State University of Trade and Economics
Department of Tourism and Management of Creative Industries

QUALIFYING PAPER
on the topic:

«PROJECT OF THE COMPETITIVENESS MANAGEMENT SYSTEM OF THE ENTERPRISE »

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ABSTRACT

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The qualification paper examines the design of an enterprise competitiveness management system using the case of Meest China on the African logistics market. The study analyses theoretical foundations, evaluates the company's current competitive position, and identifies key operational, digital, and partner-related constraints. A project-based model is developed to improve competitiveness through upgraded digital onboarding, pricing transparency, partner governance, tracking standardisation, and support capacity.

Keywords: competitiveness management, logistics, Meest China, African market, project management, service quality.

АНОТАЦІЯ

Дударєв Р.С. Проєктування системи управління конкурентоспроможністю підприємства. Рукопис.

Кваліфікаційна робота за спеціальністю 073 «Менеджмент», освітньою програмою «Проджект менеджмент». Державний торговельно-економічний університет, Київ, 2025.

Кваліфікаційна робота присвячена проєктуванню системи управління конкурентоспроможністю підприємства на прикладі Meest China на ринку логістичних послуг Африки. Досліджено теоретичні основи, оцінено поточний рівень конкурентоспроможності та визначено ключові проблеми в операціях, цифрових сервісах і взаємодії з партнерами. Розроблено проєктну модель підвищення конкурентоспроможності через модернізацію онбордингу, прозорість тарифів, управління партнерами, стандартизацію трекінгу та зміцнення підтримки клієнтів.

Ключові слова: управління конкурентоспроможністю, логістика, Meest China, ринок Африки, проєктний менеджмент, якість сервісу.

State University of Trade and Economics

Faculty of technologies and business

Department of Tourism and Management of Creative Industries

Educational Degree "Master"

Specialty 073 "Management"

Educational program "Project Management"

Approved by

Head of department

_____Tetiana Tkachenko

"____" _____ 2025

Task

for the qualifying paper

Dudariev Roman Serhiyovych

1. Topic of a qualification paper:

Project of the competitiveness management system of the enterprise

Approved by the Order of SUTE of October 14, 2024 № 3423

2. Term of submitting by a student his/her terminated paper: 21.11.2025

3. Initial data of the qualifying paper:

Purpose of the paper: to design and propose an effective enterprise competitiveness management system for Meest China to strengthen its position on the African logistics market.

The object: the competitiveness management system of Meest China as an international logistics enterprise.

The subject: methods, tools, and processes of managing and improving the competitiveness of Meest China on the African market of logistics services.

4. Contents of a qualifying paper (list of all the sections and subsections)

5. Time schedule of the paper

No.	Stages of the final qualifying paper	Terms of the final qualifying paper	
		de jure	de facto
1.	Choosing and approval of the qualifying paper topic	02.09.2024-14.10.2024	14.10.2024
2.	Preparation and approval of task for the qualifying paper	15.10.2024-15.11.2024	15.11.2024
3.	Writing and pre defence of the 1st section of the qualifying paper	16.11.2024-11.04.2025	16.11.2024-11.04.2025
4.	Writing and preparation of scientific article	by 02.05.2025	02.05.2025
5.	Writing and pre defence of the 2nd section of the qualifying paper	03.05.2025-05.09.2025	03.05.2025-05.09.2025
6.	Writing and pre defence of the 3rd section of the qualifying paper	06.09.2025-07.11.2025	06.09.2025-07.11.2025
7.	Preparation of the qualifying paper (title, content, introduction, references, appendices), presentation of master diploma paper on the department and pre defence in the committee, additional processing, getting a review form a teacher in a related department	08.11.2025-14.11.2025	08.11.2025-14.11.2025
8.	Additional processing, printing, preparation of material to qualifying paper defence	15.11.2025-20.11.2025	15.11.2025-20.11.2025
9.	Presentation of the qualifying paper on the department and on the deanery, receiving of referrals for external peer review	by 21.11.2025	21.11.2025
10.	Defence of the qualifying paper in the Examination Board	According to the schedule	15.12.2025

6. Date of receiving the task "15" November 2024

7. Scientific adviser of the research _____ Sergiy Kravtsov
(surname, initials, signature)

8. Manager of the educational program _____ Nataliia Roskladka
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9. The task received by the student _____ Roman Dudariev
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10. Resume of a scientific adviser of a qualifying paper:

Student Dudariev R. completed qualifying paper in defined term according to the approved schedule. In terms of content, structure and design, the paper meets all the requirements. The qualifying paper consists of an introduction, parts, conclusions and proposals, references and appendices.

The paper considers logistics enterprise competitiveness management systems. Analysis of the current competitiveness management system of TM "Meest China" was made. Based on the results of analytical studies conducted by the student, competitiveness management improvement model is proposed.

A qualifying paper can be admitted to defence in the Examination Board and deserves a positive estimation. The qualifying paper is independently authored paper completed in accordance with the set goal and defined tasks. The qualifying paper has been checked for plagiarism. Identified deficiencies have been eliminated. Electronic version of the qualifying paper was received for transfer to the SUTE repository.

Scientific adviser of a qualifying paper _____ Sergiy Kravtsov
(signature, date)

Predefense of the qualifying paper _____
(name, signature, date)

11. Resume about a qualifying paper research:

A qualifying paper of student Roman Dudariev can be admitted to defence in the Examination Board.

Manager of the educational program _____Nataliia Roskladka

Head of the Department _____ Tetiana Tkachenko

«____» _____ 2025

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

In today's global economy, enterprise competitiveness determines market success and long-term sustainability. For logistics companies, which operate in fast-changing international environments, effective competitiveness management is essential for growth and stability.

The logistics sector plays a vital role in connecting global production and consumption. Rapid digitalization, new technologies, and rising customer expectations require companies to constantly adapt. Therefore, developing a structured competitiveness management system is a key condition for maintaining efficiency and strategic advantage.

The topic is especially relevant for Meest China, an international logistics provider expanding its operations toward African countries. This direction offers strong potential but also complex challenges, including unstable infrastructure, diverse regulations, and high competition. Designing an effective management system for competitiveness in such a market is both a practical need and a scientific problem that this research aims to address.

Theoretical foundations of competitiveness were developed by M. Porter, P. Drucker, and H. Mintzberg, who defined competitive advantage and strategic positioning. Later research introduced dynamic capabilities (Teece, Pisano, Shuen) and value-based management.

In logistics studies, Bowersox, Closs, and Christopher emphasized service quality, integration, and flexibility as key competitive factors. [2,8] **Modern research** highlights innovation, sustainability, and digital transformation [3,7,13]. However, competitiveness management in logistics companies operating in developing regions, especially Africa, remains insufficiently explored. This work fills that gap through a focused study of Meest China.

The purpose of this work is to design and propose an effective enterprise competitiveness management system for Meest China to strengthen its position on the African logistics market.

To achieve this purpose, the following tasks were defined:

1. Study theoretical foundations of competitiveness management in logistics.
2. Analyze the current competitiveness management system of Meest China and its performance in the African direction.
3. Identify main factors affecting competitiveness.
4. Develop a model and recommendations to improve competitiveness management.

The object of research is the competitiveness management system of Meest China as an international logistics enterprise.

The subject of research methods, tools, and processes of managing and improving the competitiveness of Meest China on the African market of logistics services.

The study applies theoretical, analytical, and empirical **research methods**, including analysis and synthesis, SWOT and PEST analyses, benchmarking, economic and statistical evaluation, and modeling. These methods ensured a consistent connection between theoretical study, practical assessment, and project recommendations.

The scientific novelty lies in the development of a comprehensive model of competitiveness management for logistics enterprises operating in emerging markets.

Key contributions include:

1. Adaptation of competitiveness management principles to African logistics conditions;
2. A refined framework for evaluating logistics competitiveness;
3. A project-based model for strengthening Meest China's market position through innovation and efficiency.

The proposed system and recommendations can be used by Meest China to improve decision-making, increase efficiency, and enhance market performance. Other logistics enterprises may also apply these findings to similar international operations.

The results of the work are **approbated** in the article "Designing an enterprise competitiveness management system" by authorship of Dudariev Roman, published in 2025 collection of scientific articles of applicants of the second (master's) level of higher education in the specialty 073 "Management", educational program "Project

management” by SUTE, Faculty of Technologies and Business, Department of Tourism and Management of Creative Industries.

Academic integrity and the use of artificial intelligence. During the preparation of the qualification work, the author used artificial intelligence tools solely as an auxiliary means for analytical, editorial, and information search support. All conceptual decisions, scientific conclusions, data interpretations, and final wording of the text are the result of the author's independent work. Artificial intelligence was not used to generate scientific results, fabricate data, or create content that could distort the academic integrity of the work. The author bears full responsibility for the originality, accuracy, and correctness of the information presented.

The qualification work consists of following **structural elements**: a list of abbreviations, an introduction, three sections, conclusions and proposals, a list of references, and appendices. The main text includes 16 tables, 14 figures, and 56 sources, with a total volume of 68 pages.

SECTION 1
THEORETICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS OF LOGISTICS ENTERPRISE COMPETITIVENESS MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

1.1. Concept and essence of enterprise competitiveness in the logistics sector

Enterprise competitiveness refers to the sustained ability of a company to maintain and improve its market position relative to rivals. In the logistics sector, this competitiveness is not solely about minimizing costs; it also involves delivering consistent, reliable, and flexible services across complex, often global, supply chains. For a logistics firm, competitiveness means having a strong value proposition for clients – such as fast delivery, high visibility, good tracking, and effective handling of customs and cross-border issues – while also sustaining operational strength in warehousing, transport planning, route optimization, and inventory management [1,2].

Importantly, the network capability of a logistics company plays a crucial role. A well-connected firm with strong partnerships in various countries, distribution hubs in strategic locations, and deep local knowledge has a significant advantage [8]. Moreover, adaptability is a key component: the firm’s ability to respond rapidly to disruptions (for example, port delays, regulatory changes, or demand shocks) is often the difference between success and failure in international logistics [6,7].

Because logistics is at the heart of international trade, an efficient logistics company can significantly lower the total cost of ownership for its customers. By optimizing transport routes, reducing lead times, and avoiding bottlenecks, such a company not only competes on price but also adds value through reliability and predictability [1,2]. For global operations, particularly in emerging markets, this becomes a strategic asset: logistics firms with strong competitive capabilities can open up new markets, offer differentiated services, and build long-term trust with customers and partners.

To operationalize the concept of competitiveness, logistics companies establish key performance indicators (KPIs) covering dimensions like speed, cost, quality, visibility, flexibility, and network strength. These KPIs are not just abstract measures:

they guide the design of strategies, investment decisions, and continuous improvement efforts. Table 1.1 (below) illustrates commonly used indicators that reflect a logistics firm's competitive strength.

Table 1.1

Typical performance indicators in Logistics industry

Dimension	Typical KPI	Why it matters
Speed & reliability	% on-time deliveries, avg transit time	Influences customer satisfaction and reduces inventory cost.
Cost efficiency	Cost per shipment / per ton-km	Determines price competitiveness and margin potential.
Quality & accuracy	Order accuracy %, claims per 10 k shipments	Minimizes rework, returns, and protects reputation.
Visibility & info	% shipments with real-time tracking	Enables proactive management and smoother customer interaction.
Flexibility	% expedited orders fulfilled	Measures responsiveness to demand fluctuations.
Network strength	Number of reliable partners/routes	Broad and resilient network opens more market opportunities.

Source: example compiled by author

These indicators largely draw from empirical logistics research and performance-management best practices.

Modern competitiveness frameworks consider logistics firms as adaptive systems influenced by market turbulence, technological disruption and global trade risks. Supply chain resilience – the capability to anticipate, absorb and recover from disruptions – is now viewed as a foundational element of enterprise competitiveness [6]. Resilience strengthens reliability, reduces volatility in service delivery, and enhances the customer value proposition, particularly in markets characterized by infrastructural challenges or regulatory instability.

In addition, responsiveness has emerged as a critical capability. Various researches argue that firms able to respond faster to customer signals and environmental shifts outperform competitors through reduced cycle times and improved flexibility [11]. Responsiveness also becomes a basis for differentiation in cross-border logistics, where uncertainty about customs, transit times and last-mile operations is high.

Digital transformation has altered the mechanics of competitiveness by enabling real-time control, predictive analytics and customer-centric decision making. Empirical research on Chinese logistics enterprises shows that digital maturity – measured through automation, tracking integration, and data-driven planning – correlates strongly with higher market competitiveness and financial performance [7]. Broader IT industry trends confirm that organizations implementing scalable digital frameworks gain faster adaptation cycles and reduced process costs [18].

For logistics providers, digitalization reinforces three layers of competitiveness, described in table 1.2:

Table 1.2

Areas of benefits and reinforcements of competitiveness by implementing digitalization

Service quality enhancement
Tracking accuracy, onboarding usability, self-service tools and automated support reduce friction and increase perceived reliability [4,5,9].
Operational visibility
Data streaming from TMS/WMS systems supports predictive decision-making and performance management [7, 53].
Network integration
Digital standards enable seamless communication with partners, carriers and customs brokers [52; 53].

Source: compiled by author

These factors form the technological foundation of a modern competitiveness management system.

Thus, the essence of competitiveness in logistics is multi-dimensional. It demands not just operational excellence but also strategic foresight, strong networks, and the capacity to adapt. A logistics company that builds and sustains these capabilities will be well-positioned to compete globally, including in challenging markets.

