Briefly

Our Strategy to Develop our Competitive Advantage

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Preface: In this assignment, we aim to develop a strategy for Briefly

This is critical as we work towards our launch in May 2025.

Our Journey Thus Far:

1. Conceptualisation

November 2024

Briefly was **conceptualised to solve business professionals' challenges in accessing business insights**: credibility, cost, relevance and time

2. Incubation

January 2025

Briefly was accepted into SMU IIE's Incubation Programme , placing us **within the Top 20% of over 180 startups** that applied

BUSINESS INNOVATIONS GENERATOR

3. Launch

May 2025

We **aim to launch Briefly in phases**, starting with our website as our Minimum Viable Product, with industry-specific news

Background: Briefly is an AI-powered platform that provides credible, relevant and concise business insights in a multi-format personalized way

Insights Platform

Industry-Level Business Insights

- Summarises key news in different industries
- Connects the dots for the user in terms of broad industry trends, and analyses implications

Personalised Business Insights

- Summarises key news based on user's industry, profession and seniority
- Connects the dots for the user by highlighting shifts in user's operating environment, its implications and recommendations

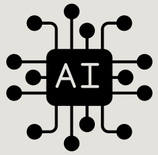
Social Platform

Posts by Key Opinion Leaders

- Allows key opinion leaders to post their latest analysis on Briefly
- This allows them to grow their following and improve their thought leadership

Key Opinion Leader Insights

- Allows users to read key opinion leaders insights on current affairs and broader shifts in industry trends
- Filter key opinion leaders based on credibility and relevance



AI-Powered Platform

AI-Powered Platform

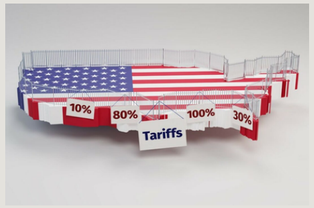
- Harnesses the power of AI to harvest the most relevant news, contextualise it to broader industry trends, analyse implications of the trends and provide recommendations

Multi-Format Options

- Allows key opinion leader to auto-generate text posts, podcasts or videos
- Allows users to consume business insights through text summaries, audiobooks, podcasts or videos

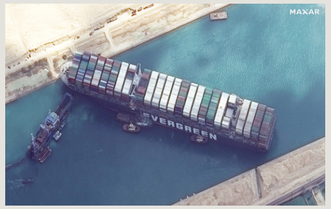
Background: Briefly aims to help business professionals navigate an increasingly turbulent and noisy world that is still highly interconnected

1. We live in an increasingly turbulent and noisy world that is still highly interconnected



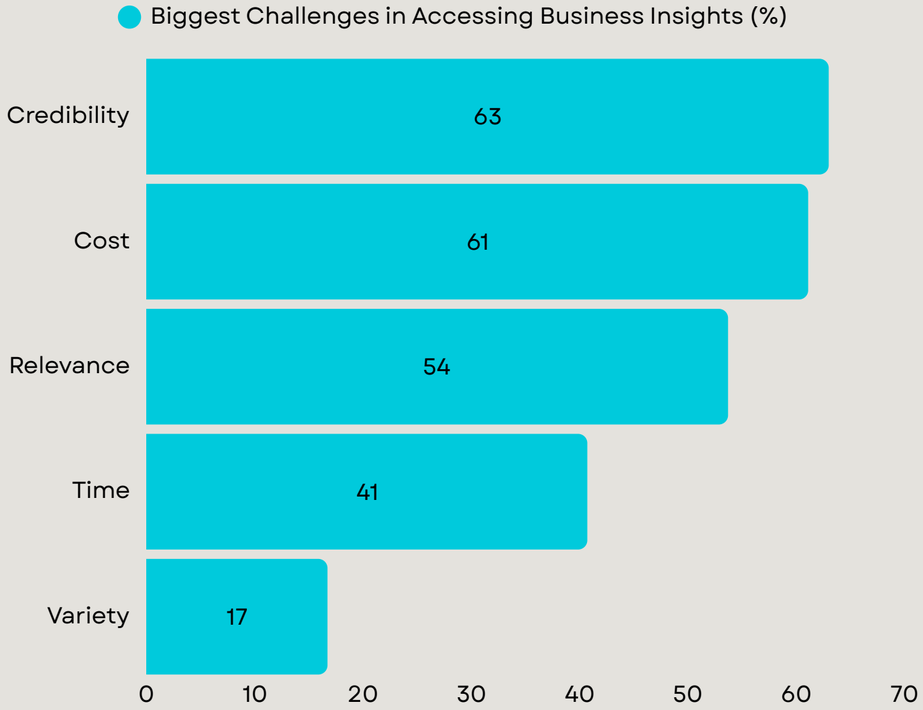
Trade tariffs imposed with no early warning resulting in massive global supply chain and immigration implications

