CROSS-BORDER E-COMMERCE BETWEEN CHINA AND THAILAND UNDER REGIONAL COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP
- A CASE STUDY OF TIKTOK IN THAILAND

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ABSTRACT

The signing of Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) has further expanded China's foreign trade market, coupled with the current rapid development of Internet technology, Internet-based e-commerce cross-border transactions in China's foreign trade are increasingly widely used. In this context, TIKTOK, as an emerging industry of cross-border e-commerce, has ushered in new opportunities and is also facing challenges. How to utilize the advantages of the current environment to rapidly develop the cross-border e-commerce strength of the enterprise is the biggest problem it faces. The research objectives of this paper were 1) to analyze the impact of the entry into force of RCEP on cross-border e-commerce; 2) to Explore the current development status of cross-border e-commerce by combining the current SWOT analysis of TIKTOK cross-border e-commerce; and 3) to analyze the strategic direction of TIKTOK's e-commerce strategy based on the SWOT Strategy Matrix.

This paper adopted a qualitative research method to analyze TIKTOK's Sino-Thai cross-border e-commerce using SWOT analysis. Targeted sampling and data collection methods were also used to interview the relevant teams within TIKTOK. These included four major departments, namely operations, commerce, marketing, and business solution, with 4 directors, 4 supervisors, and 12 employees interviewed, totaling 20 people. They are involved in operation decision-making, business management, marketing operation and strategy deployment, and were closely related to the development of the Group. This was crucial for a deep understanding of TIKTOK's factors and strategies.

This leaded to the conclusion that: 1) The tariff concessions and facilitation measures of RCEP will not only provide a more favorable development environment for the development of cross-border e-commerce, but also greatly promote the increase of the scale of import and export of cross-border e-commerce in the region and reduce the difficulty of cross-border e-commerce transactions. 2) The results of SWOT analysis are:Strengths are Thailand has demographic dividend, the population is young

as well as the Internet penetration rate is high, the e-commerce penetration rate is low, and there is more room for development. Weaknesses are large logistics costs, talent shortages, and social media attributes limiting introduction. Opportunities are RCEP's tariff reduction policy for cross-border e-commerce to broaden the growth space, as well as China's economic development of international influence. Threats are consumers' path dependence on local platforms and the obvious shortcomings in e-commerce logistics support. 3) From the SWOT analysis model, four strategic directions can be derived. SO strategy was to seize the demographic dividend and expand the scale of cross-border e-commerce exports. ST strategy was to customize the publicity program according to the localization and intensify the publicity. WO strategy was to formulate the cross-border e-commerce talent standards and establish a multi-level cross-border e-commerce talent training system. WT strategy was to improve the cross-border infrastructure construction and shorten the trade distance. WT strategies are to improve cross-border infrastructure construction and shorten trade distance.

In conclusion, this study not only theoretically deepens the understanding of SWOT analysis in the formulation of a company's strategic direction, but also provides practical insights for TIKTOK to align its strategic direction with the current environment. This study also highlights the role of SWOT analysis in corporate research on strategic direction for other subsequent corporate research on strategic direction.

Keywords: cross-border e-commerce, RCEP, TIKTOK, SWOT

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Declaration

I, Li Dongyang, hereby certify that the work embodied in this independent study entitled "CROSS-BORDER E-COMMERCE BETWEEN CHINA AND THAILAND UNDER REGIONAL COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP----USING TIKTOK AS AN EXAMPLE" is result of original research and has not been submitted for a higher degree to any other university or institution.

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(Li Dongyang)

March 20, 2024

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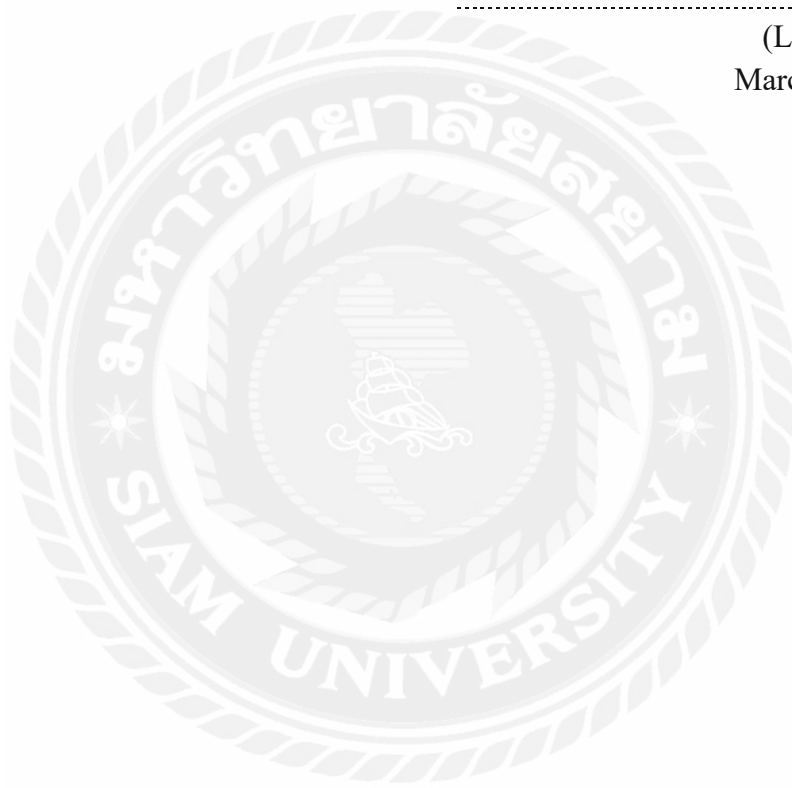
Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1 Research Background