1.2. Methodological approaches to competitiveness management

Designing a robust Competitiveness Management System (CMS) in a logistics enterprise involves more than tracking performance metrics. It requires a structured, integrated framework that aligns strategy, operations, measurement, risk management, and continuous learning. The foundation often rests on strategic analysis: firms typically use tools such as Porter's Five Forces, value-chain analysis, and PEST (Political, Economic, Social, Technological) scanning to understand their competitive landscape. These tools help decide whether to compete through cost leadership, differentiation, specialized service, or regional focus [3]. Figure 1.1 outlines the evolution of competitiveness models, demonstrating a shift from static resource analysis to dynamic, digitally supported, and resilience-oriented frameworks. This historical perspective underscores why logistics companies must integrate digital and operational innovation to remain competitive today (fig. 1.1).

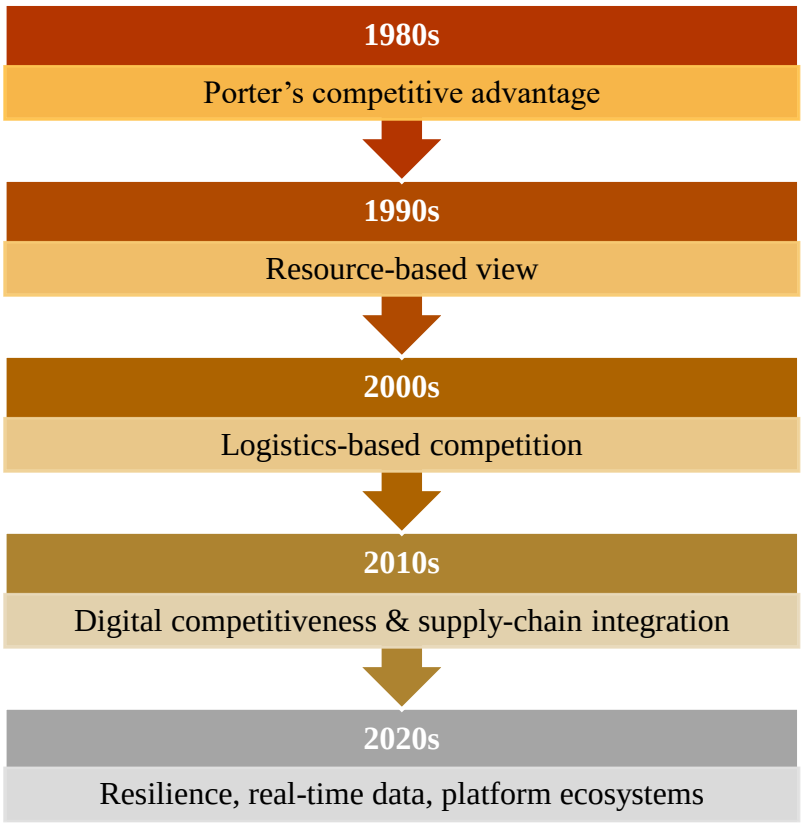

Fig. 1.1. Timeline of evolution of competitiveness models

Source: constructed by author

Once the strategic direction is defined, performance measurement becomes a central mechanism in the CMS. The firm defines KPIs (see Table 1), sets targets, and benchmarks itself against industry standards or best-in-class competitors. This benchmarking allows identification of gaps – areas where the company underperforms – and provides a basis for prioritizing improvement initiatives. Analytical techniques such as SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) complement benchmarking by clarifying internal and external factors that affect competitiveness [4].

Addressing operational efficiency is another critical piece. Methodologies like Lean, Kaizen, and Six Sigma are widely used in logistics to remove waste, shorten lead times, and improve process reliability. For example, route optimization, consolidated shipments, and rearranged warehouse layouts help reduce cost and increase throughput [12]. These practices are not one-off efforts but part of a continuous-improvement loop embedded in the CMS.

Capability development is equally important. Investing in digital technologies – such as Transportation Management Systems (TMS), Warehouse Management Systems (WMS), real-time tracking (IoT), and general automation – enables the company to scale and adapt more easily. Equally, human capacity is developed via training, cross-functional teams, and innovation management processes that encourage new service ideas or process improvements [6].

Risk and resilience management are growingly vital methodological pillars. As supply chains become globally dispersed and more volatile, a CMS must explicitly incorporate scenario planning, contingency strategies, and recovery mechanisms. Techniques such as multi-sourcing, alternate routing, and buffer strategies help firms absorb shocks. Scenario planning (often using digital twins) allows management to model disruptions (e.g., port closures, regulatory changes) and test response strategies ahead of time [6,7].

Finally, a strong CMS is customer-centric. It must design service tiers (such as standard, premium, or custom), establish clear service-level agreements (SLAs), and collect systematic feedback. Customer segmentation helps the firm understand which client groups value speed, visibility, or cost most, enabling tailored solutions aligned

with strategic priorities [10,11]. Feedback loops – where customer input influences KPI adjustments and process redesign – ensure that the CMS is not only internally consistent but also market responsive.

Putting it all together, a typical CMS workflow might be visualized (fig. 1.2).

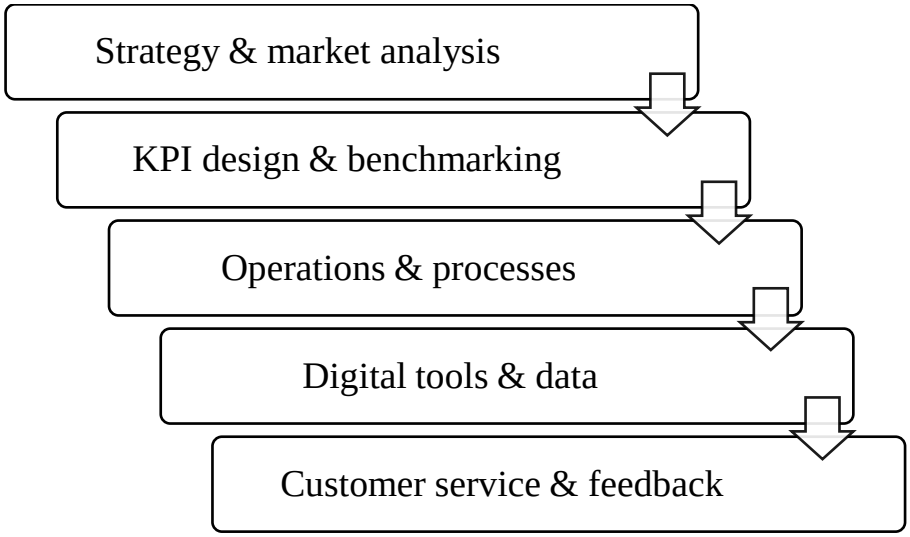

Fig. 1.2. Workflow for a logistics competitiveness management system
Source: Adapted from standard frameworks of supply chain resilience and CMS design as discussed in recent logistics studies [3,4,7].

This workflow highlights how strategic focus, measurement, operations, technology, and customer service interact in a CMS, while continuous improvement and resilience bridge all layers.

Innovation in logistics service design – including new delivery models, value-added services, and eco-efficient processes – enhances long-term competitiveness by maintaining relevance in dynamic markets [14]. Green logistics innovation is particularly emphasized as a strategic differentiator, with firms integrating sustainable packaging, carbon-efficient delivery routes and cleaner technologies achieving both cost benefits and reputational gains [13].

Furthermore, lean logistics principles remain relevant for eliminating non-value-added operations and minimizing waste across the extended supply chain [12]. While originally developed for manufacturing contexts, lean thinking now supports logistics

competitiveness by increasing reliability and reducing resource consumption.

A significant part of a logistics enterprise's competitiveness now stems from its broader partner ecosystem. Studies show that third-party logistics competence, partner coordination and contractual clarity strongly influence service quality, customer satisfaction and competitive outcomes [8]. Effective partner governance includes SLA enforcement, performance scorecarding and transparent communication, transforming the supply chain from a linear sequence of actors into a coordinated competitive network [15,16].

Antai's theory of "supply chain vs. supply chain competition" further explains that enterprises no longer compete individually; rather, networks compete as strategic units [17]. Thus, managing partner relationships becomes strategically indispensable.

Contemporary competitiveness management systems combine strategic planning, operational control, digital tools, human capital development and stakeholder collaboration into a unified governance structure. These systems rely on continuous performance measurement using logistics KPIs (delivery reliability, speed, cost, tracking performance, customer satisfaction), financial indicators (margin stability, acquisition cost, cost per shipment) and ecosystem KPIs (partner SLA compliance, digital uptime, customs efficiency) [53,54].

Moreover, organizations increasingly adopt project-based improvement methodologies and structured frameworks – such as data-driven dashboards, RTM-based accountability systems, and risk-informed decision-making models – to dynamically steer competitiveness initiatives [43,45,47,48].

In summary, competitiveness management in logistics is evolving into a specialized discipline integrating theory and practice from logistics engineering, digital transformation, network governance and strategic management. These expanded theoretical foundations create the conceptual basis for the practical assessment and improvement model applied to Meest China in subsequent sections.

1.3. The role of innovation, quality, and customer service in competitive advantage

Innovation, quality, and customer service form the three interconnected pillars of competitive advantage in logistics. Innovation in this context spans both technological innovation (such as automation, IoT, AI, tracking) and business-model innovation (shared platforms, value-added services). The drive towards digital transformation has been shown to improve visibility, reduce manual error, and enable faster and more cost-effective logistics operations [7,9]. Practical examples include implementing TMS/WMS with optimization engines, real-time shipment tracking dashboards, dynamic route and price optimization, and robotic automation in sorting and warehousing. Furthermore, green logistics solutions that reduce fuel use and emissions are increasingly influencing customer and regulatory expectations [13].

Quality, or Logistics Service Quality (LSQ), is critical. In the logistics context, LSQ comprises operational quality (timeliness, condition on arrival), process quality (accuracy of information, efficiency of customs handling), and relational quality (communication, responsiveness). Empirical research shows that higher LSQ drives customer satisfaction and loyalty, lowers claims and returns, and strengthens a provider's competitive position [4,10,11]. Key dimensions often cited include timeliness & reliability, accuracy & condition, information timeliness, and responsiveness.

Customer service links the technical and operational performance of logistics with the business outcome of customer retention and growth. Strong customer service practices include proactive communication, clearly defined service-level agreements (SLAs), easy claims resolution, and flexible, tailored solutions. In recent years, customer service in logistics has become more personal and information-rich, with e-commerce pressures increasing expectations. Research indicates that personalization and high-quality information flow are strong differentiators in both B2B and B2C logistics contexts [9,11].

These three elements – innovation, quality, and customer service – operate in

concert. For example, a logistics firm's investment in real-time tracking (innovation) improves information accuracy (quality), which enhances customer satisfaction (service), thereby contributing to customer loyalty and repeat business. At the same time, improvements in quality free resources for further innovation and allow premium pricing through differentiated service.

So, The attainment of a sustainable competitive advantage (SCA) is the central objective of corporate strategy, differentiating market leaders from mere competitors. This advantage is fundamentally built upon three interdependent strategic pillars: Innovation, Quality, and Customer Service.

Innovation serves as the primary engine for creating unique value propositions. It can manifest in product design, process efficiency, or business model configuration. Product innovation, focused on developing novel goods or features, allows a firm to capture temporary monopolistic profits before imitation occurs. Process innovation, by optimizing internal operations, dramatically lowers production costs, creating a cost leadership advantage that is often difficult for rivals to replicate quickly due to the necessity of structural overhaul. Thus, a robust innovation pipeline is crucial for continuously shifting the industry frontier and establishing dynamic SCA.

Quality acts as a crucial barrier to entry and a foundation for brand equity. Defined as conformance to standards and fitness for use, quality assurance minimizes waste and rework (reducing cost) while simultaneously increasing customer satisfaction and loyalty. High quality, particularly when perceived as superior and consistent, justifies premium pricing and fosters a strong brand reputation. This results in reduced price elasticity of demand and forms a powerful, non-imitable advantage based on trust and reliability.

Finally, Customer Service translates a transactional relationship into a relational one. Superior service, encompassing responsiveness, personalization, and post-sale support, enhances the total customer experience. This personalized approach builds significant switching costs, making it economically and psychologically harder for customers to defect to competitors. Exceptional service acts as a powerful differentiator in markets where products are quickly commoditized, creating emotional loyalty and

leveraging word-of-mouth marketing, which is often the most cost-effective form of promotion.

In conclusion, SCA is not derived from isolating a single factor, but from the synergistic interplay of these three pillars. Innovation provides the future market, quality anchors the current customer base, and service maximizes the lifetime value of those customers, collectively creating a multi-faceted and durable market position.

Conclusions to section 1

In summary, Part 1 establishes that competitiveness in logistics is a holistic concept: it encompasses cost, speed, reliability, network strength, information capability, and adaptability. Methodologically, building and maintaining competitiveness requires a management system that integrates strategic planning, measurement, process management, digital capability, risk management and customer-centric service. The roles of innovation, service quality and customer service are central, not just supportive. These theoretical and methodological foundations set the stage for the applied research on Meest China in the African logistics market, which is the focus of Part 2.