Global wars erupting which threaten the flow of trade, money and people



Small black swan events such as Evergreen halting global supply chains for weeks

2. Market research has shown that business professionals face challenges in navigating this



BACKGROUND

Briefly

Background: In sum, we are the solution that business professionals want

Our Product: An Application that Provides Personalised Summaries of Business News and Key Opinion Leader (KOL) Insights

Key Factors	Existing Options	Briefly
Credibility	✗ No Verification Means	✓ Certified KOLs & News Sources
Cost	✗ Multiple Subscriptions Required	✓ Single Affordable Subscription
Relevance	✗ General Business Insights	✓ Personalised Business Insights
Time	✗ Articles of Predetermined Length	✓ On-Demand, Preferred Length

Background: We have developed the UI for our app, and are currently working to develop the backend

BACKGROUND

Problem: How can we develop a competitive advantage?

This is our most critical problem given our context and operating environment.

Our Desired Outcomes: Growth ⟶ Revenue ⟶ Profitability

Our Context and Operating Environment:

Briefly

- Newly Established
- Limited Resources

VS

Key Opinion Leader Platforms

- Well Established
- Significant Resources

Traditional News Platforms

- Well Established
- Significant Resources

Common to All: Rapid advancements in Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning

PROBLEM STATEMENT

#1: We will adopt a focused differentiation strategy in the short run

This is based on our internal analysis using the SWOT framework.

	Cost	Differentiation
Broad	**Cost Leadership** ✗ **Small User Base** - Difficult to Achieve Economies of Scale Required for Cost Leadership	**Differentiation** ✗ **High Technological Requirements** - Difficult to Develop Engine to Generate the Best Insights Across Variety of Topics
Narrow	**Focused Cost Leadership** ✗ **High Supplier Power** - Low Power Over News and Technology Suppliers Necessary to Reduce Costs	**Focused Differentiation** ✓ **Manageable Near-Term Requirements** - Focus on Developing Engine that can Generate the Best Insights in one Domain

FOCUSED DIFFERENTIATION

#1: In particular, we will focus on ESG insights

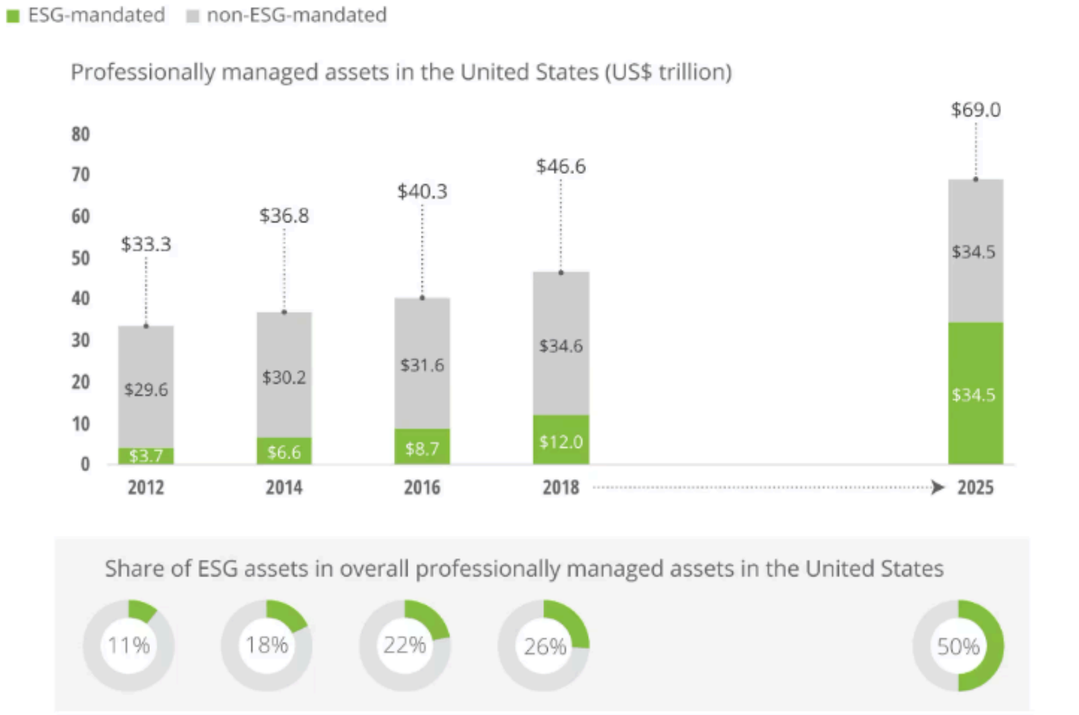
We will be the first mover in this area within our strategic group.

