & Santono, 2023). The digitalization process is not limited to advanced economies but also significantly influences developing nations, presenting new prospects for companies to broaden their operations (Meyer, Li, Brouthers, & Jean, 2023). In the current era of globalization and technological advancements, e-commerce has emerged as a pivotal avenue for fostering business growth on both local and global scales. The evolution of technology and the internet has revolutionized how businesses function, enabling them to tap into the worldwide market efficiently.

E-commerce is intricately connected to technological advancements, specifically the increasing population of internet users. The global internet user base is expanding annually, with a significant growth in numbers. In 2014, there were around 2.7 billion internet users worldwide, and this number will reach 7.3 billion by 2029, representing a significant growth of 170.37% from 2014 (Statista, 2023b). Moreover, individuals can freely explore e-commerce platforms on the Internet without any geographical limitations. This trend corresponds to the growing population of international online customers, projected to increase from 2.37 billion shoppers in 2020 to 2.77 billion by 2025, representing a 16.88% growth (Insider Intelligence, 2022).

According to a study on consumer preferences for online and offline shopping, it was discovered that the majority of respondents, 66%, lean towards online shopping, whereas 34% prefer the offline shopping experience (Yan, 2020). This trend is fueled by the forecast that online retail will experience a 2.5 times faster growth rate and outpace offline retail by the year 2030 (Chakravorty, 2023). According to the information, there is a promising outlook for expanding e-commerce in the coming years. Numerous reasons drive consumers towards utilizing e-commerce platforms, with the primary factors being convenience and ease of

use (78.72%), reluctance to physically go shopping (71.28%), access to a broader range of products (65.25%), attraction to discounts and deals (60.99%), lack of nearby retail options (7.09%), and various other contributing factors (4.96%). These perceived advantages will likely persist in motivating consumers to engage in e-commerce transactions.

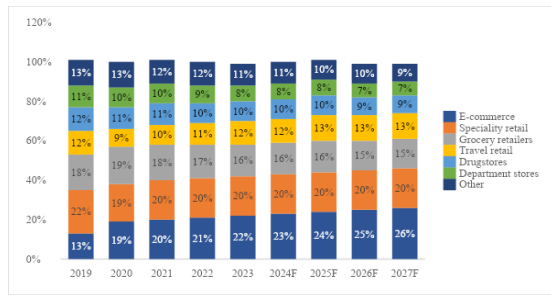
An advantage of e-commerce is the expansion of product growth. The assertion is backed up by data affirming that e-commerce is the fastest-expanding beauty product platform. Between 2019 and 2023, e-commerce reigned supreme in the beauty industry, commanding the largest market share compared to other distribution channels. It is estimated that by the year 2027, e-commerce will capture over 25% of the market share in the beauty industry (McKinsey & Company, 2023). ParagonCorp, a prominent fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) company in Indonesia specializing in beauty and personal products, has leveraged e-commerce to enhance its business operations and reach a broader customer base.



Picture 1. Beauty & Personal Care E-commerce Revenue Worldwide 2018 - 2029 (billion USD)

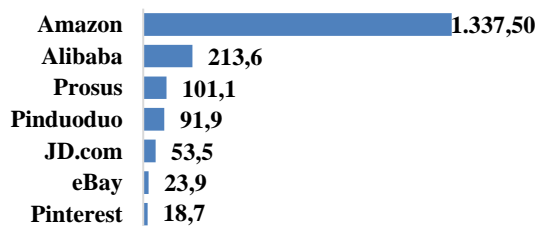
Source: Statista (2024)

Global revenue in the E-commerce market for beauty and personal care products is expected to grow between 2024 and 2029, reaching a total of 111.67 USD billion (+67,1%). After seven consecutive years of increase, the revenue is expected to reach 338.93 billion USD in 2029. It can be concluded that beauty and personal care products have a great opportunity to grow over the next few years until 2029. (Statista, 2024c) (McKinsey & Company, 2023) (Statista, 2023a) (Statista, 2024b) (Statista, 2024a) (Similarweb, 2024)



