



Your Competitive Advantage March 2026

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“Do you know what your competitive advantage is? Are you sure?” asks global consulting company McKinsey in this [2/18/26 article](#): *“Strategy’s biggest blind spot: Erosion of your competitive advantage.”*

In fact, authors Andy West, Laura LaBerge, and Matt Banholzer assert that:

“Competitive advantage is the most critical yet misunderstood facet of strategy.”

I am often asked to do competitive analyses for clients. In most cases, the focus is on identifying known and not-on-the-radar-yet competitors, and their strengths/weaknesses vis-a-vis the client and current market trends.

But this type of analysis is only *half* the assignment. While measures such as market share, gross revenue, brand awareness and shelf space are important factors, they are not the ultimate definers of competitive advantage.

A true definition of the client’s competitive advantage comes from understanding its customers’ perspectives.

McKinsey agrees: *“In most scenarios, the ultimate authority on a company’s competitive advantage is its customers (and people who could be its customers but instead buy from competitors)... It’s more than a company’s strengths—it’s the reason customers choose its offerings over its peers.”*

But none of this is static, given how quickly market conditions change. This underlines the importance of regularly keeping up with customer habits – not just through data analysis, but by speaking directly with them.

“Most companies aren’t monitoring how their industry positions and competitive advantages may be changing,” state the McKinsey Quarterly authors, continuing, *“Not surprisingly, organizations that track their competitive advantage in each of their markets and use it to guide their growth strategies and investment choices outperform their peers.”*

Are you sure about your competitive advantage? Contact me at Lrink@LindaRink.com.