	Few Topics	Many Topics
News	**Specialised News Platforms** FP, CNBC, The Economist, BT Business Times	**General News Platforms** BBC NEWS, CNN, ALJAZEERA, ST
Opinions	**Niche Opinions** TLDR *Focused on Tech* **Briefly** Briefly *Focused on ESG*	**Social Media Platforms** in **Key Opinion Leader Platforms** substack Medium

FOCUSED DIFFERENTIATION

#1: This is also because ESG is a fast growing space with high information asymmetry for business professionals

ESG mandated assets could make up half of all managed assets in the US...



Source: US SIF Foundation data through 2018; Deloitte Center for Financial Services analysis through 2025.

Deloitte Insights | deloitte.com/insights

And yet, business professionals struggle with understanding regulations.

Q: Which of the following do you feel are the biggest barriers preventing your company from progressing on environmental, social, and governance issues? Executives (n=1,257)
Source: PwC Consumer Intelligence Series June 2, 2021

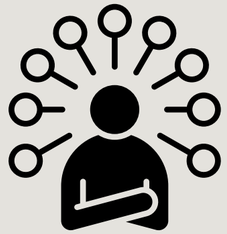
FOCUSED DIFFERENTIATION

#2: As a small start-up, value innovation will also allow us to manage costs while differentiating ourselves

	Strategy	Focus Area	Evidence
Eliminate	**Don't create content for the sake of creating content**	• "Junk" News and Insights	• 63% of survey respondents said that credibility is one of the biggest challenges in accessing business insights
Reduce		• "Lengthiness" of News and Insights	• 41% of survey respondents said that time is one of the biggest challenges in accessing business insights
Raise	**Only create content that is credible and relevant**	• "Credibility" of News and Insights	• 63% of survey respondents said that credibility is one of the biggest challenges in accessing business insights
Create		• "Personalisation" of News and Insights	• 54% of survey respondents said that relevance is one of the biggest challenges in accessing business insights

VALUE INNOVATION

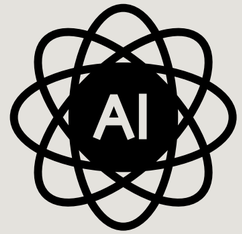
#2: For “Raise” and “Create”, we will focus on developing our exclusive key opinion leader content and proprietary AI



Exclusive Key Opinion Leader Content

“Credibility” of News and Insights

- Develop features to increase posting rates of key opinion leaders (e.g.., podcast or video generation).
- Enroll and invest in exclusive key opinion leaders based on the appropriate target audience.



Proprietary AI Workflows and Frameworks

“Personalisation” of News and Insights

- Workflow based on proprietary insights frameworks.
- Retrieval Augmented Generation based on proprietary database.
- Fine-tuned model based on most advanced AI tools.

#2: Importantly, this will also reduce our vulnerabilities from external threats based on Porter's Five Forces

Threats	Risk	Key Threats
Entrants	**High**	New entrants can easily copy our idea, making use of openly available news and opinion sources and generative AI tools.
Suppliers	**Moderate**	We are dependent on news sites and key opinion leaders who are relatively established and can bar us from using their content; however, there are many options
Customers	**High**	Customers can easily switch at low costs, with little incentive to continue to use our platform, with subscriptions on a monthly basis at best.
Substitutes	**High**	Beyond existing competitiors, generative AI tools are advancing rapidly, and could be a viable substitute for what our platform does.
Competitors	**High**	Our competitors are well established, and could actively shift their positioning or lower their prices to squeeze us out of the market.

- Exclusive key opinion leader content reduces threats from **suppliers and customers** as we are less dependent on established news websites and customers will have more incentive to stay on our platform for the content
- Proprietary AI will reduce threats from **entrants, competitors and substitutes** as it is not easily copied or replaced

#3: We will hire, train and partner based on VRIN competencies

This will allow us to build up our VRIN core competencies.