Cross-border e-commerce refers to an international commercial activity in which transaction subjects belonging to different customs borders conclude transactions through e-commerce platforms, make electronic payment and settlement, and deliver commodities through cross-border e-commerce logistics and off-site warehousing so as to complete the transactions. According to the 52nd Statistical Report on the Development of China's Internet, online shopping accounted for a steady increase in the proportion of consumption, and cross-border e-commerce and other business models maintained rapid growth.2023 In the first half of the year, the national online retail sales of physical commodities amounted to 6.06 trillion yuan, an increase of 10.8%, accounting for a proportion of 26.6% of total retail sales of consumer goods, which accounted for a steady increase in the proportion of consumption. Meanwhile, cross-border e-commerce maintains rapid growth, becoming a new growth point for foreign trade.2023 In the first half of the year, China's import and export of cross-border e-commerce amounted to 1.1 trillion yuan, a year-on-year increase of 16%. The proportion of import and export of cross-border e-commerce goods in foreign trade has risen from less than 1% five years ago to around 5%;(Cnnic,2023)

RCEP was initiated by ASEAN in 2012 and took eight years to sign on November 11, 2020, and came into effect on January 1, 2022 in each member country. covering nearly half of the global population and nearly one-third of the world's trade scale, its entry into force means the birth of the world's largest FTA, which will bring new dynamics and new opportunities for traditional foreign trade. First, the tariffs between member countries will be reduced, and even zero tariffs will be realized in the future, which will greatly enhance the competitiveness of China's commodity exports. Secondly, it will simplify the customs clearance procedures among member countries and greatly improve the efficiency of cross-border logistics. Third, unify the rules and policies within the FTA, promote paperless trade, and vigorously promote trade facilitation.The landing of RCEP will weaken the trade barriers, reduce the difficulty of exporting, increase the profit of cross-border e-commerce exports, and stimulate the sustainable development of cross-border e-commerce exports. (Chen, 2023)

With the signing and promotion of RCEP and the rapid development of the Chinese and Thai economies, the economic and trade relations between China and

Thailand continue to strengthen. Currently, China is still the most important trading partner country of Thailand, and Thailand is also China's third largest trading partner country in the ASEAN region. Since the establishment of the China-Thailand Free Trade Area, the scale of cross-border e-commerce transactions between China and Thailand has shown steady growth. In terms of trade scale, the total amount of cross-border e-commerce transactions between China and Thailand has also been climbing. According to the data released by Report e-ConomySEA 2020 (Southeast Asia Digital Economy Report 2020), the total e-commerce transactions of the five ASEAN countries have reached $62 billion in 2020, which is an 11.4-fold increase compared to $5 billion in 2016. In the same year, the ASEAN-5 added 40 million new internet users, bringing the total number of users to 400 million. (Shi, 2023)

Meanwhile, during the New Crown epidemic, the short-video industry developed rapidly, bringing new opportunities and challenges to cross-border e-commerce.TikTok, a popular short-video platform, gradually attracted the attention of e-commerce users due to its unique content format and broad user base. More and more merchants have started to utilize TikTok platform for product promotion and sales, displaying product features and advantages in the form of short videos to attract potential customers and increase sales. In addition to the short video field, TikTok is also gradually involved in the cross-border e-commerce field. By cooperating with e-commerce platforms, TikTok users can buy goods directly on the platform, saving the trouble of jumping to other e-commerce platforms. This convenient shopping experience makes it easier for consumers to be attracted to TikTok's e-commerce ecosystem, providing more sales opportunities for merchants. (Xia, 2024)

Cross-border e-commerce has grown rapidly in recent years, and the entry into force of RCEP has stimulated the continued development of cross-border e-commerce exports. TIKTOK has seized the opportunity to gradually expand its business in Southeast Asia from 2022. 2021 saw the opening of the UK and Indonesia sites, and 2022 saw the one-off opening of five overseas markets - Malaysia, Thailand, Vietnam, the Philippines and Singapore - all RCEP allies. TikTok Shop, a cross-border e-commerce platform, is gaining momentum in Southeast Asia, and will be ranked fourth in the number of downloads of e-commerce apps in Thailand in 2023.

1.2 Research Problem

The research questions of this paper centers on the strategic challenges that TIKTOK is currently facing, particularly the lack of clarity of direction, which has led to the risk of losing control of the market and difficulty in launching new businesses.

This situation raises concerns about the company's ability to effectively adapt to changes in the market as well as its continued growth. Despite TIKTOK's broad user base and position in the industry, these issues may hinder its competitive advantage and ability to survive and thrive in the long term.

And SWOT analysis has a key role to play for companies that are entering new markets and looking for growth opportunities in them. This study aims to identify and address TIKTOK's environmental analysis and strategic direction in the new market environment, where SWOT analysis can help provide clear insights.

Therefore, this study has 3 research questions:

1. How does RCEP affect cross-border e-commerce between China and Thailand?

2. What is the current situation of the development of the company in cross-border e-commerce?

3. What is the direction for companies heading with their strategies in the current cross-border e-commerce environment？

1.2 Research Objective

This paper uses the cross-border e-commerce development with the RCEP in effect as the background, and uses SWOT analysis to analyze China-Thailand cross-border e-commerce and TIKTOK cross-border e-commerce, so as to summarize the e-commerce development strategy of TIKTOK, and to provide effective suggestions for the promotion of the development of TIKTOK.

1. To analyze the impact of the entry into force of RCEP on cross-border e-commerce.

2. To explore the current development status of cross-border e-commerce by combining the current SWOT analysis of TIKTOK cross-border e-commerce.

3. To analyze the strategic direction of TIKTOK's e-commerce strategy based on the SWOT Strategy Matrix.

1.4 Research Scope

This paper will focus on exploring the current situation of import and export cross-border e-commerce between China and Thailand from 2019-2023, analyzing the various types of impacts on it after the entry into force of the RCEP (which will come into effect in January 2022) based on the data that have been made public on the official website and the interview data obtained through the interview method. It also takes TIKTOK as the research object, analyzes the development trend of its cross-border e-

commerce in Thailand (opened in April 2022), and puts forward the development strategy in a targeted manner.