SECTION 2
RESEARCH AND ANALYTICAL ASSESSMENT OF THE COMPETITIVENESS MANAGEMENT SYSTEM OF TM "MEEST CHINA" ON AFRICAN MARKET OF LOGISTIC SERVICES

2.1. Management characteristics of TM "Meest China" and its market position

TM "Meest China" is part of the Meest group, a logistics and postal holding with roots in transnational parcel delivery and a presence in many countries. The Meest brand began as a postal network and grew into a wider international logistics provider.
The Meest Group, originating as a key player in the Ukrainian diaspora remittance and parcel delivery market, has successfully evolved into a complex, diversified international logistics holding. Its managerial profile is characterized by a hybrid operational model that leverages both traditional freight forwarding and advanced e-commerce enablement services, positioning the company as a crucial bridge between Western economies and Eastern European consumer markets. Meest's core competitive advantage lies in its specialized expertise in cross-border logistics, particularly the last-mile delivery and customs clearance for C2C and B2C shipments in highly complex regulatory environments. The management structure is strategically decentralized to manage disparate geographical operations (North America, Western Europe, and Eastern Europe), yet centrally controlled regarding digital integration. This dual focus supports both high-volume e-commerce flow (Meest China, Meest America) and traditional postal services. Operationally, the company demonstrates high capital intensity in physical infrastructure (warehouses, consolidation centers) complemented by significant investment in digital platforms. The managerial challenge involves the vertical integration of digital services, such as proprietary IT systems for parcel tracking, customs documentation, and dedicated mobile applications, to streamline the client experience. The successful integration of Meest into global e-commerce platforms (e.g., eBay, Amazon) reflects an effective shift from a purely logistical provider to a

technology-enabled commerce facilitator. The managerial strategy is centered on diversification across service lines: Meest Express (domestic courier services), Meest Post (postal automation via parcel lockers), and Meest Cargo (B2B freight). This strategy mitigates sector-specific risks. However, key managerial challenges persist: ensuring service quality standardization across multiple jurisdictions, navigating geopolitical and customs complexity, and maintaining operational agility against global competitors like DHL and UPS. Effective management requires strong governance in regulatory compliance and sustained investment in automation to achieve scalable efficiency.

The Meest Group operates within a highly competitive, capital-intensive, and globally fragmented logistics market. The company's economic model is fundamentally structured around cross-border parcel delivery, acting as an essential enabler for global e-commerce, specifically linking sellers in developed markets (e.g., North America, China, and Europe) with consumers in Eastern Europe, particularly Ukraine.

Meest's revenue stream is primarily derived from two major segments: E-commerce Logistics (B2C and C2C), which includes last-mile delivery, full-cycle tracking, and parcel consolidation services; and Traditional Freight and Money Remittance Services (B2B and Financial Services). The B2C e-commerce segment, driven by the rapid digital adoption in emerging markets, represents the most significant growth vector. Pricing strategies are complex, balancing competitive global shipping rates with the necessity to cover high final-mile delivery costs and variable customs brokerage fees inherent in the region.

The economic efficiency of Meest is heavily dependent on optimizing its cost structure, which is dominated by three main components: transportation Costs (international air and road freight), Infrastructure Costs (operating and maintaining large-scale sorting and consolidation hubs, particularly those strategically located near major transit zones, e.g., Poland), and Labor Costs (couriers, warehouse staff, and IT personnel).

Achieving economies of scale through increased parcel density and leveraging proprietary IT solutions for automated customs processing are critical mechanisms for

lowering the unit cost per shipment.

Sustained economic growth for Meest is predicated upon strategic capital investment in network expansion and digital transformation. Key investments include expanding the network of parcel lockers (Meest Post) to reduce costly human last-mile delivery, and enhancing proprietary software platforms to improve operational throughput and reduce processing errors. The company's long-term economic viability relies on its ability to maintain a superior marginal cost profile relative to new entrants, while continuously adapting to macroeconomic volatility, including foreign exchange fluctuations and global fuel price variations that directly impact core input costs. The ability to successfully monetize market penetration and scale across multiple consumer touchpoints remains the central economic imperative.

Meest China operates as the group's Asia hub specializing in collecting and forwarding parcels from Chinese marketplaces to recipients worldwide. Its headquarters for Meest China is located in Kyiv and the company presents itself as providing end-to-end delivery services from China to a range of destinations including Europe, post-Soviet countries, and selected African countries such as South Africa and Nigeria. Corporate registry information from public Ukrainian open-data portals indicates that Meest Group's legal headquarters in Ukraine are registered under the unified state register for enterprises (ЄДРПОУ) as entities belonging to the postal-logistics sector, with Meest Express and Meest Group International operating as key legal bodies within the holding structure [37]. The corporate web pages outline the firm's network strategy, its warehouses, and the partnerships used to provide last-mile coverage in multiple markets [19,26].

From a legal organizational standpoint, Meest China functions as a foreign representative office with operational centers in China (primarily Shenzhen and Guangzhou), all coordinated from Kyiv. The representative office model enables the company to work through a combination of in-house staff in China – responsible for warehouse operations, parcel inspection, consolidation, and data management – and third-party providers, including last-mile carriers, customs brokers, and airline/sea freight partners [27,34]. The internal staff structure is described in the fig. 2.1.

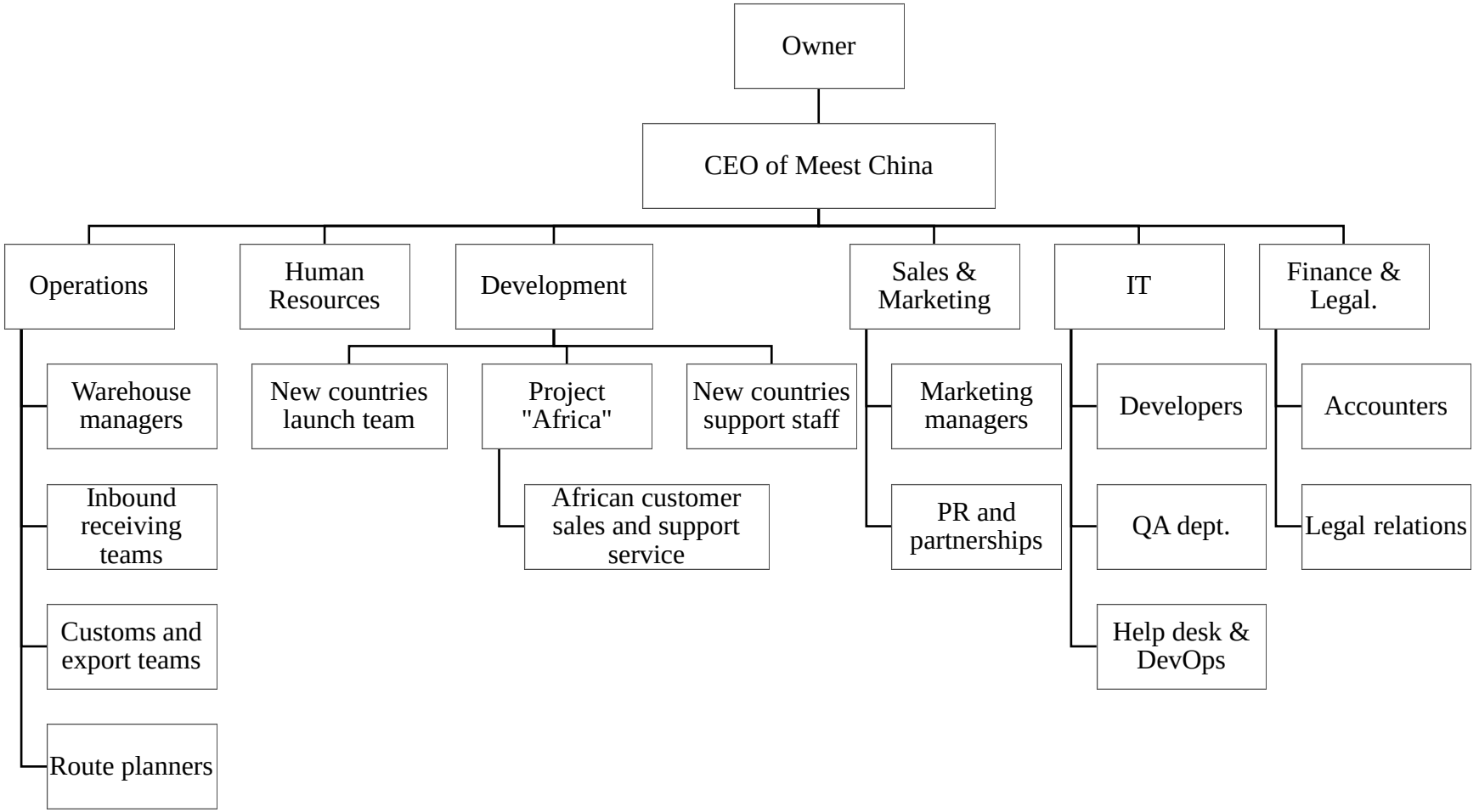

Fig 2.1. Meest China's organizational hierarchy

Source: Meest China's organizational structure [19,25,32]

At the top of the structure is the CEO of Meest China, who reports to Meest Group executive management and owners, and is responsible for the overall performance of the delivery from China hub, including compliance and strategic partnerships [25, 26].

The Operations function as the backbone of the hub. Operations own the inbound consolidation flow, quality control, packaging and handover to carriers (air or sea) and to local partners for last mile. Warehouse and export processes are typically governed by SOPs and monitored by operations KPIs such as throughput, dwell time, and accuracy [19, 33].

Sales & Marketing covers B2C/B2B sales, promotional campaigns, referral programs, and marketplace partnerships. This team plans seasonal campaigns (e.g., Christmas, back-to-school) and produces educational webinars and social content.

IT manages the website, mobile apps, shipping calculator, tracking integrations (including third-party trackers), and analytics. This team is responsible for UX/UI, API integrations with marketplaces and partners, and the app's onboarding flows. Public app pages and the shipping calculator indicate active product development, but UX issues reported publicly suggest a need for stronger user-centered testing and localization for African novices [20,21].

Human Resources focuses on recruitment, training (especially for multilingual support roles), workforce planning for peak seasons (temporary agents/outsourcing), and internal knowledge management.

Finance & Legal manages pricing policy, discount matrices and invoicing, as well as customs compliance and local legal registration considerations. The dynamic pricing (discount levels, daily rates) and complex invoicing that customers experience is administered through finance and commercial coordination [21,29].

Development department carries out the processes of launching Meest China services in new countries, such as South Africa and Nigeria. This department combines skills and responsibilities from all aforementioned divisions of the company for each country. Every country, that this department works on, is equipped with individual staff members for more localized customer support, last mile logistics focus and specialized

PR and marketing campaigns.

Process organization inside Meest China aligns with project-management logic: each shipment follows a structured pipeline (fig. 2.2).

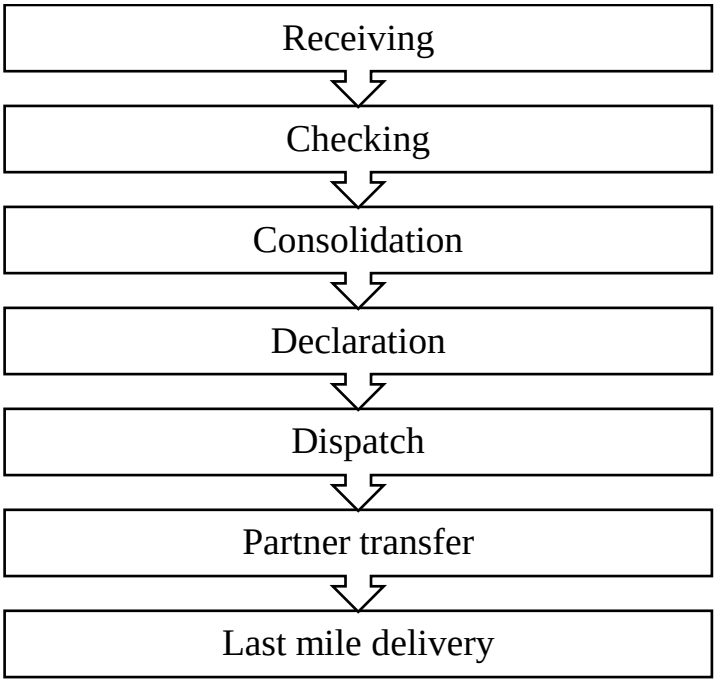

Fig. 2.2. Process organization inside Meest China

Source: by author

Coordination with partners is executed through SLA-based agreements (service-level agreements) that prescribe delivery expectations, reporting, and claims procedures [40]. However, review sources indicate variability in partner discipline, especially in emerging African markets where infrastructure quality varies considerably [30,31].

Meest China's market position in Africa can be described as developing but promising. The company stands between two competitive groups:

1. global integrators such as DHL, FedEx, Aramex – competing on speed, reliability, and brand trust;
2. regional freight forwarders competing on price and payment convenience.

Meest China positions itself in a hybrid niche: specialized China-origin consolidation logistics, offering significantly lower prices for large-volume or multi-item shipments and maintaining a fast-growing customer base of small traders and

online shoppers. The firm emphasizes its capacity to consolidate parcels from multiple sellers, to provide customs support where needed [25,33,26]. This niche is attractive to African customers seeking affordable access to Taobao, Pinduoduo, 1688, and other Chinese marketplaces.

Public information from corporate pages and app stores shows that Meest China has invested in customer-facing digital tools: a website with calculators and an app available on Google Play and Apple App Store, through which clients can register, request shipments, and track parcels [20,22]. The company also maintains active social media accounts, notably on Instagram and Facebook, which are used for seasonal marketing and client education in targeted markets, including campaigns timed for peaks such as Christmas and school periods [23,24]. At the same time, review platforms and forums indicate a mixed reputation: while some customers praise speed and helpful staff, others report problematic experiences with delivery delays, customer support response times, and claim handling – a variability that has direct implications for competitiveness on price and trust in new markets [30,31].