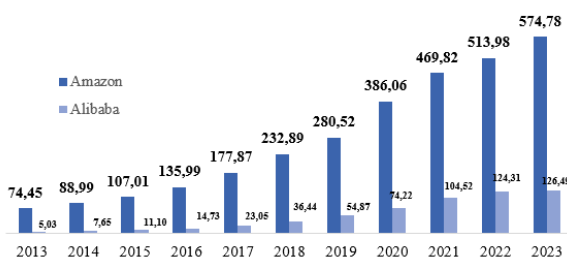
Picture 2. Beauty Product Sales by Channel (billion USD)
Source: McKinsey (2024)

Data from McKinsey support the statement that e-commerce is the fastest-growing channel for beauty products. From 2019 to 2023, e-commerce dominated the beauty industry's market share, with the highest percentage compared to other distribution channels. By 2027, e-commerce will account for more than 25% of the industry's market share.



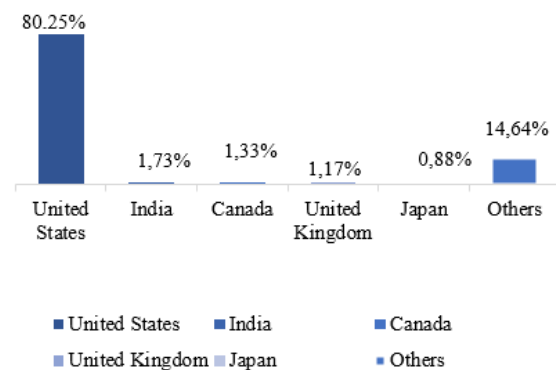
Picture 3. Global Large-Cap E-commerce Companies
Source: Statista (2023)

Amazon is the largest e-commerce company in the world, focusing on developing e-commerce platforms. By 2023, Amazon ranked first among large-cap e-commerce companies worldwide. Based on data from the Company's Market Cap on 21 May 2024, Amazon has a market capitalization of USD 1.910 trillion, making it the world's largest e-commerce company.



Picture 4. Amazon and Alibaba Annual Revenue 2013 - 2023 (billion USD)
Source: Statista (2024)

Amazon.com and Alibaba are the two largest e-commerce companies in the world. According to Statista (2024), from 2013 to 2024, Amazon led the world e-commerce market with more annual revenue than its e-commerce competitor Alibaba. In 2023, Amazon had a yearly income of 574.78 billion USD, which is about 4.5 times more than Alibaba, which is 126.49 billion USD. Based on some of the descriptions above, Amazon is suitable for use as one of the e-commerce companies to expand its business abroad.



Picture 5. Geography of Amazon User Distribution 2024
Source: Similarweb, 2024

Several countries use Amazon as their main choice of e-commerce site. According to data from Similarweb (2024), the largest number of Amazon users in the United States is 80.25%. The country with the largest coverage of Amazon is the United States. In 2023, US-based managed to sell more than 4.5 million items, with an average sale of about 8,600 item per minute, which achieved annual sales of more than USD 250,000. One of Amazon's advantages is that it can increase customer trust. According to a survey by Feedvisory involving 2,000 customers, 89% prefer buying products through Amazon's e-commerce platform over other e-commerce sites. This data shows that customers highly trust Amazon as an online shopping platform. It can be inferred that Amazon is a viable option for expanding business internationally through e-commerce.

PT. Paragon Technology and Innovation, also known as ParagonCorp, is one of Indonesia's leading Fast-Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG) companies focusing on beauty and personal care products. Founded in 1985, Paragon has

been a significant player in the local cosmetics industry. Paragon has over 10,000 employees and 41 distribution centres across Indonesia and Malaysia. With more than 39 years of experience, ParagonCorp intends to broaden its business network by focusing on the beauty care sector, particularly skincare, hair care, and makeup, using the global e-commerce giant Amazon. This research is anticipated to offer valuable insights into the potential strategies that ParagonCorp can harness to grow its business by leveraging Amazon's worldwide e-commerce platform.