This paper adopts a qualitative method of analysis using SWOT analysis and data collection using interview method. Among them, a total of 20 people were interviewed, including the four major departments of operations, commerce, marketing, and business solution, in which the operations department has 1 director, 1 supervisor, and 3 employees, the commerce department has 1 director, 1 supervisor, and 3 employees, the marketing department The marketing department has 1 director, 2 supervisors and 3 employees, and the business solution department has 1 director, 1 supervisor and 2 employees. They are involved in operational decision-making, business management, market operation and strategy deployment, and are closely related to the Group's development.

The theoretical aspects are drawn from contemporary literature on RCEP, cross-border e-commerce, SWOT and TIKTOK, ensuring that the study is well rooted in existing academic discourse.

By analyzing and summarizing the characteristics of TIKTOK's development in the existing cross-border e-commerce environment, this study aims to contribute to a broader understanding of how firms formulate their development strategies in cross-border e-commerce, and to address the gap in the literature on how firms can develop their cross-border e-commerce and formulate an effective development strategy when RCEP comes into effect.

1.5 Research Significance

Theoretical significance

From an academic perspective, with the rapid development of cross-border e-commerce, theorists have begun to pay attention to and study the development strategy of the enterprise. However, most of them study the overall situation from the perspective of traditional enterprises, and TIKTOK is a product brought by the modern emerging industry, non-traditional e-commerce enterprise type, and there are even fewer monographs analyzing it from the theoretical perspective. Most of the research literature is from a purely theoretical point of view, based on the analysis of the enterprise's internal and external environments, and there are fewer research papers defining the actual development strategy of the enterprise.

This paper focuses on the study of enterprise background to analyze the internal and external characteristics of emerging e-commerce enterprises in the current fast-

developing environment, so as to find out the development strategies that enterprises should choose. Therefore, this paper enriches the research on cross-border e-commerce.

Practical significance

China's cross-border e-commerce imports have realized nearly tenfold growth over the past six years. With the continuous penetration of the consumer population, frequent favorable policies, and the continuous improvement of supporting infrastructure, it is expected that the next three years will continue to maintain a high rate of growth, and the scale is expected to double, and China's cross-border imported e-commerce still has room for significant development. (Deloitte, 2023)

The RCEP e-commerce chapter is the first comprehensive, high-level e-commerce rules outcome reached in the Asia-Pacific region. The chapter covers a wealth of relevant content to promote the use of e-commerce and cooperation, in addition, the parties also reached an important consensus on cross-border message transmission, information storage and other issues in the agreement. These contents will provide institutional guarantee for members to strengthen cooperation in the field of e-commerce, which is conducive to the creation of a favorable environment for the development of e-commerce, and enhance mutual trust in policies, mutual recognition of regulations, and interoperability of enterprises in the field of e-commerce among the members, which will greatly promote the development of e-commerce in the region. (SMCC, 2022)

And with the in-depth development of RCEP, many domestic e-commerce giants have increased their investment in various resources in Thailand, including capital, technology, logistics and other industries involved in the development of cross-border e-commerce, which provides a good material foundation and technical support for the rapid development of cross-border e-commerce between China and Thailand. (Gu, 2023)

It can be seen that the landing of RCEP will have a multifaceted impact on China as well as many member countries including Thailand. While China's cross-border e-commerce still has huge development space, and the friendly exchanges between China and Thailand also accelerate the development of cross-border e-commerce between the two countries. Under the background of the new economic normal, this paper carries out in-depth thinking and research on the development of cross-border e-commerce between China and Thailand, seizes the development opportunities in the new period, pays attention to the problems in the development process, optimizes the development countermeasures, and improves the level of cross-border e-commerce between China and Thailand, which is an inevitable choice and development trend of the development

of the new era, and is an important way to realize China's economic development strategy. And how to be able to eat the dividends, rapid development of cross-border e-commerce of the enterprise, the study of the internal and external characteristics of the enterprise at the moment, namely, advantages and disadvantages, opportunities and threats is very necessary. Therefore, this paper has important practical significance.

Chapter 2 Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews literature studies related to TIKTOK, RCEP, and cross-border e-commerce between China and Thailand, describes concepts and information related to cross-border e-commerce and RCEP, and introduces contents related to the SWOT analysis method, which lays a solid theoretical foundation for the following analysis.

2.2 RCEP

In November 2020, the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) was signed after eight years of negotiations.The RCEP was initiated by the ten ASEAN countries, with the main objective of reducing tariff and non-tariff barriers to trade and liberalizing regional trade.Following the signing of the RCEP, the contracting parties will maintain tariff exemption for e-commerce in the countries of the region, accelerate the digitalization of cross-border e-commerce regulatory approaches, and The RCEP will also accelerate the digitization of cross-border e-commerce regulation and achieve cross-border synergy in consumer protection. Along with the implementation of the provisions of the RCEP agreement, the raw materials, production costs and commodity prices of the contracting parties will also be on a downward trend, which will usher in a historic opportunity for the development of cross-border e-commerce in various countries. Under this opportunity, cross-border e-commerce cooperation between China and Southeast Asia will usher in a broad space for development. (wu,2021)

The signing of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (RCEP) has brought brand new opportunities for the development of China's e-commerce industry and provided policy support for cross-border trade cooperation. With the in-depth development of RCEP, many domestic e-commerce giants have increased their investment in various resources in the ASEAN region, including capital, technology, logistics and other industries involved in the development of cross-border e-commerce, which provides a good material foundation and technical support for the rapid development of cross-border e-commerce between China and ASEAN. (Gu, 2023)