Regionally, Meest China’s African operations appear to be in an expansion and consolidation stage. Dedicated country pages (for example the South Africa portal) and a specific regional Facebook presence demonstrate a market entry strategy that leans on localized marketing and the use of local partner networks for last-mile fulfillment. At the same time, the company’s rate calculators and transparent price lists on Meest group pages reveal a two-tiered approach to pricing: published price bands for shipping methods provide a baseline, while the actual customer price is influenced by discount levels, promotions (such as referral codes), and the chosen level of service (air express vs consolidated sea). This flexible pricing model suits cross-border buyers who vary in urgency and price sensitivity, but it can also create confusion for first-time users who do not have strong digital literacy or prior experience with consolidated logistics services.

2.2. Analysis of the current competitiveness management system

Meest China's competitiveness management system, as can be reconstructed from public materials, user reviews, app functionality, and the company's visible processes, pay most attention to several interacting elements (fig. 2.3).

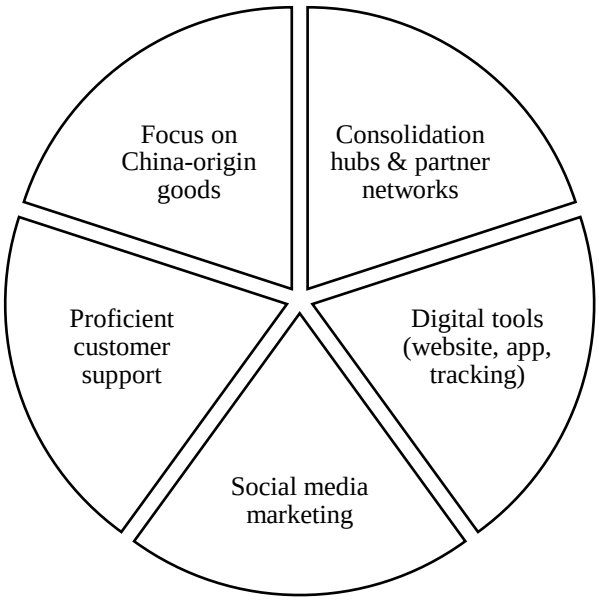

Fig. 2.3. Focus areas of current Meest China competitiveness management system

Source: by author

Each of these elements aligns with logistics management theory described in Part 1 and contributes to general competitiveness. The current CMS provides a functional base – Meest China is operational, delivering services, serving customers, and attracting some recurring business.

Table 2.1

Current implementation and results of present CMS aspects

CMS aspect	Current implementation	Current results
Digital tools & UX (website + app + calculator + tracking)	Has a web portal, shipping-cost calculator, mobile apps (Android & iOS), tracking interface. Many functions available online.	Enables users request shipments online. On-time shipments via air work, but sea and last-mile deliveries show variability.

Continuation of table 2.1

CMS aspect	Current implementation	Current results
Customer support & human-centered service	Staff with good English and experience, capable of explaining options (consolidation, customs, sea vs air, etc.), handles escalations, responds to support tickets. Internal support practice as per prior experience.	Where customers get live support and guidance – positive feedback, successful deliveries even for first-time users. Builds trust and compensates for digital complexity.
Pricing & tariff structure	Published base shipping rate bands, dynamic discounts, promotional codes (e.g. referrals), flexible service-level offerings (economy air, consolidated sea, express)	Competitive base cost for budget-sensitive customers. Some customers attracted by apparent savings. But pricing complexity sometimes results in confusion, customers report unexpected charges or unclear final invoices.
Partner / network coverage (hubs, third-party partners for last-mile, warehouses)	Consolidation hubs in China, partner network for last-mile in African target markets; regional pages for countries (e.g. South Africa), network expansion strategy	Enables broad reach and ability to serve multiple African destinations. The business model works for many routes. Variability in partner performance causes inconsistent delivery reliability.
Marketing, Referral & Customer Acquisition	Active social media (Instagram, Facebook), webinars, referral promo codes, seasonal campaigns (e.g. holidays)	Generates demand spikes, attracts new customers and stimulates growth. The referral program and marketing campaigns bring new users. However, high new-user influx sometimes strains support capacity and exposes UX/processing weaknesses.
Quality control, data & monitoring	Basic internal oversight: support staff handle escalations; some monitoring of partner reliability via feedback; limited public KPIs; no formal published performance dashboard	Good service and customer satisfaction. Absence of a formalized CMS with standardized KPIs leads to inconsistent processes, unpredictable partner outcomes, and uneven user experience across markets.
Customer support & human-centered service	Staff with good English and experience, capable of explaining options (consolidation, customs, sea vs air, etc.), handles escalations, responds to support tickets. Internal support practice as per prior experience.	Where customers get live support and guidance – positive feedback, successful deliveries even for first-time users. Builds trust and compensates for digital complexity. But response speed varies, especially during peaks.

Source: compiled by author

The table 2.1 gives us a general insight of how the current CMS is organized, which results, strengths and weaknesses it possesses.

Specific staff members contribute and carry out the implementation of these results, ways of management, correction and monitoring. How exactly is it done, is described in the table below (table. 2.2).

Table 2.2

Meest China staff and their responsibilities in competitiveness insurance

Personnel	Responsibilities
Operations managers	Monitor metrics from TMS/WMS dashboards and convene daily operations calls during peaks [26,33];
Regional management	Holds strategic responsibility: defining market approach, approving tariff bands, and steering resource allocation for African direction [19,26];
Partnerships managers	Responsible for partner selection, onboarding, SLA negotiation and performance scorecards [33];
Customer support staff	Ensures service quality: handling escalations, monitoring response times, quality of replies, and training agents to guide novice customers;
IT department	Manages the website/app and tracking integrations; responsible for uptime, accuracy of tracking events, and implementing onboarding features;
Finance & Legal staff	Monitors pricing margins, discount budget, and cash flows, as well as monitors customs performance and documentation accuracy, reducing clearance delays and fines that otherwise reduce competitiveness. Finance reconciles applied discounts/promotions to maintain profitability per route/service type [29];
Top management (CEO, shareholders, the owner)	Accountable for every major company decision and milestone, reflecting their strategic oversight role.

Source: compiled by author

Each staff subordinate and external partner is assigned specific KPIs to maintain, as described in the table 2.2.

Monitoring of these elements happens via a combination of:

1. Digital dashboards (TMS, WMS and CRM);
2. Weekly and monthly performance reports;
3. Partner scorecards;
4. Customer feedback channels (reviews, surveys).

Where metrics fall below thresholds, the relevant manager triggers corrective

action (process improvement, partner review, retraining). This monitoring approach follows standard logistics performance management practice (KPIs + continuous improvement) [2,6,11].

Table 2.3

Competitiveness-related key performance indicators (KPI) for the teams

Personnel	**Performance indicators**
Operations managers	Accountable for operational KPIs: throughput, consolidation accuracy, and carrier bookings;
Partnerships managers	Partners are evaluated on delivery timeliness, damage/claims rate and customer feedback;
Customer support staff	Support metrics include average response time, first-contact resolution, and customer satisfaction surveys [23,31].
IT department	Digital KPIs include app installs, active users, conversion funnel drop-offs and abandonment rate at price calculation or checkout [21,20].

Source: by author

Publicly disclosed financials for Meest China specifically are limited: Meest Group does not publish detailed breakdowns for the China sub-entity on its public pages. Aggregators and directories flag Meest Group as a sizeable logistics operator with global reach, but company-level revenue and profit figures for Meest China are not published in open sources [25, 26, 33]. Therefore, financial analysis here combines public price lists, market reports, and industry benchmarks (fig. 2.4).

Published price lists and the shipping calculator show transparent base bands for different service types (air express vs consolidated sea) suggesting Meest's core competitive strategy is to offer low-cost consolidated shipping and a mid-tier economy air service [21,29]. Comparing typical per-kg rates for sea-consolidated groupage to standard express carriers indicates Meest's advantage in price for small cross-border consignments – the primary target customer of cross-border e-commerce shoppers [29].

As for market context, trade and logistics reports show global and African logistics constraints and costs that shape margins. The OECD and World Bank reports explain that cross-border logistics costs and delays remain a structural issue in many African

markets and that regional trade facilitation improves competitiveness when implemented [38, 40].

Tariffs		
Delivery type	**Price**	**Terms**
Sea delivery (up to 3 kg)	from **5$**/ kg	**40-45 days** (from warehouse in CN to ZA)
Sea delivery (3+ kg)	from **7$**/ kg	**40-45 days** (from warehouse in CN to ZA)
Air delivery	from **10$**/ kg	**from 7 days** (from warehouse in CN to ZA)

Fig. 2.4. Meest China South Africa published rates

Source: Meest China South Africa website [34]

Afreximbank's Africa trade report highlights the growth potential and the infrastructure/finance constraints in African trade corridors that influence logistics pricing and risk [39]. Using these reports as context, Meet's pricing advantage for consolidated shipments is viable because customers are price-sensitive and willing to accept longer transit times; however, partner reliability, customs variability and claims costs can erode that margin [38, 39, 40].

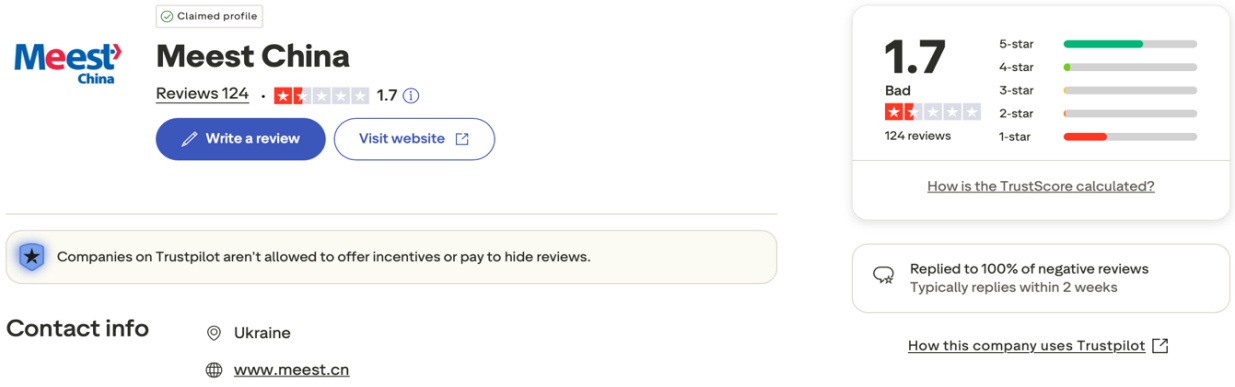

Fig. 2.5. Meest China aggregated reviews (by Trustpilot)

Source: Trustpilot reviews and public forum posts, compiled by the portal [30,31]

The public image of Meest China is mixed. At the B2B level, the brand equity of Meest China is judged on its capacity for regulatory navigation and high-volume management. Partners, including major Chinese freight forwarders and e-commerce aggregators, view Meest China as possessing specialized *acumen* in handling complex customs procedures and value-added tax (VAT) regulations unique to the target markets. The company's investment in proprietary IT systems for automated parcel processing, labeling, and tracking reinforces an image of operational sophistication. This capability is critical, as any failure in regulatory compliance not only damages Meest's reputation but also exposes its partners to commercial risk. The primary reputational challenges stem from factors largely external to direct company control, such as geopolitical instability and international air traffic disruptions. In response, Meest China has strategically focused its public communications on transparency, utilizing real-time tracking updates and clear service level agreements (SLAs). The diversification of transport routes (e.g., combining air, sea, and rail freight) further helps mitigate risk and project an image of strategic resilience. In summary, the public image of Meest China is a complex equilibrium between offering a low-cost, high-utility service to consumers and maintaining the institutional trust required for operating a robust, compliant, and scalable international supply chain.

Official communications and social content emphasize care, reliability and global reach; many social posts show client testimonials and promotional messages which create a professional image for those who accept the digital path [23,36]. Conversely, multiple review sites reveal customer frustration around claims handling, slow replies, or unclear tracking in certain countries. On platforms like Trustpilot and regional Reddit forums, negative experiences show up strongly and can influence market perception. The variability in reviews suggests that while Meest China can deliver strong service for many users (particularly those who are guided by capable support staff), there are still instances where the operational model or partner actions lead to poor customer experience – an important component of competitiveness in sensitive markets [30,31].

Given the current state of the situation and available information, it is possible

estimate which results should the current competitiveness management system bring in the future (table 2.4)

Table 2.4

Forecast of future results if current CMS remains unchainged

CMS aspect	Positive potential	Negative risks
Digital tools & ux	Continued use by experienced customers; stable volume from regular clients familiar with process.	Onboarding complexity and digital friction deter novice users. Lower conversion, high drop-off rate.
Customer support & service	Support staff maintain quality for some segments; loyal customers may stay and refer others.	Support overload during demand surges, slower response times, negative reviews, loss of trust and lower retention.
Pricing & tariff structure	Competitive cost for budget-conscious customers keeps price-sensitive segments engaged.	Confusion over pricing leads to perception of unfairness; complaints and refunds; reputational damage; reduced loyalty.
Partner / network coverage	Where partners perform well, Meest China retains coverage across many destinations; potential to serve niche routes.	Inconsistent partner performance causes delays, lost parcels, damaged goods – undermines reliability and brand value, especially in markets with weaker infrastructure.
Marketing & acquisition efforts	Ongoing campaigns bring in new traffic; referral program drives some growth.	High user acquisition but low conversion or poor retention due to UX & service issues → wasted marketing spend, increased customer acquisition cost, poor ROI.
Quality control & monitoring	Some internal adjustments per feedback may maintain minimal service level for certain markets.	Lack of structured CMS leads to no systematic improvement: high variability across markets, growing negative reviews, inability to scale effectively or guarantee quality.