International trade, as defined by (Sudiantini, 2022), is the exchange of goods and services between individuals from different countries based on mutual agreement. It involves exports and imports and aims to establish trade relations (Aprita & Adhitya, 2020; Suryanto & Kurniati, 2022). The primary goal of international trade is to enhance the quality of life within a country and promote income quality both domestically and internationally (Harianto, 2021). International trade is essential for nations aiming for economic development. International trade allows countries to obtain goods and services that are unavailable domestically, preventing reliance solely on local production (Suryanto & Kurniati, 2022).

International marketing is a strategic business approach involving the development of plans, pricing strategies, promotional efforts, and market positioning of goods and services to attract customers from various countries to generate revenue (Tien, Phu, & Chi, 2019). International marketing is a strategic approach to selling goods and services across multiple countries. It encompasses the planning, pricing, promotion, and distribution of products with the ultimate goal of generating profit (Cateora, Gilly, Graham, & Money, 2016). International marketing encompasses a range of components, including strategic planning, promotional activities, distribution channels, and pricing strategies tailored to target end consumers. The primary distinction between domestic marketing and international marketing lies in the expansive geographical scope and cultural diversity of multiple countries, which influence the strategies employed in marketing efforts. These

variations encompass cultural norms, consumer preferences, economic status and organization, market composition and distribution channels, business practices, legal requirements, and regulations.

Methodology

This research employs a descriptive-qualitative approach to conduct a literature study. Qualitative research is a methodology that focuses on capturing real-life conditions through qualitative data collection and analysis. Descriptive research seeks to offer a methodical and precise depiction of the information about the population under investigation (Rinaldi & Mujianto, 2017). Therefore, it can be inferred that qualitative descriptive research involves a systematic approach to gathering data that provides a detailed depiction of a phenomenon in its true state, focusing on interpreting its significance. This research centres around ParagonCorp. The researchers selected the descriptive qualitative research method to investigate potential marketing strategies for expanding into Amazon's global e-commerce platform, specifically within the cosmetics product category.

The process of qualitative data analysis involves comprehensively examining research data to obtain a thorough understanding, adhering to specific criteria (Siyoto & Sodik, 2015). Qualitative data analysis entails examining data in words or sentences from the research participants and delving into the events associated with the research topic. To address the issues in the study, one can employ SWOT analysis as a preliminary step, followed by the TOWS Matrix and STP strategies. Upon completion of both external and internal data analysis, the study proceeds to conduct a SWOT analysis to identify the company's strengths and weaknesses and its opportunities and threats. Following this, a TOWS analysis compares external opportunities and threats with internal strengths and weaknesses and identifies alternative strategies that ParagonCorp can implement.

SWOT

SWOT analysis is a methodical system used to pinpoint the key factors that impact a company's strategic planning (Rangkuti, 2006). This analysis posits that a successful strategy will leverage current strengths and opportunities while mitigating weaknesses and threats. According to (Mashuri & Nurjannah, 2020; Putra, 2019)SWOT analysis consists of different components: Strengths refer to the assets, capabilities, or advantages a company possesses compared to its competitors and response to market demand. Weaknesses refer to circumstances in which there are constraints or shortcomings in resources, skills, and capabilities that have the potential to impede the performance of a company. Opportunities refer to advantageous circumstances present in the company's external environment. Threats are external factors that have the potential to negatively impact the company and impede its progress toward achieving objectives.