The signing of RCEP has brought opportunities and challenges to China-Thailand trade and promoted the development of China-Thailand trade. In recent years, the trade volume between China and Thailand is climbing, but there are still some influencing factors in the development of trade. China and Thailand are both members of RCEP,

both are developing countries, and trade products are mainly agricultural and sideline products such as fruits and rice. China and Thailand have always been close cooperation on trade, both sides signed a bilateral, multilateral trade and many other agreements, such as China-Thailand zero-tariff agreement on fruits and vegetables, China-ASEAN Free Trade Area of agricultural and sideline products of zero-tariff policy, 2020 RCEP formally signed after the trade between China and Thailand is to enjoy the tariffs of the members of the RCEP and the rules of origin preferential, so that the trade between China and Thailand is more frequent and closer. RCEP is the embodiment of member countries (regions) upholding the multilateral trading system, building an open regional economy, and promoting the development of China's trade with Thailand. Both China and Thailand are making efforts to improve the related infrastructure construction, and the economic trade between China and Thailand under the framework of China-ASEAN FTA has been increasing year by year, and after the signing of RCEP in 2020, it will promote the further development of China-Thailand trade. (Su, 2023)

2.3 Cross-border E-commerce

Cross-border e-commerce refers to an international commercial activity in which transaction subjects belonging to different customs borders conclude transactions, make electronic payment and settlement through e-commerce platforms, and deliver goods through cross-border e-commerce logistics and off-site warehousing, so as to complete the transaction. Cross-border e-commerce is a product of the Internet era, compared with the traditional export trade, cross-border e-commerce will enable merchants to directly face the merchants and consumers in more than 200 countries and regions around the world, with huge market potential and vast imagination.

With the rapid development of cross-border e-commerce, relevant studies on the influencing factors of cross-border e-commerce have begun to emerge. Through the analysis of the cross-border e-commerce export development potential level of each country by calculating the ratio of actual cross-border e-commerce export actual trade volume to the simulated cross-border e-commerce export trade volume, from the results, the cross-border e-commerce export development of China and most of the RCEP member countries is still in the period of high-opportunity development, and there is still a lot of space for synergistic development. (CHEN, 2023) It can be seen that studying the development of cross-border e-commerce between China and Thailand is an inevitable choice for the development of the times.

With the popularization of the Internet, online shopping has developed rapidly, and online shopping during the epidemic has become a norm. Internationally, online

shopping has also gradually become the norm for people's consumption, and cross-border e-commerce has also ushered in a good time for development. (ZHANG, 2023)

In recent years, Thailand has attached great importance to the construction of digital infrastructure, and has actively launched a large number of practical cooperation with China, laying a solid foundation for bilateral cooperation. This cooperation has received much attention and support from the leaders of the two countries, including the signing of the China-Thailand Strategic Cooperation Joint Action Plan (2022-2026), the China-Thailand Cooperation Plan for Jointly Promoting the Construction of One Belt and One Road, as well as a number of cooperation documents involving trade and investment, e-commerce, and science and technology innovation. The signing of these documents further consolidated the close partnership between China and Thailand in the field of cross-border e-commerce. It is particularly noteworthy that with the entry into force of RCEP, China has adopted the policy of zero tariff or immediate reduction to zero for Thailand's tariffs on 960 categories of agricultural products, which covers 65.3% 65.3% of Thailand's total agricultural products, providing a huge opportunity for Thailand's agricultural products to expand their sales in the Chinese market. Both China and Thailand are actively committed to the efficient implementation of the RCEP agreement and to promoting the best interests of both sides, primarily through the free trade area arrangement.2021, China-Thailand trade grew by 33 percent to exceed the important threshold of 100 billion U.S. dollars for the first time, underscoring the remarkable breakthrough in bilateral cooperation. This deepening cooperation is of great value in further consolidating China-Thailand relations and promoting the prosperity of the regional economy. (Shi, 2023)

Cross-border e-commerce in the current era is gradually expanding its market share, becoming the norm for people's consumption and becoming the mainstream consumption mode. Therefore, it is very necessary to study the current situation and development trend of cross-border e-commerce.

2.4 TIKTOK

TikTok, a short-video communication platform under the banner of ByteDance, was officially launched in May 2017, with the vision of "inspiring creativity and bringing pleasure".TikTok has become a global short-video social media platform with billions of users. TikTok is the international version of Jieyin, a short-video platform under ByteDance Group. TikTok has been launched in four Southeast Asian countries, including Thailand, Vietnam, Malaysia, and the Philippines, and has launched the TikTok Shop in a short period of time, becoming a cross-border e-commerce platform

of great interest. in December 2020, TikTok completed the live-streaming cooperation with Walmart in the U.S. In March 2021, TikTok joined hands with a local company in Indonesia to bring goods to Indonesia. TikTok made its Southeast Asian live streaming debut in Indonesia in partnership with local cross-border e-commerce platform Shopee.TikTok's collaboration with local e-commerce platforms has facilitated its successful rollout outside of the country. (ZHANG, 2023)

TIKTOK has its obvious advantages and disadvantages. First of all, TikTok is a short video platform, showing content to everyone in the form of short videos, triggering users' support and gaining a strong user scale and traffic, and the innovation of content and form makes it quickly catch fire all over the world, with a top ranking in downloads.TikTok also develops a shopping function in the process of overseas development, and the users plant their own self-used products in the daily videos of the bloggers to form a good user adhesion. Successful marketing by building trust. Secondly, TikTok belongs to social media, initially social media is a platform for people to learn about new things and plant products, the main function is to socialize and entertainment, shopping on the social platform is not the main purpose of users. The platform function limits its introduction of sellers and buyers, and TikTok entered the Southeast Asian market after the rise of local cross-border e-commerce platforms, and the current e-commerce supply chain construction is not perfect. (ZHANG, 2023)