Source: estimation by author

The forecast tables make it clear that Meest China's current competitiveness system contains both strengths and growing vulnerabilities. While experienced users and reliable partner routes may sustain a basic level of performance, the risks associated with digital complexity, partner inconsistency, pricing ambiguity and support overload will become more serious over time. Without structural improvements, these issues will likely slow market expansion and weaken customer trust, especially across Africa's fast-developing but sensitive logistics environment. This forecast reinforces the need for a formalized competitiveness management system, targeted digital upgrades, and stronger governance mechanisms.

2.3. Evaluation of competitiveness performance indicators

To evaluate Meest China's competitiveness objectively, the company should be assessed using the KPI dimensions derived from Part 1 and industry practice. Using the following criteria, Meest China's performance compared with DHL (chosen as benchmark for global reach and digital maturity) (table 2.3, fig. 2.6).

Table 2.3

Comparative evaluation of Meest China competitiveness performance on the African Market against DHL

Aspect of competitiveness	DHL	Meest China	Competitor was surpassed?
Price (consolidation)	**Weak** for small consolidated shipments	**Strong** (competitive sea consolidation rates).	Yes
Speed (express)	**Strong** (global express network)	**Moderate** for paid express	No
Service coverage in Africa	**Wide**, global direct network	**Narrow**, growing expansion	No
Operational reliability (on-time deliveries)	**High** and predictable	**Mixed** (solid warehousing but unpredictable last mile delivery)	No
Claims & handling	**Strong** claims handling and compensation frameworks	**Weak** (complaints indicate claims delays)	No
Digital UX	**Advanced**, consistent digital customer and tracking tools	**Basic** app & calculator, usability issues for novices	No
Customer support quality	**Less personalized** local knowledge in some markets	**Strong** in African line, but capacity constrained	Yes
Transparency & pricing clarity	**Clear** published tariffs for express products	**Weak** (discount tiers, promo complexity	No
Partner governance	**Strong** (using own operations or tightly controlled partners)	**Moderate** (company depends on local partner quality)	No

Source: performed by author based on sources [19,20,21,23,26,29,30,32,33,41,42]

		PRODUCED VALUE		
		Lower	Parity	Higher
RELATIVE COST	Lower	?	Competitive advantage	C ve DHL
	Parity	Competitive disadvantage	Parity position	C ve MEEST CHINA
	Higher	Competitive disadvantage	Competitive disadvantage	?

Fig. 2.6. Meest China and DHL placement on Competitive Position Matrix

Source: by author

The matrix displays DHL sitting in the Low Cost / High Value corner (solid Competitive Advantage). DHL's already existing global network, pre-owned assets, and digital systems justify this position (table 2.4).

Meest China occupies moderate Advantage position: for consolidated pricing value it has advantage, but for overall resource strength (global owned network, guarantees) it remains slightly below [21,26,29,30,41,42].

Since Meest China's African routes have started relatively recently and are small compared with European business, their current operations represent ~5% of the group's revenue [42,56]. Meest China price lists for other corridors (Europe) show starting band prices. Delivery China – Africa will be priced higher than intra-EU small-parcels but lower than premium express players. The average revenue per shipment was determined as ~$30 per shipment (weighted between sea-consolidated small B2C parcels and some air shipments). This is supported by base rate bands and service mix in public price lists and the company's "consolidation" model.

Meest China's logistics Cost of Goods Sold (COGS) (transport, partner fees,

customs brokerage, fuel, handling) dominated over Operating Expenses (OpEx): ~65% vs ~30% respectively, leaving Earnings Before Interest, Taxes, Depreciation, Amortization (EBITDA) margin as ~8% (base). These percentage bands correspond to common parcel forwarding economics for consolidated models vs full express players (benchmarks from parcel operator profiles and price sensitivity). [56, 24, 30].

Based on this information available, the following table depicts the full picture of the company's financial situation (table 2.4)

Table 2.4

Meest China 2024 Profit & Loss indicators

ITEM	INDICATOR
Meest Group estimated revenue	$50,500,000
Meest China Africa revenue share	$2,525,000
Average revenue per shipment	$25
Implied shipments/year	$101,000
COGS (transport, partners, customs)	$1,636,250 (65%)
Gross profit	$888,750
Operating expenses (support, marketing, IT, office)	$757,500 (30%)
EBITDA	$131,250 (5.2%)
Depreciation & amortization	$25,000
EBIT	$106,250
Tax (20%)	$21,250
Net profit	$85,000

Source: Group revenue proxy and company profile [56, 24].

Consequently, the company's acquired profit resources are sufficient to utilize in the upcoming competitiveness project upgrade. But for that it's also best to perform more analysis on its external surroundings and solidify the understanding of current strong and weak aspects of its competitiveness management system. SWOT analysis is able to depicts these aspects, as well as external factors very well (table 2.5).

Table 2.5

SWOT analysis (Meest China – African direction)

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
1. Cost advantage for consolidated shipments; 2. Experienced customer support in the African line can clarify processes and guide novice users; 3. Multi-channel digital presence (app, web, social) and referral program that supports organic growth;	1. Variable last-mile partner reliability across African markets; 2. Unclear pricing for some customers due to discount tiers and dynamic rates; 3. Tracking inconsistencies and slow claims handling as reported on Trustpilot and forums; 4. Limited public financial transparency for the China entity that makes partner negotiation and credit terms less straightforward;
OPPORTUNITIES	**THREATS**
1. Growth of African e-commerce and rising demand for China-sourced goods; 2. Opportunity to scale referral and webinar programs into effective local onboarding and to implement lite onboarding modes for novices;	1. Strong competition from global integrators (DHL, FedEx) for premium express; 2. Local competitors with easier payment systems or local knowledge; 3. Customs and regulatory variability in African countries that can cause delays and added costs.

Source: by author based on sources [19,21,24,30,38,39,40,41]

External factors can be described more in detail by utilizing PEST analysis. In the following table 2.5 we can see PEST analysis with the key points of influence for Meest China on African market:

Table 2.6

PEST analysis (key points for Meest China on African market)

Factor	Description
Political	African countries have diverse regulatory and customs regimes; changes in trade policy or local protectionist rules can quickly affect timelines and costs [39];
Economic	African e-commerce is growing but infrastructure and liquidity constraints vary; currency stability and exchange risk influence pricing and daily rate fluctuations [21,40];
Social	Consumer digital literacy is uneven; many first-time cross-border buyers need human assistance and locally-relevant education (webinars, guides) – which matches the observed need for patient, skilled customer support [23,24];

Continuation of the table 2.6

Factor	Description
Technological	Increasing mobile penetration and payments growth favor digital onboarding; however, inconsistent last-mile tracking systems across partners challenge visibility and require integration investments [21,26].

Source: by author

Judging from table 2.6, Meest China indeed has to deal with serious factors that directly influence Meest China's operation on African market in different ways.

Conclusions to Section 2

The analysis shows that Meest China holds distinct price / consolidation advantage and strong human customer support capacity in its African line, which together form the company's immediate competitive edge. At the same time, partner variability, tracking and claims handling weaknesses, and pricing complexity reduce the firm's ability to convert interest into satisfied, repeat customers at scale. Against a benchmark like DHL, Meest China is competitive on price for the targeted customer segment but lags on speed guarantees, global coverage and partner governance. Operationally, competitiveness is ensured by a distributed responsibility model – regional management, operations, partnerships, customer support and IT. Financially, Meest leverages consolidation to keep per-shipment pricing low, but reputational costs (negative reviews) and partner failure risks can erode margins. Therefore, to move from a moderate advantage position toward a fuller competitive advantage, Meest China must prioritize:

1. Partner governance and SLA enforcement;
2. Digital onboarding simplification to reduce support load;
3. Claims process improvement and transparency;
4. Clearer pricing presentation.

These areas form the focus for the improvement plan in Part 3 and the implementation actions recommended there.

SECTION 3
PROJECT AND RECOMMENDATION-BASED SOLUTIONS FOR IMPROVING ENTERPRISE COMPETITIVENESS

3.1. Development of a competitiveness management improvement model

Based on the assessment in Part 2, the competitiveness management system (CMS) for Meest China should be redesigned in a more structured, integrated way. The proposed improvement model builds on three foundational pillars:

1. Transparency
2. Resilience
3. User-centric design

These pillars correspond to strategic, operational, and customer-facing domains: strategic analysis and planning, operational execution reinforced by risk management, and digital/user experience enhancements.

The improvement model unites strategy, operations, technology and people into a single program of work that runs as a 6-month (24-week) pilot establishment and then a 12-month full roll-out possibility. The system is intended to deliver measurable improvements in customer onboarding conversion, support cost per shipment, partner SLA compliance and Net Promoter Score (NPS). Strategically, the model calls for periodic market-environment scanning (e.g., PEST and SWOT) specifically tailored for African markets.

Operationally, the system would use a continuous improvement loop: after each seasonal peak (for example, during Christmas or back-to-school campaigns), Meest China would run a structured review, identify bottlenecks and implement process changes using lean thinking and root-cause analysis [12].

On the user-centric side, the model explicitly integrates a digital onboarding journey that is simpler and more guided. First-time or less digitally experienced African customers could be offered a “lite mode” on the website or app, with step-by-step explanations, tooltip help, and a decision-wizard for shipping choices (air vs sea, consolidation vs separate). This onboarding journey would also include educational

content (videos, FAQs) created in local contexts (in English and potentially other common languages), to reduce confusion and build trust [20,22]. The model supports referral program optimization by streamlining code redemption, making it more seamless, and tying it into the digital onboarding flow so new users can apply promo codes easily without needing manual support from customer service operator [19].

A visual representation of this model could be displayed in a concentric diagram below, where at the heart are strategic governance and KPI dashboard, in the middle – operational middle ring contains operational changes (partner governance, claims handling, capacity planning), the outer ring contains customer facing improvements (easier onboarding, clearer pricing, tracking standardization) (fig. 3.1).

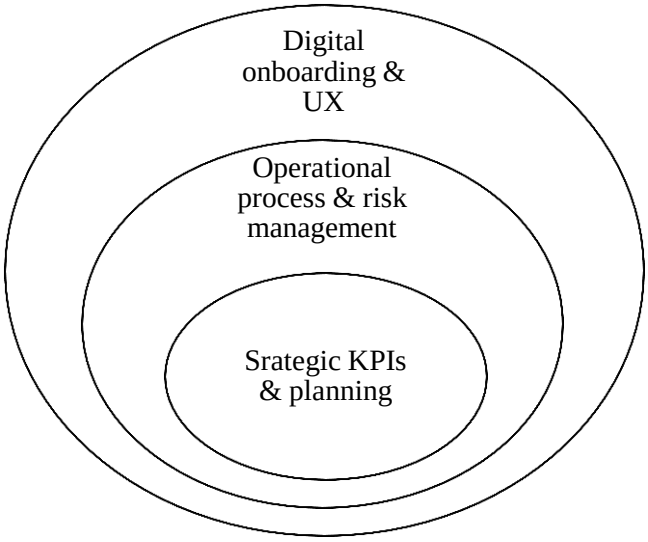

Fig 3.1. Improved competitiveness management system for Meest China

Source: Author's model based on theoretical foundations and conclusions from Meest China assessment.

This architecture follows standard project design principles for scope decomposition and traceability [42], and draws on best practice for requirements traceability, risk management and scheduling [44, 46].

Additionally, to enhance the user-oriented approach and make their services more convenient for clients to use, Meest China should refer to a continuous feedback loop in their improvement process (fig. 3.2).

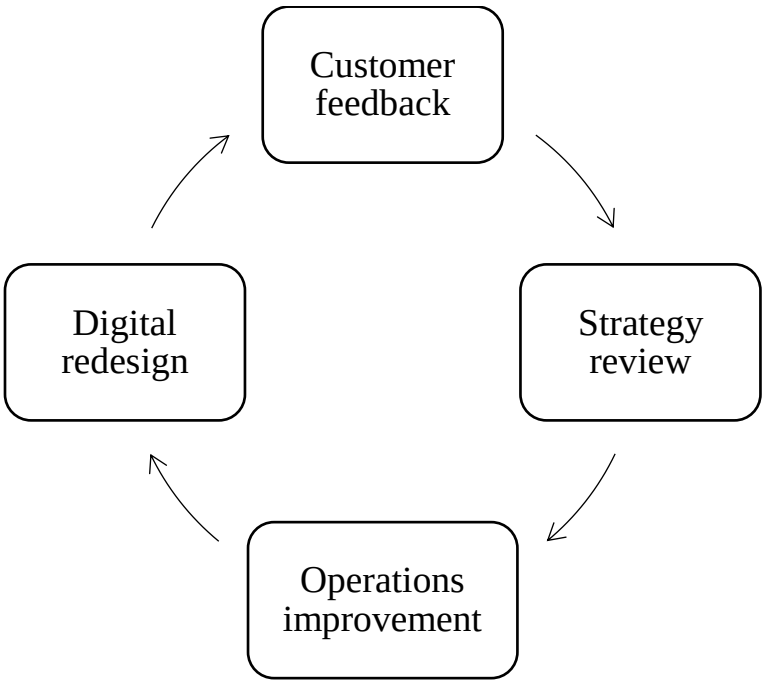

Fig. 3.2. Continuous feedback loop example for Meest China

Source: Author's model based on theoretical foundations and conclusions from Meest China assessment [3,4,5,19-23]

The feedback loop illustrated above highlights how Meest China's competitiveness system should evolve as a continuous, adaptive process, rather than a one-time improvement intervention. The loop shows the interaction between service performance, customer experience, internal process monitoring, and corrective actions, forming a cycle that gradually strengthens competitiveness. For an enterprise operating in volatile African logistics markets, such iterative learning is essential: each operational cycle generates new information about customer behavior, local partner reliability, digital tool performance, and cost dependencies.