The TOWS matrix is a strategic tool that aids in formulating a company's long-term plan. The TOWS matrix is a strategic tool that combines the factors of Threats, Opportunities, Weaknesses, and Strengths to formulate effective strategies (Qanita, 2020). According to (Istiqomah & Andriyanto, 2018), the TOWS matrix helps in creating four types of strategies: SO (strengths - opportunities), WO (weakness - opportunities), ST (strengths - threats), and WT (weakness - threats). The analysis from this matrix often leads to recommendations on enhancing strengths, leveraging opportunities, minimizing weaknesses, and mitigating threats.

Table 1. TOWS Matrix

Internal Factors	External Factors	Strengths Capabilities that can help the company achieve its goals	Weaknesses Obstacles that may affect the company's ability to achieve its goals
	Opportunities Opportunities that the company can	S-O Strategies Strategies that use	W-O Strategies Strategies that minimize

utilize to gain profits	strengths to capitalize on opportunities	weaknesses to take advantage of opportunities
Threats Challenges to the company's current and future performance	S-T Strategies Strategies that use strengths to overcome threats	W-T Strategies Strategies that minimize weaknesses and avoid threats

Source: (Hutagalung & Simatupang, 2023)

STP

Segmenting, Targeting, and Positioning (STP) is a strategic framework utilized to tailor marketing strategies to distinct target audience segments (Vivaldy, Ogi, & Lintong, 2023). This approach seeks to establish a strong presence for a product in the consumer's consciousness, effectively enhancing the brand's competitive edge (Muharromah & Dwi Adi Nugroho, 2022). Market segmentation is the strategic method of categorizing consumers into more homogeneous groups (Wijaya & Sirine, 2016). By dividing the market into segments, businesses can enhance their ability to target consumers effectively and offer products and services that cater to their specific needs. According to (Kotler & Armstrong, 2016) there are various factors to consider when defining market segmentation, such as geographic, demographic, psychographic, and behavioral. Geographic segmentation involves dividing markets into various geographic categories, including countries, states, regions, counties, cities, and neighborhoods. Companies can opt to operate in one or multiple geographic areas, tailoring their products, services, and advertising, promotions, and sales strategies to address the unique needs of each location. Demographic segmentation involves dividing the market into groups based on factors such as age, gender, income, occupation, education, religion, and ethnicity. This method is widely used because consumer needs, desires, and usage patterns can vary significantly based on these demographics traits. Understanding demographic characteristics is crucial for companies to evaluate the size of their market

target. Psychographic segmentation involves dividing a market into segments based on social class, lifestyle, or personality traits. Companies frequently adopt this approach as a foundation for creating effective marketing strategies. On the other hand, behavioral segmentation breaks the market into a segment based on consumer knowledge, attitudes, product usage, or responses to a product. This type of segmentation aids companies in comprehending consumer behavior regarding product usage and serves as a starting point for developing market segments. Based on (Berlian, 2022; Widjaya, 2017), targeting is the process of evaluating and choosing the interest of specific market segments that a company will focus on for its products offerings. Similarly, (Wijaya & Sirine, 2016) define targeting as the evaluation of segmentation and the application of marketing strategies at specific geographic levels, such as countries,

provinces, or groups of individuals likely to respon similarly. The goal of targeting is to identify new market segments for the company to concentrate on. According to (Kotler & Armstrong, 2016), there are several strategies for selecting target markets: undifferentiated marketing targets the entire market eith the same offer, disregrading differences between segments; differentiated marketing focuses on multiple segments, creating tailored offerings to boost sales and strengthen market position; concentrated marketing targets a specific segment, allowing the company to build a strong market positions through in- depth understanding of consumer needs; micromarketing customizes product and marketing strategies for specific individuals or segments. It includes local marketing, which tailors promotions to local customer groups, such as cities or neighborhoods.

Result and Discussion

TOWS Matrix Analysis

Using a TOWS matrix analysis, the research findings will examine the internal and external factors affecting ParagonCorp.

