

Ikea is on top of the furniture world essay sample

[Business](#), [Company](#)



There are certain necessities that consumers will buy in their lifetime.

Furniture is on the top of that list. With so many consumers shopping to decorate and make their homes livable, there is a definite competition out in the furniture world today. One company name stands out more than others. IKEA sits with a high reputation among consumers and other businesses. They not only strive to make contemporary and stylish furniture pieces, but also make their inventory affordable enough that the average person would be able to buy it. Although there are many furniture companies competing to be successful, IKEA leads the charts as number one.

IKEA started its journey in 1943 by the company's founder, Ingvar Kamprad (Bing, Zaleski and Gediman). The journey was conceptualized much earlier than that though. Kamprad had envisioned having his own business at the age of 5. Starting out at the age of only 17, Kamprad is given some reward money by his father (IKEA). With this money, he uses it to establish his own business, IKEA. IKEA originally sold pens, wallets, picture frames, watches, and jewelry; Not furniture. Furniture was introduced 5 years later in 1948. The response to the first line of furniture is quite positive, so Kamprad continues to expand the line. With his success, Kamprad decides that he would like to sell the furniture on a larger scale. In 1951, the IKEA catalog is born. In today's world, this catalog is still very sought after and anticipated every season. Not only are the catalogs popular, but also the furniture showrooms. This feature was added in 1953 and gave IKEA most of the competitive advantage at that time. For the first time, customers can feel, touch, and look at IKEA furniture without ordering it. This innovation was also a success.

IKEA was now climbing the scales of the furniture market. To only further this success, in 1956, Kamprad comes up with an idea of how to get customers to take this furniture home in a safe, but also convenient way to consumers. IKEA then focused on flat packaging and self-assembly. The impact of this idea was so highly positive, it became the staple of IKEA as we know it today (IKEA). To add to this combination of IKEA staples, particleboard was introduced in 1968. Because of particleboard's inexpensive and easy-to-process reputation, IKEA soars in the market. The price of furniture was unbeatable at IKEA and the consumers knew about it. IKEA made its mark in the furniture world with these winning concepts.

Fast forward to 2011, IKEA sales soared to over \$40 billion, or over 23% of the global furniture market (Jones and George). IKEA is now the largest furniture chain in the world having over 300 stores in 40 countries. Their innovations attract customers at all levels. Not only are customers able to purchase furniture at an affordable price, but also, the furniture is modern and sleek with a contemporary design. IKEA's designs focus on simplicity and attention to detail that is popular throughout the world.

A company is only as strong as its weakest link. Kamprad's core values stream throughout IKEA's stores and into the employees themselves. When stepping foot into an IKEA store, you are greeted by employees that operate on the simplest rules and procedures. Kamprad prides himself on being frugal, hardworking in which he teaches his managers. All IKEA employees from the bottom to the top are all in business "together", which means that every person who works in his global empire plays an essential role and has

an obligation to everyone else (Jones and George). Once an employee is recruited to one of its many stores, they start learning about the culture and norms of the company. For example, someone being hired as a manager might go through a training process with the bottom line. The manager would see the production line and how they perform their duties. This training helps the manager internalize the values Kamprad is so infamous for. Not only do the employees focus on their customers, but they also make sure that problems are solved the right way-the IKEA way.

Being an employee at IKEA has many benefits. IKEA offers holidays, sick pay, discounts, life insurance, family friendly policies, and even first day of school leave (IKEA). These benefits, while some normal, are carried out in a way that makes an employee feel part of something great. Petra Hesser, human resource manager of IKEA states, “ IKEA has always offered me a variety of learning and career possibilities. You can always be yourself, everyone has a voice and it’s a company that encourages open dialogue. IKEA wants co-workers that can help build on that culture – straightforward and down-to-earth people with a willingness to learn” (IKEA). If an employee considers himself or herself to be hardworking, driven, and enthusiastic, they will see themselves at a higher ranking quickly. IKEA builds on the development and success of its employees. There are opportunities everywhere. When people feel that they belong, it creates a community of positivity, togetherness, and strength. These are the values in which IKEA has built itself on since 1946 thanks to Kamprad.

When a consumer walks into an IKEA store, it can be a little overwhelming. Visually, there is a lot to look at. The largest store is in Sweden that measures 594, 000 square feet (Bing, Zaleski and Gediman). Within this massive structure are showrooms that are designed with IKEA furniture and other home furnishings. The concept of showrooms is to stage IKEA's functional designs. Customers enjoy looking at a room to visualize the pieces working in their own home and life. There are hundreds of these rooms to look at with multiple lines of furniture. A customer will make a wish list and go to a cashier to pay for their items. Customers can also get a shopping cart and shop in the open warehouse full of smaller furniture and furnishings. What is enticing about all of the furniture lines from IKEA is the price. The prices at IKEA are unbeatable in some areas. What customers will find are functional, simple, modern designs at the price they are willing to pay.

The process to find what to make a home complete can take many hours in IKEA. In 1960, IKEA launched the concept of having a restaurant in one of its Sweden stores (IKEA). This was also a success and brought to most of the stores around the world and is still used today. Customers can enjoy low-priced but delicious food while on a break from shopping. To add to the shopping experience at IKEA, moms and dads can appreciate the play area for their kids. Parents have the option to drop off their children at the play area and pick them up after they're done. In some stores, IKEA actually gives pagers to parents just in case they need to come back sooner than expected. Now, that's customer service.

The experience won't stop at the store. Once all of the furniture that has been picked out is at home, the self-assembly begins. Part of the IKEA vision is to sell pieces that are easy to transport from store to home, starting with the flat packaging. Customers will find simple step-by-step instructions with their products. What makes the assembly easier is the type of wood used for the furniture. Particleboard is simple and not difficult to work with. When customers are done, they should be left with the same piece they saw in the showroom. Most customers are left happy, satisfied, and with more cash in pocket than expected.

In all of IKEA's 71 years in business, its founding innovations, thoughts and processes are still being practiced today. The combination of these makes IKEA still stand strong on the global furniture market. Its competitors will compete with solid values from Kampad, inexpensive yet modern furniture design, and an already competitive edge in the global market. IKEA is continuing to grow and brainstorm for more ideas they can put in the IKEA staple. Consumers know that there is always a possibility of something new coming from the company. IKEA has mastered keeping the world on its toes waiting to see the next big furniture line or even the way it does business. IKEA is truly on top of the furniture world.

Works Cited

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