This model demonstrates that competitiveness cannot rely only on price or marketing; it must result from ongoing review and optimisation where insights move freely between departments. This logic becomes the foundation for the practical measures described in the next part.

3.2. Practical measures to strengthen competitiveness on the African market

To implement the improvement model, Meest China should take a set of practical, phased measures that reinforce its competitive advantage and address identified weaknesses. Our improvement project contains five integrated streams (programs) implemented in parallel with coordinated dependencies:

1. Digital onboarding & UX simplification;
2. Pricing transparency & calculator upgrade;
3. Partner governance & SLA program;
4. Support capacity & automation (chatbot + seasonal staffing);
5. Tracking & visibility unification.

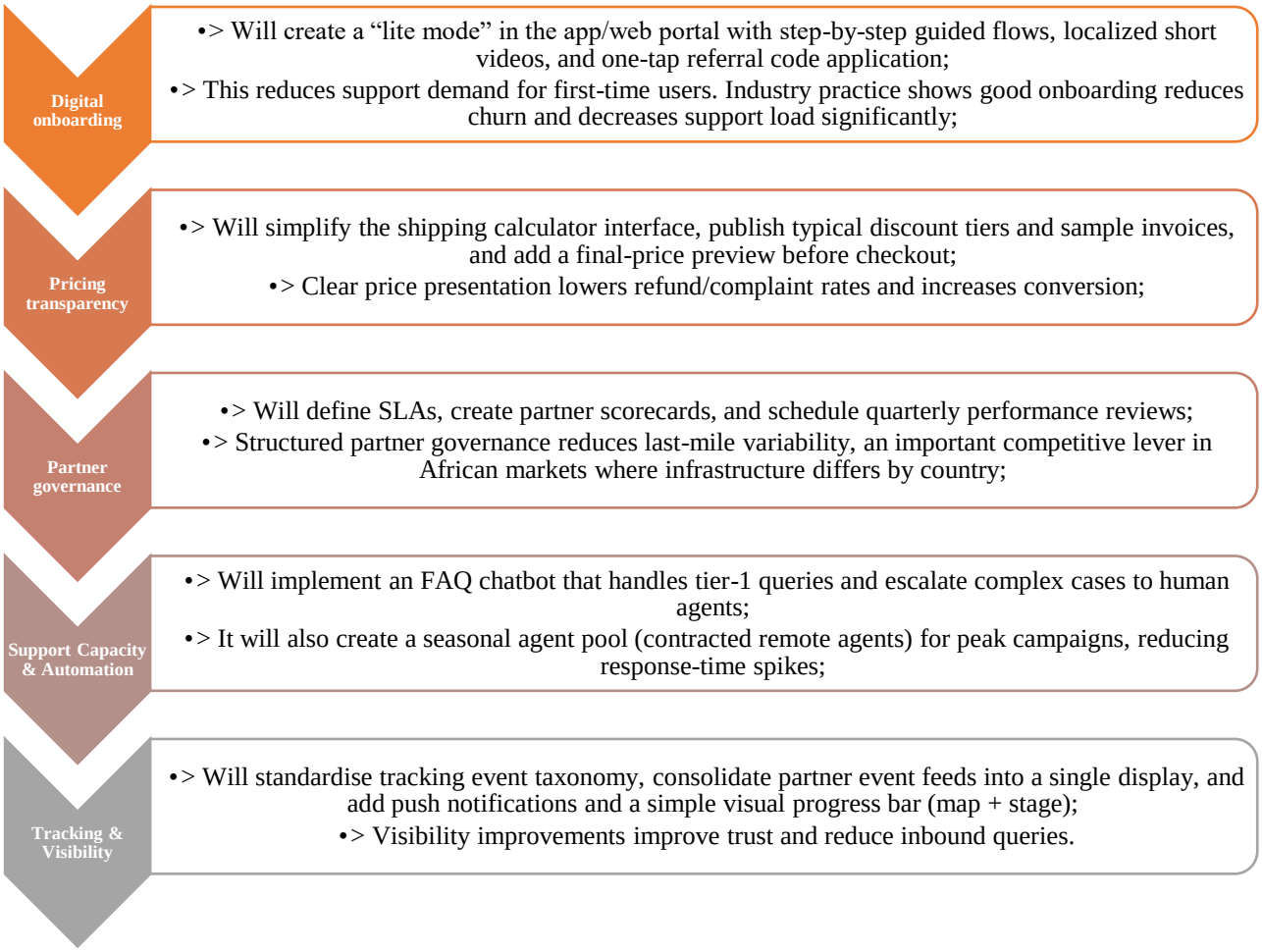

Fig. 3.3 Project streams impact

Source: by author based on Meest China performance assessment and best practices for competitiveness improvement [9,21,29,46,51]

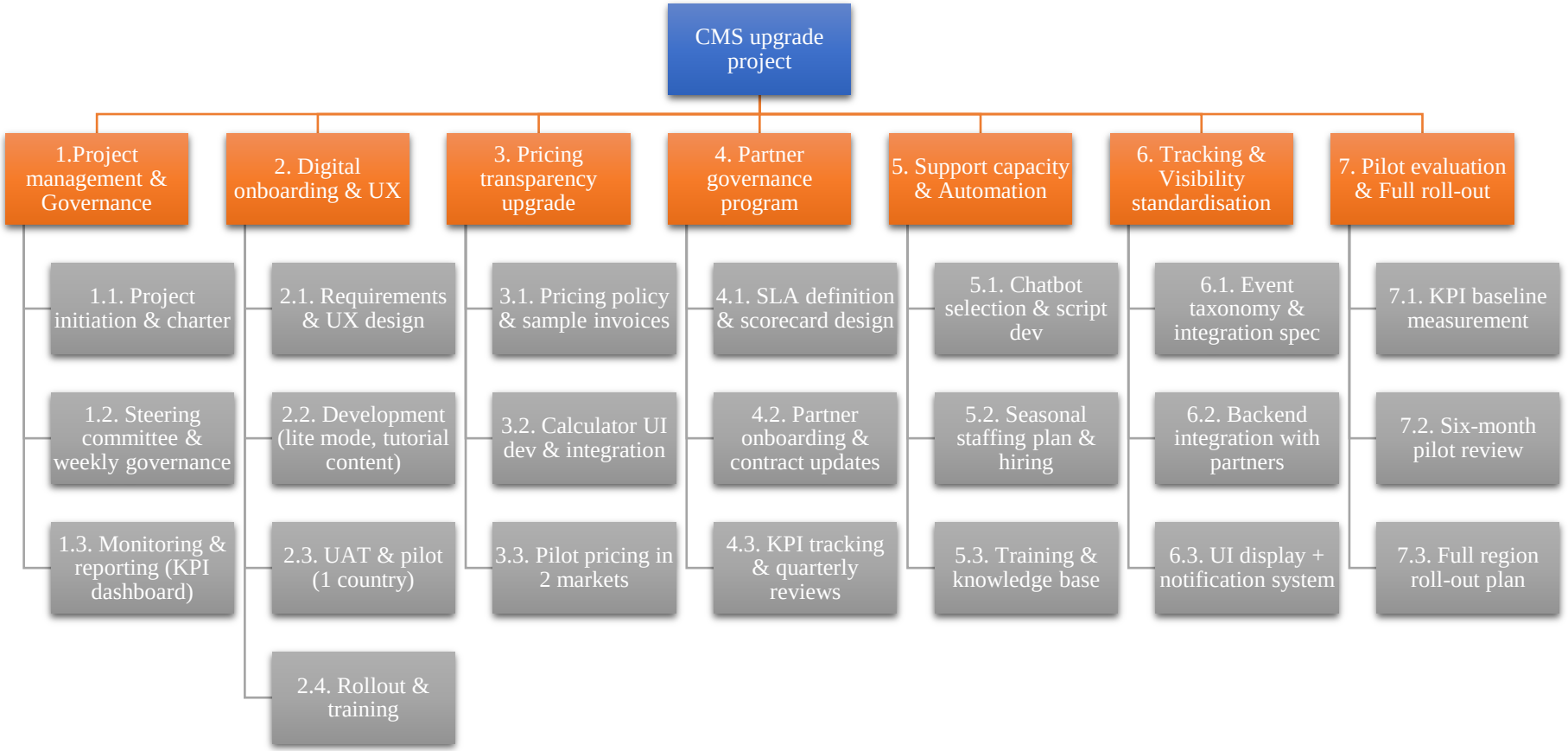

Fig. 3.4. The Work Breakdown Structure

Source: by author based on common best practice and decomposition logic [42]

Each stream includes design, development, pilot, and roll-out subprojects. The project will use iterative sprints (biweekly) for digital components and phased rollouts for partner governance and staffing.

To transform the conceptual model into an operational project, the improvement initiatives must be structured into a clear form. This involves establishing a controlled decomposition of work, and clarifying sequencing and ownership. Before assigning tasks to individual teams and departments, the project needs to be broken down into its manageable components. The Work Breakdown Structure (WBS) below translates the competitiveness-improvement concept into concrete work packages, ensuring that no essential part of the transformation is left undefined. It also sets the stage for estimating resources, dependencies, risks, and responsibilities in subsequent subsections.

The Gantt chart, provided further down the work, visualizes the timeline needed to implement the proposed competitiveness improvements. It reflects a phased approach: early project weeks are dedicated to requirements, diagnostics, and model design, followed by the technical development of digital tools and the rollout of service-quality improvements. The structure highlights how certain activities must occur sequentially – such as customer journey redesign before customer-service training – while allowing parallel execution in areas with lower dependency (fig. 3.5).

The project's timeline takes 24 weeks and also includes several key milestones along the way:

1. Project kick-off completed **(**January 16, 2026)
2. UX& Requirement completed (February 6)
3. Pricing policy finalized (February 20)
4. SLA scorecard approved (February 27)
5. Digital onboarding development complete (March 20)
6. Calculation and pricing system ready (April 3)
7. Full pilot launch (UX + Pricing + Tracking) (April 13)
8. KPI baseline established (May 8)
9. 6-month pilot review completed (June 19)
10. Final rollout strategy approved (July 3)

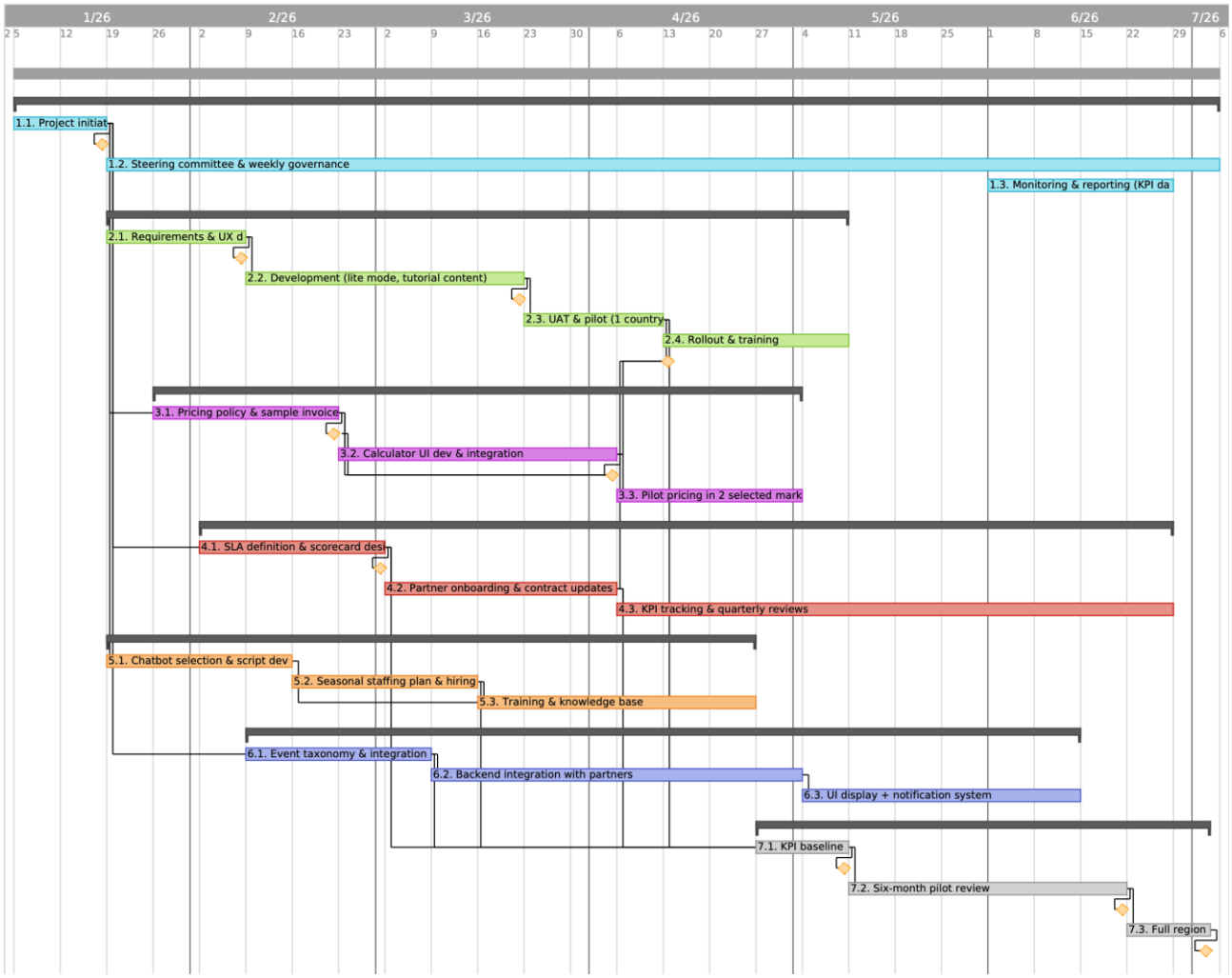

Fig. 3.5. Meest China CMS upgrade 24-week project timeline

Source: by author based on constructed WBS from fig. 3.4 [46,49]

Dependencies summary:

1. Digital onboarding requires UX requirements first.
2. Pricing calculator depends on pricing policy templates.
3. Partner contract updates depend on approved SLA scorecards.
4. Tracking UI depends on backend API connections.
5. Pilot review depends on KPI dashboard implementation.