Competencies Required	Importance of Competency	Current Competency	Approach
Business Management (i.e., managing the day to day business manning, operations and finances)	Valuable	High	**Execute** - internally manage given that we have a high level of competency in doing this and there is a low ROI of outsourcing
Full Stack Web Development (i.e., development of our application and website)	Valuable	Low	**Outsource** - hire interns given that this competency is easily available and is imitable
AI/ML Development (i.e., development of proprietary AI workflows and frameworks)	Valuable, Rare, Inimitable, Non-Substitutable	Low	**Train** - this will be have to be our core competency that deters entrants and allows us to deliver value to our consumers
Key Opinion Leader Engagement (i.e., onboarding key opinion leaders to post on Briefly)	Valuable, Rare, Inimitable, Non-Substitutable	Moderate	**Partner** - leverage partners for a multiplier effect in onboarding key opinion leaders and building an ecosystem

CORE COMPETENCIES

Conclusion: Our Strategy Statement

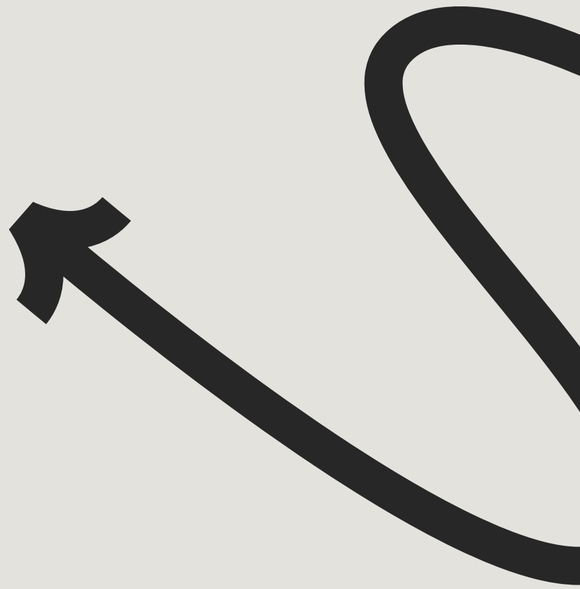
Key Elements of Our Strategy
Where do we compete? The business insights market, with a focus on ESG insights in the near term.
What unique value do we bring to customers? Credible, relevant and concise business insights in a multi-format, personalised way.
What resources and capabilities do we utilize? We will develop our core competencies in AI and ML to make sure that we can generate the best insights for our consumers.
How do we sustain our value? **We will develop** proprietary AI workflows, frameworks and databases while securing exclusive expert-driven content

Our Strategy Statement
Briefly competes in the business insights market, focusing on niche markets. ***We deliver credible, relevant, and concise business insights through AI-powered curation and multi-format personalization, ensuring professionals receive the most relevant and actionable information.*** ***Our core strength lies in AI/ML capabilities to generate the best insights.*** ***To sustain our competitive advantage, we will develop our proprietary AI, and expert-driven content partnerships.***

Briefly

More than just a news app

Let’s personalize news and KOL Insights. Join us in this revolution!
News stays awake.



External Analysis - PESTEL

	Potential Challenges	Mitigation Strategy
Political	• AI & Data Privacy Regulations differ across countries • Content Licensing Rules	• Full compliance to regulations & transparency • Partner with news providers (including legal binding contract)
Economic	• Minimum consumer purchase power in developing countries	• Freemium business model, earn revenue from data selling and advertisement.
Sociocultural	• Limitation of English in non-english speaking countries • Trust & misinformation	• Localization to local language (in the far future) • Verified sources and content/KOLs curation
Technological	• AI model competition • Hallucinations (AI Bias)	• Continuous improvement with rolling release • AI engine trainingHuman verifications
Ecological	• AI energy consumption	• Find out solution to sustainable AI practices (e.g. Carbon neutral cloud providers)
Legal	• Copyright risks • AI ethics & liability	• Secure content licensing deals • Create internal AI ethics policies to avoid bias, ensure transparency and protect data

EXTERNAL ANALYSIS

Internal Analysis - Our Connections and Access

1

Connections to Mentors

- Business Innovation Generator Program
- SMU MBA Alumni and Lecturers

2

Access to KOLs and Users

- SMU Lecturers and Students
- Existing Professional Networks

3

Partnerships with Other Start-Ups

- Other startups within the BIG Program
- Previous startups as part of the BIG Program