According to the data on the network's official website, it can be learned that in more than 80 million downloads of Jitterbug and its overseas version of TikTok. which accounted for 1% of downloads of Jitterbug and 16% of downloads of the overseas version of TikTok. during the outbreak, shopping with TikTok gradually became a trend, and the number of people who made purchases on TikTok surged by 553%, which is almost as high as Instagram (The number of people shopping on TikTok jumped 553% during the epidemic, nearly three times the growth in shopping on Instagram (189%) and Facebook (160%). Unlike other traditional social platforms, TikTok has a higher percentage of younger users, who are more willing and receptive to new things than other age groups. In addition, short-video platforms have stronger social attributes and engagement and better user stickiness than other social platforms, making TikTok's model - interest-based e-commerce - even more dependent on impulse spending by users. Today, TikTok is still growing rapidly and is expected to remain on an upward trend in the coming years. Many foreign Internet users are not good at short-video marketing, so this provides many opportunities for e-commerce in China. Merchants can choose to conduct cross-border e-commerce business abroad, or they can selectively teach the methods and strategies of short-video marketing to their

foreign friends, or become a celebrity to help merchants bring in goods and so on. (Xia, 2024)

TIKTOK's good video viewing experience and the new shopping mode of TIKTOK SHOP make it develop rapidly. A good start requires stable development, so it is necessary to explore cross-border e-commerce in a new mode.

2.5 SWOT

SWOT model, also known as situational analysis model, is a combination of various internal and external factors closely related to the target object, including advantages S (Strengths), disadvantages W (Weaknesses), opportunities O (Opportunities) and threats T (Threats), through the investigation of the enumeration and matrix analysis, to analyze the target object of the internal resources, the external environment, and to analyze the competitive environment and formulate strategic decisions. SWOT model is the first framework proposed by Professor Andrews of Harvard Business School and refined by Professor Weihrich of University of San Francisco, which has been widely used in the comprehensive analysis of internal and external environments of target objects and the formulation of competitive strategies. (LIU,2019)

With the rapid development of economy, science and technology and many other aspects, especially the acceleration of the process of globalization and integration of the world economy, the establishment of global information networks and the diversification of consumer demand, the environment in which enterprises are located is more open and turbulent. This change has had a profound impact on almost all enterprises. Because of this, environmental analysis has become an increasingly important business function.

Environmental trends fall into two broad categories: those that represent environmental threats and those that represent environmental opportunities. An environmental threat is the challenge posed by an unfavorable trend in the environment that will result in a weakening of the company's competitive position if decisive strategic action is not taken. An environmental opportunity is an area of attractive behavior for the company in which it will have a competitive advantage.

It is one thing to recognize attractive opportunities in the environment, it is quite another to possess the competitive capabilities necessary to succeed in them. Every business needs to examine its strengths and weaknesses on a regular basis. When two

firms are in the same market or they both have the ability to provide products and services to the same group of customers, if one of the firms has a higher profit margin or profit potential, then we consider that firm to have a competitive advantage over the other, and vice versa for a competitive disadvantage. In the process of maintaining its competitive advantage, an enterprise must have a deep understanding of its own resources and capabilities and take appropriate measures. Because once an enterprise has a competitive advantage in a certain area, it is bound to attract the attention of competitors. Generally speaking, the enterprise after a period of effort, to establish a certain competitive advantage; and then in the maintenance of this competitive advantage posture, competitors began to respond gradually; and then, if the competitors directly attack the enterprise's strengths, or to take other more powerful strategy, it will make this advantage is weakened.

Therefore, SWOT analysis is actually the internal and external conditions of the enterprise in all aspects of the content of the synthesis and generalization, and then analyze the strengths and weaknesses of the organization, facing the opportunities and threats of a method. SWOT analysis is one of the most commonly used internal and external environmental conditions of the enterprise strategic factors of the integrated analysis method.

The SWOT matrix helps managers of an organization to identify and develop four types of strategies: SO strategy (Strengths and Opportunities Strategy), WO strategy (Weaknesses and Opportunities Strategy), ST strategy (Strengths and Threats Strategy) and wT strategy (Weaknesses and Threats Strategy). The most difficult part of planning enterprise SWOT analysis lies in the combination of external environment and internal conditions, which not only requires solid theoretical skills and rich practical experience, but also requires strategic intuitive judgment and does not follow a fixed pattern. (Yu, 2008)

SWOT model, as a traditional qualitative analysis tool, on the one hand, can quickly help to locate the direction of development, but on the other hand, it also has the shortcomings of being highly subjective and has the limitation that it can only indicate the direction of development but not determine the plan.
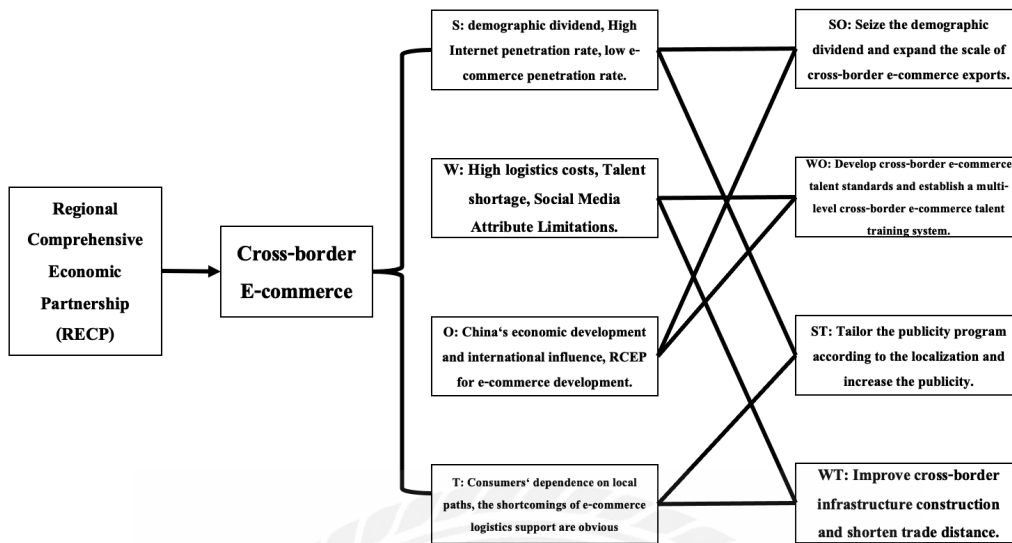
2.5 Theoretical frameworks

Figure 2.5 Theoretical frameworks

Chapter 3 Research Methodology

3.1 Introduction

Based on the previous chapters, this chapter adopts a qualitative research methodology, collects qualitative data through the interview method, and analyzes and researches the current state of the cross-border e-commerce environment in China and Thailand as well as the current state of TIKTOK's development by using the SWOT analysis model in order to identify opportunities for development and to adjust the development strategy.