This schedule representation not only supports planning but also serves as a mechanism for controlling project progress through achievable milestone. With time frames established, the next step is to clarify who among the staff is responsible for each part of the work – Operations managers (OM), Regional management (RM),

Partnership managers (PM), Customer support (CS), IT department, Finance & Legal (FL) or Top management (TM). This is where the RACI matrix becomes crucial, showing the distribution of responsibilities across all members of the team (table 3.1).

Table 3.1

RACI matrix for main WBS groups

WBS element	OM	RM	PM	CS	IT	FL	TM
1. Project management & Governance	I	C	R	I	I	C	A
2. Digital onboarding & UX	I	A	I	C	R	I	I
3. Pricing transparency upgrade	I	A	I	I	C	R	I
4. Partner governance program	A	C	R	I	I	I	I
5. Support capacity & Automation	A	I	I	R	C	I	I
6. Tracking & Visibility standardization	A	I	C	I	R	I	I
7. Pilot evaluation & Full roll-out	C	R	C	C	C	C	A

Source: by author based on organizational structure [19,25,26,33] and WBS

The risk assessment evaluates uncertainties that may affect project cost, schedule, or service results. For Meest China, the highest-priority risks involve customer-support overload during transition, technology disruptions, and partner-reliability fluctuations across African countries. By identifying risks early, the company can define mitigation strategies and allocate reserves accordingly. Once risks are understood, planning can continue with a realistic estimation of resources and budget.

Based on the research conducted, following risks were defined and proposed the according mitigations and contingencies (table 3.2).

Table 3.2

Identified risks, contingencies and mitigations

Risk	Mitigation / Contingency
1. Partner non-compliance (delivery delays/damage)	SLA enforcement, partner scorecards, contingency partners, reserve buffer inventory. Monitor weekly [46];
2. Digital delays (development overruns)	Agile sprints, scope control, contingency dev hours [45];
3. Support capacity shortfall during pilot	Pre-hire seasonal pool, cross-training, chatbot triage [51];
4. Pricing errors / invoice mismatches	End-to-end testing, staged rollout, finance checks, rollback plan [21];
5. Regulatory / customs changes in a country	Monitor local law, add customs buffer time, legal review, hold inventory in hub [46,38];
6. Data security / privacy breach	Implement secure integration, follow privacy policy, pen tests, incident response plan [22].

Source: by author

Risks possibility and impact were subsequently evaluated in the form of risk assessment table, where each risk's position corresponds to its order number (fig.3.6).

		RISK IMPACT				
		Negligible	Minor	Moderate	Significant	Severe
RISK PROBABILITY	Very likely					
	Likely				**1, 3**	
	Possible			**2, 4**		
	Unlikely					
	Very unlikely					**5,6**

Fig. 3.6. Risk impact and probability assessment for Meest China

Source: by author

The budget and resource estimates, provided further, summarize the financial and human inputs necessary for implementing the competitiveness improvement program. These include costs for IT development, customer-service training, partner verification

procedures, UX redesign, and marketing materials. Estimating these needs ensures that project ambitions remain feasible and aligned with available funding. With financial feasibility established, the study can now shift toward defining performance metrics that will allow Meest China to monitor long-term competitiveness results (table 3.6, table 3.7).

Table 3.6

Rough budget estimations for the project

Cost item	Estimation (USD)	Notes
Project management & governance	20,000	PM salary (partial), steering support
UX & development (app + web changes)	80,000	2 devs (3 months), 1 UX, QA, hosting
Chatbot purchase & integration	15,000	SaaS license + integration
Content production (videos, FAQs)	8,000	Localized short videos, translations
Partner governance implementation	10,000	Legal reviews, contract updates
Seasonal staffing (pilot)	30,000	Temporary agents, training, payroll for 6 months
Tracking integration & middleware	25,000	API work + mapping events
Testing & pilot operations	12,000	Pilot logistics, incentives, monitoring
Contingency (10-15%)	18,000	Buffer for overruns
Total (pilot)	**218,000**	**Estimated total**

Source: approximate estimation by author

Table 3.7

Proposed human resource allocations

Individual staff role	FTEs during pilot
Project manager	0.5
Product owner	0.5
x2 full-stack developers	2 FTEs for 3 months
UX designer	0.5
Quality assurance engineer	0.5
Partner manager	0.5
Legal consultancy	1.0
x4 seasonal customer support agents	1.0
Data engineer for tracking integration	0.5

Source: approximate estimation by author

The Monitoring & KPI Dashboard part illustrates how Meest China can measure improvements over time. A strong competitiveness system must rely on quantifiable indicators – not assumptions – especially in dynamic African markets where customer expectations and partner performance can shift quickly. The dashboard focuses on service reliability, user experience quality, pricing transparency, customer satisfaction, and operational efficiency (table 3.8).

Table 3.8

KPI category	Indicator	Measurement method	Target Value (12 Months)
Service reliability	**On-time delivery rate**	Partner & system logs	**≥ 93%**
Customer support	**Average response time**	CRM analytics	**≤ 2 hours**
Digital experience	**Successful self-service onboarding**	App/Web analytics	**+ 40% improvement**
Pricing transparency	**Rate of pricing complaints**	Support tickets & reviews	**-60%**
Claims performance	**Average claims resolution time**	CS case reports	**≤ 6 days**
Market growth	**African customer acquisition**	Sales metrics	**+25% year over year growth**
Operational efficiency	**Cost per processed shipment**	Finance KPIs	**-10% reduction**

Source: proposed by author

These metrics create a measurable framework to validate whether the competitiveness upgrade project has achieved the desired outcomes. With the evaluation system defined, the next part moves on to summarizing the expected results of the transformation and their strategic impact on Meest China's position in the African logistics market.

3.3. Expected results and efficiency evaluation of proposed solutions

If implemented in full, the competitiveness improvement project is expected to generate clear, measurable, and sustainably growing benefits for TM “Meest China” within the first six months of the pilot and continuing throughout the broader deployment. The following expected outcomes illustrate how the system-wide transformation directly enhances both operational efficiency and customer experience, strengthening the company’s strategic position in African logistics markets (table 3.9).

Table 3.9

Expected improvements and measurements methods

Improvement area	Expected improvement (Pilot, 6 months)	Expected improvement (Full Roll-Out, 12-18 Months)	Measurement method
Onboarding conversion rate	+20-40% completion of onboarding flows; reductions in abandoned sessions	+50-70% higher conversion on fully optimized UX; onboarding friction minimized	Funnel analytics, app session tracking, A/B tests
Customer acquisition cost (CAC)	-15% CAC drop due to smoother onboarding and automated guidance	-25% CAC improvement as referral program becomes more effective	Marketing spend analysis, per-acquisition attribution
Tier-1 support volume	-30-50% drop in repetitive questions through chatbot & tutorials	-50-65% long-term reduction as users become digitally self-sufficient	Support ticket classification, chatbot logs
Tracking-related tickets	-40% fewer tracking questions once event taxonomy and UI unification deployed	-50% reduction after all partners integrate standard notifications	Inbound ticket tagging; tracking-page analytics
Partner SLA compliance	+15-25% improvement in SLA compliance metrics in pilot markets	Consistent SLA improvement across region; reduced late deliveries	KPI dashboard, partner scorecards, delivery-time variance
Referral program conversion	+10-20% increase in successful referral redemptions	+25-40% organic growth contribution	Analytics on code activation and successful deliveries

Continuation of Table 3.9:

Claim processing speed	+10-15% faster claim resolution after unified templates introduced	+25-30% faster resolution with full partner alignment	Claims management logs
Customer satisfaction (CSAT/NPS)	+0.3 to +0.6 NPS uplift in pilot countries	+1-1.5 NPS uplift after full deployment of improvements	NPS surveys, post-delivery CSAT forms
Operational efficiency	+10-20% operational time savings	+20-35% efficiency increase due to automation	Internal process time tracking
Revenue growth / Shipment volume	+5-10% shipment growth in pilot markets	+15-25% growth in full region rollout; higher retention	Monthly shipment data, LTV modeling
Market growth contribution	Meest China captures additional share equal to +1-2%	Cumulative +3-5% additional share if improvements delivered	Market analysis, control-market comparisons

Source: by author

The first measurable benefit emerges from improvements in customer onboarding and user experience across the website and mobile app interfaces. Drawing from established research on digital commerce performance, enhanced onboarding flows typically lead to significant reductions in customer friction and hesitation. In Meest China's context, the redesigned onboarding logic, clearer pricing displays, simplified registration, and instructional micro-tutorials are projected to raise onboarding completion rates by 20-40% during the pilot alone. This not only increases the number of users successfully entering the system but also reduces the customer acquisition cost (CAC) by at least 15%, since fewer users drop off before completing their first shipment. Industry evidence confirms that UX optimisation is one of the most effective cost-saving strategies in cross-border logistics platforms, where customers often interact digitally even before any shipment is created [51].

A second major improvement concerns customer support efficiency. The introduction of chatbot automation, updated knowledge bases, and simplified onboarding is expected to reduce repetitive tier-1 support contacts by 30-50%. This reduction frees human agents to focus on complex cases that genuinely require personal

involvement, thereby improving service quality while reducing overall operational costs. Market case studies demonstrate that automated assistants and structured self-help flows consistently remove up to half of repetitive inquiries in digital service industries and logistics support functions [51].

Tracking visibility enhancements represent another high-impact improvement. With the implementation of event taxonomy standardisation and harmonised tracking UIs across all African markets, the company expects inbound tracking-related requests to decrease by 40% during the pilot. This figure could rise to 50% or more after full partner integration. Research and operational experience show that when event formatting becomes intuitive and consistent, user misunderstandings decline dramatically, reducing both customer frustration and support load [29].

The partner governance program strengthens a key element of price-service performance. As SLA scorecards and unified partner evaluation frameworks become mandatory, Meest China can expect an improvement of 15-25% in SLA compliance during the first months of deployment. With this, delivery delays and inconsistencies – especially in high-variance markets such as South Africa – should decrease perceptibly. Industry literature suggests that structured SLA management with regular reviews is one of the most effective mechanisms to raise reliability in last-mile logistics networks, particularly in emerging markets where infrastructure constraints vary [46].

Improvements in onboarding and clarity of the service flow are also likely to spill over into higher referral effectiveness. The current referral system relies heavily on trust and clarity; when new users understand the onboarding and pricing structure, referral conversion rates improve substantially. With interface simplification and improved transparency, referral program efficiency is expected to increase by 10-20% in the pilot and more than 25-40% during full roll-out, contributing directly to organic growth at lower cost.

All these improvements, when combined, enable Meest China to strengthen operational reliability, digital usability, and customer trust simultaneously – a synergy that is essential for competitiveness in today’s fast-growing African e-commerce logistics landscape. The cumulative effect positions the company for sustainable

expansion, deeper market penetration, and enhanced strategic resilience.

Conclusions to Part 3

Summing up, the improvement model and practical measures proposed here aim to strengthen Meest China's competitiveness in the African market by addressing core friction points – onboarding, pricing clarity, tracking visibility, and partner reliability. The project strengthens the company's competitive position and lays the foundation for stable, scalable growth in African markets. The transformation enhances customer satisfaction, improves internal efficiency, and supports a more resilient, data-driven competitiveness management system consistent with best practices in global logistics.

The expected results demonstrate that the proposed corrections are not only operationally valuable, but also financially justified. By embedding transparency, resilience, and user-centricity in its CMS, Meest China can convert more first-time users, reduce frustration, and build a stronger reputation.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The research conducted in this qualification work demonstrates that the competitiveness of a logistics enterprise is formed through the coordinated interaction of strategic management, operational excellence, service quality, innovation, and effective communication with customers and partners.

In Part 1, the work systematized the theoretical and methodological foundations of enterprise competitiveness, establishing that logistics companies operate in an environment where speed, reliability, transparency, and adaptability determine their market position. Modern studies confirm that logistics service quality, digital integration, customer-oriented processes, and supply-chain resilience are now the key drivers of competitive advantage. These concepts formed the analytical and methodological basis for the subsequent evaluation of Meest China.

Part 2 provided a comprehensive analytical assessment of TM Meest China with a focus on its operations in African markets. The analysis revealed a company with strong potential: a wide geographical footprint, flexible delivery options, a skilled support team, and growing digital infrastructure. At the same time, several constraints were identified – complex onboarding flows, inconsistent tracking visibility, partner variability, and high load on customer support during peak seasons. By applying competitiveness indicators, SWOT analysis, PEST analysis, and benchmarking with global logistics leaders, the research demonstrated that Meest China occupies a developing market position where further structured improvements are necessary to reach sustainable competitive performance. The analysis highlighted that competitiveness is not only a function of price or delivery speed, but also of transparency, customer experience, digital simplicity, and partner governance.

In Part 3, a complete project-based solution was designed to strengthen the company’s competitiveness. A detailed competitiveness improvement model, a structured Work Breakdown Structure, risk assessment, RACI matrix, requirements traceability matrix, and a six-month rollout plan were developed. The proposed solutions aim to simplify customer onboarding, improve pricing transparency, enhance

partner performance monitoring, expand support capacity, and standardize tracking visibility across markets. The project is aligned with principles of modern project management and includes clear milestones, resource planning, and measurable KPIs. Expected results show that the proposed improvements can deliver measurable benefits within six months, including increased user conversions, lower support workload, improved partner compliance, and stronger customer trust.