Table 2. TOWS Matrix Analysis ParagonCorp

Internal Factors	Strengths	Weaknesses
External Factors	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The company has a wide range of product brands that can be customized to various customer segments 2. Products are easy to find in Official Stores, Drugstores, and various e-commerce 3. The company can innovate technology for its products 4. One of the company's product brands has become a Halal Cosmetics Pioneer and is a top-of-mind halal product 5. The company has a strong brand reputation over the years 6. Competitive and affordable prices and premium quality 7. The company won 3 awards in 2023 at the Indonesia Halal Industry Award (HIYA) 8. The company's products can compete with foreign products good distribution network in the 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The company is less competitive in the international market/global market 2. The company's product packaging has similarities with other products, making it less attractive 3. The more diverse product variations, making production costs increase 4. Some product brands are only oriented to the female segment, making it challenging to develop product lines in the male segment 5. Limited use of International E-commerce platforms 6. Limited financial and human resources may hamper the company's expansion efforts <p>Limited ability to research and develop products to meet the</p>

	domestic market can be the basis for building networks abroad.	preferences and needs of international consumers
<p style="text-align: center;">Opportunities</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Exploring new markets will open opportunities to expand the company's market share and revenue. 2. The level of halalness possessed by one brand is superior to other cosmetic brands 3. Using differentiated pricing to attract new customers or create new market segments 4. Advertising with strong and attractive television and social media, making the company's various brands known in various circles 5. Understanding and catering to consumer preferences in new markets will keep the company ahead of the game 6. Global consumers are increasingly interested in cosmetic products, which can be an opportunity for companies to offer such products 7. The growth of e-commerce opens up new opportunities for companies to sell products online to consumers around the world 8. The Indonesian government offers programs and 	<p style="text-align: center;">S-O Strategies</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Conduct market research to identify countries with the highest demand for cosmetic products, collaborate with local distributors, and build distribution networks. 2. Utilize halal certification to promote products in Muslim-majority markets by creating marketing campaigns focusing on product halalness. 3. Develop a specialized product line for men's skincare and launch it internationally. 4. Increase investment in television and social media advertising in destination countries and use local influencers to increase brand awareness. 5. Conduct competitor price analysis and implement competitive pricing to attract new market segments 	<p style="text-align: center;">W-O Strategies</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Collaborate with international research institutions to improve research and product development. 2. Invest in e-commerce and logistics digital technology to expand international market reach 3. Conduct market research to identify men's needs and preferences and develop products accordingly. 4. Recruiting experts from various countries and optimizing human resource and financial management 5. Conduct new research and innovation on packaging design to make products more attractive and different from competitors.

<p>incentives to export products.</p>		
<p style="text-align: center;">Threats</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Many brands (local and international) offer products at lower prices and have good quality 2. There are still doubts among the public about the quality of the company's products 3. The circulation of counterfeit products in the market can damage the reputation of the company's brand 4. Product prices are uncontrollable because there are parties who mark up prices / raise prices unreasonably 5. Changes in regulations or requirements in the destination country can be an obstacle for the company to enter a new market 6. Competition with market leaders and new competitors in the international market can threaten the company's market share 7. Economic downturn or currency exchange rate fluctuations may negatively affect the company's profitability. 	<p style="text-align: center;">S-T Strategies</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Organize events, webinars, and beauty workshops for consumers and influencers that explain the quality and benefits of the company's products. 2. Apply for patents and trademarks in the market to protect against counterfeit/counterfeit products. 3. Set strict pricing policies and work closely with distributors to control prices. 4. Allocate more resources to research and development to improve product quality. 5. Work with the government to understand and fulfill the regulations in the destination country. 	<p style="text-align: center;">W-T Strategies</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Improve the efficiency of the production process and find alternative sources of raw materials that are more affordable. 2. Conduct training programs to improve employee skills and optimize financial management. 3. Develop a hedging strategy to protect the company from currency fluctuations and economic risks. 4. Focuses on the preparation of e-commerce regulations in international business so that it can facilitate companies in expanding. 5. Diversified markets to reduce dependence on one market. 6. Utilize a cloud-based supply chain management system to improve coordination and efficiency.