3.2 Research design

This paper utilizes SWOT analysis to conduct a comprehensive, systematic, and accurate study of the scenario in which the subject of the study is located, so as to discover the directions, plans, and countermeasures for developing strategies based on the results of the study. In this paper, SWOT analysis can help companies locate the strengths and weaknesses of TIKTOK's development on the Sino-Thai e-commerce track under the cross-border e-commerce environment under the RCEP in force, expand their understanding of it, and discover the opportunities and threats.

In order to gain a deeper understanding, this paper will use interviews as the main data collection method. These interviews will be conducted with relevant people within tiktok. The selection criteria for the interviewees will include their role in the company's operations, their experience in strategic planning, and their involvement in decision making during critical periods.

The interview questions will be carefully designed to elicit detailed responses that will provide insight into TIKTOK's strategic decision-making process. The questions will be designed to help reveal an assessment from within the company of its strategic context and positioning at the current stage, as well as an understanding of the motivations and considerations in the process of future strategy development.

The questions for this interview were designed as follows:

Table 3.2 interview questions desgin

Factors	Interview Questions
Strengths (S)	1. what advantages does TIKTOK have in the current cross-border e-commerce market between China and Thailand?

	2. How does TIKTOK strategically capitalize on these advantages?
	3. Can you elaborate on what relevant strategic adjustments TIKTOK has made?
Weaknesses (W)	4. what disadvantages does TIKTOK have in the current cross-border e-commerce market between China and Thailand?
	5. How does TIKTOK strategically improve these disadvantages?
	6. Can you elaborate on what relevant strategic adjustments TIKTOK has made?
Opportunities (O)	7. What opportunities does TIKTOK have in the current cross-border e-commerce market between China and Thailand?
	8. How does TIKTOK strategically capitalize on these opportunities?
	9. Can you elaborate on what relevant strategic adjustments TIKTOK has made?
Threats (T)	10. what are the threats to TIKTOK in the current Chinese-Thai cross-border e-commerce market?
	11. How does TIKTOK strategically avoid these threats?
	12. Can you elaborate on what relevant strategic adjustments TIKTOK has made?
General Questions	13. In what ways has the entry into force of RCEP affected TIKTOK's operational strategy?
	14. From your perspective, what will be TIKTOK's future development in the cross-border e-commerce market between China and Thailand?
	15. Looking back over the past few years, what are the most important successes and lessons learned from TIKTOK's growth strategy?

Each question aims to map TIKTOK's decision-making process in the current cross-border e-commerce context. This not only helps to understand the content of the factors and their impacts, but also helps to identify the direction of its strategy.

By examining the qualitative data from the interviews, as well as the official and publicly available secondary data, this study aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the SWOT factors of TIKTOK in the current context, as well as its strategies. The content obtained will contribute to a full understanding of TIKTOK's

case situation in the context of SWOT analysis, as well as its strategy development ideas, providing valuable lessons for academic research and practical application.

3.3 Sampling and data collection

This paper uses targeted sampling and data collection methods to explore TIKTOK's development strategies in the current context. A total of 20 people were interviewed. They were carefully selected because they had different perspectives and were directly involved in the strategy development process of the company.

The sampling was purposive and focused on people in each of the departments of the company that focus on decision making. It includes four major departments: operations, commerce, marketing, and business solution, in which operations department has 1 director, 1 supervisor, and 3 employees, commerce department has 1 director, 1 supervisor, and 3 employees, marketing department has 1 director, 2 supervisors, and 3 employees, and business solution department has 1 director, 1 supervisor, and 3 employees in total. 2 employees, 3 employees in marketing department, 1 director, 1 supervisor and 2 employees in business solution department participated in the interviews, totaling 20 people. They are respectively involved in the company's operational decision-making, business management, marketing operation and strategy deployment, and are closely related to the Group's development.

Data collection was conducted through semi-structured interviews that allowed for a natural and in-depth exploration of each participant's experiences and insights. Each interview was conducted in an environment convenient to the participant, either face-to-face or via a virtual platform, and was recorded and transcribed for detailed analysis. These interviews were supplemented by extensive document analysis of TIKTOK's publicly available data and strategy documents, which complemented the interview data and assisted in triangulating the findings. This sampling and data collection methodology provided a multifaceted understanding of TIKTOK's current status and strategy development.

3.4 Data analysis

After completing the interviews and collecting additional documents for this study, a structured data analysis method was used to achieve the goal of understanding TIKTOK's growth strategy in the current cross-border e-commerce context. The altered analysis aimed to understand insiders' perceptions of TIKTOK's SWOT and to synthesize how the development strategy was formulated in the context of these four factors.

The first step was to categorize the collected data based on the four SWOT elements of SWOT analysis. This classification facilitates the subsequent summarization of it and lays the foundation for further analysis.

In the second step, the key elements of the four SWOT elements were summarized and the corresponding strategies were identified. This was done by carefully analyzing the interview responses and aligning them with the results of the document analysis. Responses from different participants provided different perspectives on development strategies, which were summarized to provide a comprehensive picture of the key elements of development strategies for each aspect of TIKTOK. Similarities and differences in the data were identified and analyzed to draw meaningful conclusions.