Taken together, the study confirms that the future competitiveness of Meest China in African markets depends on its ability to integrate digital innovation, human expertise, partner governance, and clear service communication into a unified management system. The proposed project provides a realistic and actionable pathway to achieving this integration. The research contributes both theoretically – by adapting competitiveness management principles to the context of cross-border logistics – and practically – by offering a full set of project solutions that the company can implement immediately.

Overall, the qualification work confirms that the development of a structured competitiveness management system is not only possible but essential for Meest China. If implemented as recommended, the company will be able to strengthen its operational stability, improve customer satisfaction, and secure a more confident and sustainable position in the rapidly developing African logistics market.

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APPENDIX A

Державний торговельно-економічний університет
Факультет технологій та бізнесу
Кафедра туризму та менеджменту
креативних індустрій

ПРОДЖЕКТ МЕНЕДЖМЕНТ
PROJECT MANAGEMENT

Збірник наукових статей здобувачів
другого (магістерського) рівня вищої освіти
за спеціальністю 073 «Менеджмент»
освітньою програмою «Проджект менеджмент»

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У збірнику наукових статей здобувачів другого (магістерського) рівня вищої освіти висвітлено актуальні проблеми проєктного менеджменту. Розглянуто актуальні питання проєктування систем управління підприємством, застосування технологій проєктного менеджменту в умовах кризових ситуацій.

Призначено для наукових і практичних працівників сфери проєктного менеджменту, керівників підприємств і організацій, які застосовують інструментарій проєктного менеджменту, а також викладачів закладів вищої освіти, аспірантів, студентів.

Матеріали подано в авторській редакції. Відповідальність за зміст матеріалів несуть автори.

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РОСКЛАДКИ Н. О.

DESIGNING AN ENTERPRISE COMPETITIVENESS MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

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This article explores the design of an enterprise competitiveness management system as a strategic tool for sustainable development in a globalized economy. Special emphasis is placed on international logistics and the challenges enterprises face when entering foreign markets, particularly in African countries. It analyzes modern approaches to building such systems, identifies key elements and implementation stages, and emphasizes the role of digital technologies and analytics in decision-making processes.

Keywords: *enterprise competitiveness, management system, strategic management, international logistics, digitalization, African markets.*

У статті досліджується розробка системи управління конкурентоспроможністю підприємства як стратегічного інструменту забезпечення стійкого розвитку в умовах глобалізованої економіки. Особлива увага приділяється міжнародній логістиці та викликам, з якими стикаються підприємства при виході на іноземні ринки, зокрема в африканських країнах. Проаналізовано сучасні підходи до побудови таких систем, визначено ключові елементи та етапи впровадження, акцентовано увагу на ролі цифрових технологій та аналітики у прийнятті управлінських рішень.

Ключові слова: *конкурентоспроможність підприємства, система управління, стратегічне управління, міжнародна логістика, цифровізація, африканські ринки.*

Actuality of the article is determined by today's interconnected global economy, enterprises are increasingly seeking opportunities beyond their domestic markets to sustain growth and enhance profits. International logistics has become a critical component in this endeavor, serving as the backbone for efficient supply chain management and market expansion. In the rapidly evolving global marketplace, enterprise competitiveness is no longer a static goal but a dynamic and continuous process. To achieve and sustain a competitive advantage, modern organizations must move beyond reactive measures and implement a systematic, proactive approach. An Enterprise Competitiveness Management System (ECMS) is a strategic framework designed to systematically analyze, measure, and enhance a company's ability to outperform its rivals and achieve long-term success.

African markets, in particular, present both significant opportunities and challenges for enterprises aiming to establish a competitive presence. The continent's vast resources, growing consumer base, and initiatives like the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) offer immense potential. However, infrastructural deficits, regulatory complexities, and logistical inefficiencies pose substantial hurdles [1].

For instance, the average cost to import a container inland in Africa is approximately $1,100, higher than in most other regions, with landlocked countries facing even steeper costs [2]. Such challenges underscore the necessity for enterprises to develop robust competitiveness management systems that account for the intricacies of international logistics, especially when targeting emerging markets like those in Africa.

The purpose of the article is to formulate a comprehensive approach to designing an enterprise competitiveness management system that effectively integrates international logistics considerations. By identifying structural components, implementation stages, and technological enablers, the goal is to provide enterprises with a practical framework that supports strategic planning, performance monitoring, and competitiveness improvement in a sustainable and adaptive manner, with a particular focus on navigating the complexities of African markets.

Enterprise competitiveness encompasses an organization's ability to deliver products and services more efficiently and effectively than its competitors. It involves a combination of factors, including innovation, operational efficiency, customer satisfaction, and adaptability to market changes. In the context of international logistics, competitiveness is heavily influenced by the efficiency of supply chain operations, the reliability of transportation networks, and the agility to respond to global market demands.

The following table provides a description of key components of a Competitiveness Management System.

Table 1

Main components of a Competitiveness Management System

	Description
Market Analysis and Intelligence	Continuous monitoring of global market trends, customer preferences, and competitor strategies to inform decision-making.
Strategic Planning	Developing long-term objectives that align with the organization's vision and market opportunities, particularly in emerging markets like Africa.
Operational Excellence	Implementing lean processes, quality management systems, and performance metrics to enhance efficiency and reduce costs.
Innovation Management	Fostering a culture of innovation to develop new products, services, and processes that meet evolving customer needs.
Human Capital Development	Investing in employee training and development to build a skilled and adaptable workforce.
Technology Integration	Leveraging digital tools such as Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) systems, Artificial Intelligence (AI), and data analytics to optimize operations and decision-making.

Source: created by author

Well-designed ECMS is built on several fundamental principles that ensure its effectiveness and longevity.

Holistic View: The system must connect internal performance with external market dynamics. It should not operate in a vacuum but rather integrate data on customer behavior, competitor strategies, and industry trends with internal metrics like operational efficiency, financial health, and employee productivity. This integrated view allows for a deep understanding of cause-and-effect relationships.

Dynamic and Adaptive: Competitiveness is a moving target. An effective ECMS must be a living system that can adapt to changing market conditions. It should be designed with flexibility in mind, allowing for easy updates to data sources, analytical models, and strategic priorities.

Data-Driven: All decisions within the system must be grounded in data. The ECMS should provide robust mechanisms for data collection, analysis, and visualization. This replaces intuition and guesswork with actionable intelligence, leading to more reliable and predictable outcomes.

Integrated and Collaborative: Competitiveness is a cross-functional responsibility. The ECMS must break down departmental silos by providing a shared platform for information and collaboration. By integrating data from sales, marketing, operations, and R&D, the system ensures that all parts of the organization are aligned toward common competitive goals.

Expanding into African markets requires a nuanced understanding of the continent's logistical landscape. Despite its potential, Africa faces significant challenges in transportation and infrastructure. For example, the average time for container ships to spend in African ports is about 20 days, compared to 4 days in large international ports, leading to increased costs and reduced competitiveness [4].

However, initiatives like the AfCFTA aim to address these issues by promoting regional integration and reducing trade barriers. The agreement has the potential to increase intra-African trade by over 50% through the elimination of import duties alone, thereby enhancing the continent's attractiveness for international business [5].

The **adoption of digital technologies** is transforming logistics operations across Africa. Ports and logistics companies are increasingly implementing automated terminal operations, blockchain-based tracking systems, and smart customs processes. For instance, the Port of Durban in South Africa has embraced smart port technologies to streamline operations and minimize delays [6].

Moreover, the use of AI in enterprise transformation is revolutionizing business operations and strategies across various industries. AI enables improved efficiency and decision-making by providing predictive analytics, automating routine tasks, and enhancing innovation [7].

Designing and implementing a competitiveness management system is a multifaceted endeavor that requires a structured approach to ensure alignment with organizational goals and adaptability to dynamic market conditions.

Assessment (the initial phase) involves a comprehensive evaluation of the organization's current capabilities, market position, and logistical infrastructure. This includes conducting SWOT analyses, benchmarking against industry standards, and assessing the efficiency of existing supply chain operations. In the context of entering African markets, this stage also encompasses understanding regional trade agreements, infrastructural challenges, and cultural nuances that may impact business operations.

The ***design*** phase focuses on developing a tailored competitiveness management system that integrates strategic objectives with operational processes. This involves setting clear goals, defining key performance indicators (KPIs), and establishing governance structures. Incorporating frameworks like the Balanced Scorecard (BSC) can be instrumental in aligning business activities with the organization's vision and strategy by focusing on financial, customer, internal process, and learning and growth perspectives.

Implementation and effective deployment of the designed system requires meticulous planning and execution. This includes allocating resources, training personnel, and establishing

communication channels to ensure organization-wide buy-in. Utilizing project management methodologies such as PMBOK can provide structured guidance through initiating, planning, executing, monitoring, and closing processes.

Continuous monitoring and evaluation are vital to track progress and identify areas for improvement. Implementing tools like the Balanced Scorecard facilitates the measurement of performance across various dimensions, enabling organizations to make informed decisions and adjustments.

Fostering a culture of ***continuous improvement*** ensures that the organization remains agile and responsive to market changes. Adopting methodologies such as the Plan-Do-Check-Act (PDCA) cycle can support ongoing refinement of processes and strategies.

Maintaining flexibility and adaptability is crucial, especially in today's rapidly evolving business environment. Incorporating scenario planning and risk management strategies allows organizations to anticipate potential challenges and adjust their approaches accordingly.

Engaging stakeholders at all levels, from employees to external partners, is essential for successful implementation. Transparent communication, feedback mechanisms, and collaborative decision-making processes foster a sense of ownership and commitment to the organization's strategic objectives.

Ensuring ***strategic alignment*** between the competitiveness management system and the organization's overarching strategy is paramount. Utilizing frameworks like the McKinsey 7S Model can help analyze and align seven critical elements: strategy, structure, systems, shared values, skills, style, and staff. [8]

An ECMS is not a single tool but a collection of interconnected modules that work together to provide a comprehensive view of competitiveness. Competitive Intelligence (CI) Module is the eyes and ears of the system. Its primary function is to gather, analyze, and disseminate information about the external environment. Internal Performance Analysis (IPA) Module provides a critical self-assessment by measuring the company's internal strengths and weaknesses. Strategic Planning & Foresight Module is where intelligence is translated into action. The module provides the tools for developing and validating competitive strategies.

Designing an ECMS is a project in itself. A structured, phased approach is crucial for success.

Phase 1: Needs Assessment and Scoping. The first step is to clearly define the objectives of the ECMS. What specific competitive challenges is the company facing? Who are the key stakeholders, and what information do they need? This phase involves interviewing managers, analyzing current processes, and identifying the scope and scale of the system.

Phase 2: Data Architecture and Tool Selection. Once the needs are clear, the focus shifts to the technical foundation. This involves designing a robust data architecture that can handle diverse data types from multiple sources. A key decision at this stage is the selection of appropriate tools and technologies, such as business intelligence (BI) software, data warehousing solutions, and competitive intelligence platforms.

Phase 3: Integration and Pilot Project. The core of this phase is to connect the various data sources and build the initial modules. It's recommended to start with a small-scale pilot project within a specific business unit or department. This allows the project team to test the system, identify potential issues, and gather valuable feedback before a wider rollout.

Phase 4: Full-Scale Deployment and Training. After a successful pilot, the system can be deployed across the entire organization. This phase requires a strong focus on change management and training. Employees at all levels need to understand how to use the system, interpret the data, and incorporate the insights into their daily work.

Phase 5: Continuous Improvement. The final and most crucial phase is to establish a culture of continuous improvement. An ECMS is not a one-time project. It requires ongoing maintenance, regular data refreshes, and periodic reviews to ensure it remains relevant and effective in a changing competitive landscape.

Designing an Enterprise Competitiveness Management System is an essential investment for any organization seeking to thrive in the modern economy. By integrating competitive intelligence with internal performance analysis, and by providing a robust framework for strategic planning and monitoring, a well-designed ECMS can provide a sustainable competitive advantage. It transforms a company from a passive observer of market forces into an agile and proactive leader, capable of anticipating change and capitalizing on new opportunities.

***Conclusion*:** An enterprise competitiveness management system provides a structured, strategic approach to maintaining and enhancing competitive advantage in a complex market environment. Its successful design and implementation require the integration of analytical tools, strategic planning, digital technologies, and organizational alignment. As enterprises face increasing uncertainty and disruption, the ability to adapt and innovate through such systems becomes not only desirable but essential. The practical framework outlined in this article offers a roadmap for businesses seeking to institutionalize competitiveness as a continuous, measurable, and strategic process.

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Work is executed under scientific guidance of the Candidate of Sciences (Public Administration), Associate Professor, KRAVTSOV S. S.

APPENDIX B

Revenue and profit of MEEST INTERNATIONAL, USD

Year	2022	2023	2024
Net sales	47 474 871.17	44 672 765.97	66 545 855.10
Operating activity costs	46 807 260.56	43 262 696.09	63 593 259.47
Sales profit	667 610.60	1 410 069.88	2 952 595.64
Other operating income	485 883.94	7 821.01	9 787.25
Other operating expenses	3 085.06	3 149.86	412 235.18
Operating profit (loss)	–	1 414 741.03	2 550 147.70
Gross profit (loss)	1 220 423.12	1 188 047.02	2 596 045.00
Net profit (loss)	1 072 776.64	976 231.18	2 096 842.30