Table 3. STP Analysis ParagonCorp

Segmenting	Targeting	Positioning
Geography: - Country: United States	Targeting women aged 12-44 who are looking for vegan products and professional decorative makeup - Targeting upper-middle-income consumers - Targeting women looking for vegan products that do not use harmful ingredients, care about cruelty-free, and sustainability.	- Products: High-quality professional decorative and vegan cosmetics, free of harmful chemicals. - Distribution: Cosmetics and skincare products that can be made available in international e-commerce (online stores) - Price: premium but proportional to the quality and benefits offered - Promotion: social media-based marketing campaigns, influencers, and consumer testimonials (reviews). - Makeup and skincare products for sensitive skin
Demographics: - Gender: Female - Age: 12-44 years old - Income: middle-upper class		
Psychographics - Lifestyle: Follows the latest trends in beauty and cares about skin health and glamorous appearance. - Personality: cares about environmentally friendly products that do not contain harmful ingredients, natural products (vegan), and animal protection welfare. Behavioral. - A vegan (natural) product user, a loyal consumer of natural cosmetics, and seeking quality personal care products and cosmetics. - Many cosmetic products are available for daily use or special occasions.		

ParagonCorp have to consider strategies to prioritize, companies must engage in market research, as it offers valuable insight into local consumer preferences, market size, growth potential, and the competitive landscape. This information enables companies to tailor their products and marketing strategies to address the specific needs of the new market. This aligns with the perspective of (Sakarya, Eckman, & Hyllegard, 2007) that market research is essential for expansion because it aids in evaluating consumer acceptance of foreign brands and businesses which is crucial for understanding market potential. Furthermore, market research also assists in identifying long-term market opportunities, cultural differences, the competitive strengths, and customer acceptance.

The company needs to carry out an urgent strategy, ParagonCorp needs to focus on complying with all applicable regulations in the Indonesia government related to exporting, as well as adhering to Amazon e-commerce regulations in international business. This will help the company adjust and expand effectively. This statement aligns with the opinion from (Cumming, Johan, Khan, & Meyer, 2023) that e-commerce policies establish the legal frameworks that multinational companies must adhere to, influencing their ability to enter and compete in international markets. These policies can either create barriers to entry or make market access easier.

ParagonCorp should consider a hedging strategy because hedging enables businesses to safeguard against potential losses resulting

drom unfavorable market fluctuations. This is especially crucial when venturing into new markets with uncertain economic conditions. According to (Boehe, 2014), the conclusion regarding hedging strategies for exports is that companies can manage the challenges posed by decreasing exchange rate competitiveness through strategic hedging. This approach allows firms to offset currency losses in specific markets with gains in other, ultimately improving their performance.

Conclusion

Following thorough research, it is evident that ParagonCorp possesses the capacity and opportunity to broaden its range of beauty products within the Amazon global e-commerce platform. The company possesses a range of product brands with exceptional potential to penetrate the global market, particularly in professional makeup, self-care products, and cosmetics made from natural ingredients (vegan). These offerings align perfectly with the preferences of consumers in the United States. The company should focus on upholding its core strengths, such as its established brand reputation in Indonesia while embarking on a strategic journey to cultivate a strong international brand presence. To address its vulnerabilities, the company should establish effective measures to combat counterfeit and imitation goods while prioritizing continual investment in technological advancements. Furthermore, it is imperative for the company to carefully consider the outcomes of the SWOT analysis, highlighting key strengths that need to be preserved and weaknesses that require enhancement. Enhancing the proposed S-O strategy by employing the STP approach to target Amazon in the United States to maximize effectiveness is crucial. The company's promotional efforts should focus on eco-friendly products and professional-grade makeup, considering the American public's strong interest in sustainable goods. With a well-thought-out approach, the company has the opportunity to effectively broaden its business presence by utilizing e-commerce platforms.

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