In order to identify the key elements of each element and ultimately the development strategy, the study used thematic analysis. This involved identifying recurring themes and concepts in the data that were relevant to the SWOT factors and strategies. Thematic analysis helped to reveal TIKTOK's strengths and weaknesses, opportunities and threats at this stage and the corresponding development strategies.
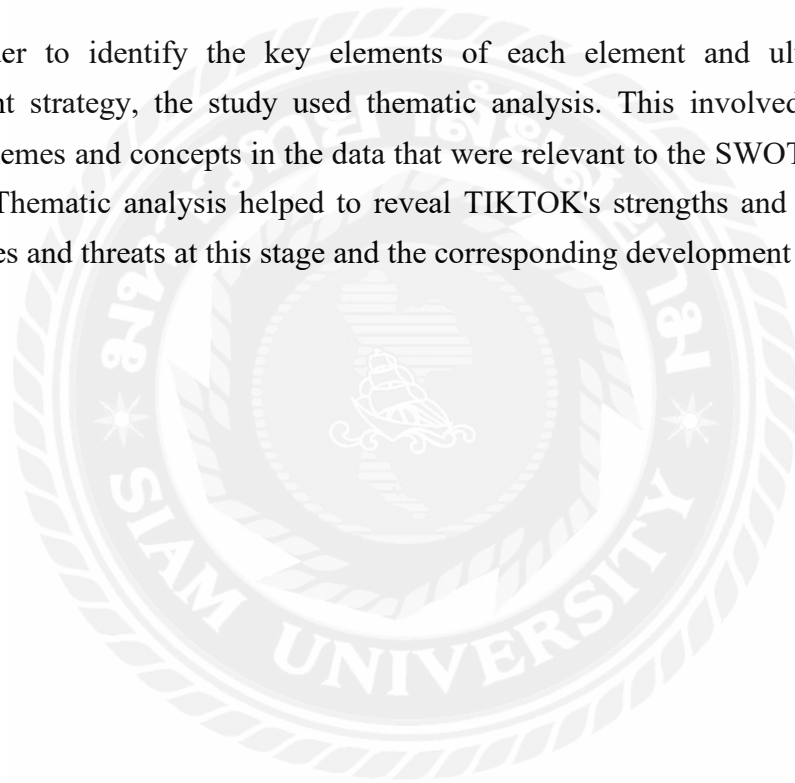
Chapter 4 Findings

4.1 Introduciton

In this section, the paper will analyze the data collected in the interviews and summarize the impact of the entry into force of RCEP on cross-border e-commerce based on the data collected in the interviews and combined with the official data that have been made public, and analyze the current situation of cross-border e-commerce and summarize the corresponding strategies through the SWOT analysis method.

4.2 Impact of RCEP on Cross-border E-commerce

The data from the interviews show that the impact of RCEP is taken into account by the top management of each department of the company when making decisions, and that the impact is mostly positive.

The signing and entry into force of RCEP marks the successful launch of the world's largest free trade area, which includes the 10 ASEAN countries as well as China, Japan, South Korea, Australia and New Zealand.

RCEP explicitly adopts the concept of "e-commerce", focusing on the rules related to new trading platforms for traditional goods trade mediated by the Internet, i.e., it has an obvious encouraging and facilitating effect on cross-border e-commerce. Secondly, RCEP's tariff reduction commitments, customs procedures and trade facilitation measures and other policies have been put in place to open up the industrial chain, value chain and supply chain, which will greatly promote the increase in the scale of cross-border e-commerce imports and exports in the region, and reduce the difficulty of cross-border e-commerce transactions, so that small and medium-sized micro-enterprises (SMMEs) and Southeast Asian markets will become a new growth point for cross-border e-commerce. Finally, by recognizing electronic signatures and electronic authentication, it will not only help improve the transparency of cross-border transactions, but also help improve efficiency and reduce transaction costs.

After the entry into force of RCEP, the customs of the countries in the region have adopted more convenient customs clearance procedures such as pre-determination, pre-arrival processing, information technology application, and hierarchical management of enterprises to further improve the efficiency of customs clearance, and have formed a synergy with the rules related to the chapter on e-commerce, which has safeguarded

the timeliness and stability of the cross-border e-commerce logistics, and thus facilitated the development of intra-regional trade.

4.3 SWOT analysis of cross-border e-commerce

By analyzing the content of the interviews, it is possible to understand the perception of the company within TIKTOK.

Table 4.3 Interview data key concept frequencies

Factors	Key Concepts/Phrases from Interviews
Strengths (S)	Demographic dividend (90%), young population (85%), high internet penetration (75%) low e-commerce penetration (75%)
Weaknesses (W)	Larger logistics costs (75%), talent shortage (70%), media attribution limitations (70%)
Opportunities (O)	Tariff reductions, policy support (90%), increased influence of China's economic development (80%)
Threats (T)	Consumers' dependence on local paths (85%), and the shortcomings of e-commerce logistics support are obvious (80%)

Strengths (S)

Thailand has a demographic dividend with a young population. At the same time, GDP per capita is increasing year by year, and the middle class is driving the demand for shopping; online shopping is more easily accepted and absorbed by young people, and e-commerce is more likely to penetrate first in young countries and regions.

High Internet penetration rate, low e-commerce penetration rate, more room for development. The Internet penetration rate of Southeast Asian countries is higher than the global average, and Internet users are highly addicted to the Internet and spend more time on the Internet than the global average, which provides good conditions for the continuous and rapid development of e-commerce.

Weaknesses (W)

Large logistics costs. The overall logistics infrastructure in Southeast Asia is backward, which directly affects the operating costs and efficiency of cross-border logistics enterprises. Although the express delivery business is developing rapidly, the competition is still insufficient and is still at a relatively backward level.

Talent shortage. Talent shortage is the bottleneck that non-local enterprises are most likely to encounter in overseas development. At the same time in Thailand's e-commerce industry as a whole is in a relatively early stage, there is not too much basic experience in e-commerce, so there is not too much to learn from, refer to, and introduce a relatively comprehensive talent.

Social media properties limit the introduction. TikTok is a social media platform, which limits the introduction of sellers and buyers, and TikTok entered the Southeast Asian market after the rise of local cross-border e-commerce platforms, and the current e-commerce supply chain is not yet complete.

Opportunities (O)

Tariff reduction and exemption policies have broadened the growth space for cross-border e-commerce. Before the signing of RCEP, cross-border e-commerce companies had to pay different levels of tariffs for exporting goods. With the gradual implementation of the "progressive" zero-tariff policy by the RCEP countries, the tariffs on goods exported by cross-border e-commerce companies will be significantly reduced, and there will be a wide scope for growth in the types and quantities of goods that can be exported.

Increased international influence of China's economic development. The continuous improvement of China's comprehensive national power and international influence is also an important opportunity for cross-border e-commerce development. China's role in many international economic cooperation organizations is becoming more and more influential, all of which can improve the recognition of overseas consumers of China's economy and trade in Chinese goods.

Threats (T)

Consumers are path-dependent on local platforms. Due to the different geographic locations of China and Thailand, the living habits, religious beliefs, and traditional cultures of the residents are somewhat different, which further amplifies the path dependence of consumers on local platforms. after the signing of the RCEP agreement, it has become an inevitable trend for cross-border e-commerce companies from China and Thailand to penetrate each other's markets. Under this situation, consumers' natural path dependence on local platforms makes it more difficult for foreign cross-border e-commerce companies to operate.

The shortcomings of e-commerce logistics support are obvious. The signing of RCEP means that the demand for trade has increased significantly, and the demand for freight transportation to match has grown accordingly. However, at this stage, Thailand's local e-commerce supporting shortcomings are obvious, and it is difficult to meet the requirements of both sides of the cross-border e-commerce goods export logistics services. On the one hand, the geographical environment of Southeast Asian countries is complex and changeable, and the distribution difficulty itself is high. On the other hand, the vast majority of Southeast Asian countries lack mature logistics companies, and the degree of informatization in the local logistics industry is generally low, with overall poor delivery efficiency and service quality.

4.4 Cross-border e-commerce development strategy

In this section, the study explores the financial characteristics of Monmilk Group at each identified life cycle stage. The analysis draws on the qualitative data from interviews and aligns it with quantitative findings from the company's financial documents.

Table 4.4 Key Characteristics

Factors	Key Concepts/Phrases from Interviews	Record
Strengths (S)	Demographic dividend (90%), young population (85%), high internet penetration (75%) low e-commerce penetration (75%)	"Southeast Asian countries like Thailand have a numerical advantage in terms of population and have been developing fast in recent years, and young people are quick to accept new things" "E-commerce in Thailand is still developing, but there is a trend to shift from offline to online shopping, and there is still a lot of room for e-commerce to grow"
Weaknesses (W)	Larger logistics costs (75%), talent shortage (70%), media attribution limitations (70%)	"Thailand's logistics costs are relatively higher, not as well developed as China's 'four-way'" "People use TIKTOK mainly to watch more short videos, and it is still relatively difficult to convert from video to e-commerce"
Opportunities (O)	Tariff reductions, policy support (90%), increased influence of China's economic development (80%)	"The landing of RCEP is really good news, the tariff reductions, facilitation measures and other contents in it have reduced the cost greatly for the development of cross-border e-commerce" "The landing of RCEP is really good news, the tariff reductions, facilitation measures and other contents in it have reduced the cost greatly for the development of cross-border e-commerce"
Threats (T)	Consumers' dependence on local paths (85%), and the shortcomings of e-	"But cross-border e-commerce are facing a problem, that is, its local software is to have a larger customer base, which is a challenge for us"

	commerce logistics support are obvious (80%)	"Unlike LAZADA which has its own LEX courier, TIKTOK can only cooperate with other courier companies, but it's not fully developed yet, the short board is more obvious"

4.4.1 SO strategy

Seize the demographic dividend and expand the scale of cross-border e-commerce exports. Thailand's overall population is young, belonging to a typical young country with a rising population, which can bring a huge consumer demographic dividend for cross-border e-commerce. Population size has a significant positive impact on cross-border e-commerce exports, and Thailand has a large population base, the overall population is in the dividend period, enterprises should seize the opportunity of population rise, vigorously develop cross-border e-commerce exports. At the same time, the youthful population will bring the prevalence of social media culture, TIKTOK should deeply understand the Thai social media culture, increase foreign social media marketing efforts to seize the demographic dividend development period.

4.4.2 ST strategy

Tailor the publicity program according to the localization and increase the publicity. As the Thai population is young and has a strong ability to accept new cultures, TIKTOK needs to integrate local culture in many ways, promote through various means and provide appropriate incentives, increase the penetration rate of e-commerce, create a new business model, and support excellent local brands to increase the acceptance of the local population, thus promoting development.

4.4.3 WO strategy

Develop cross-border e-commerce talent standards and establish a multi-level cross-border e-commerce talent training system. The sustainable and high-quality development of cross-border e-commerce needs the support of professional cross-border e-commerce talents. Aiming at the current problems in the process of cross-border e-commerce talents training, it is suggested to improve the following two aspects: First, accelerate the formulation of cross-border e-commerce talents standards, and integrate cross-border e-commerce related courses into the talents training system. The second is to take the demand of cross-border e-commerce enterprises as the goal, and increase the cultivation of talents with "foreign language + cross-border e-commerce" by integrating the professional resources of universities. At the same time, according to the market demand, we will train high-level talents who are fluent in foreign languages, have cross-cultural communication ability and international

operation ability, and are familiar with international rules and regional country knowledge.

4.4.4 WT strategy

Improve cross-border infrastructure construction and shorten trade distance. The trade distance between two countries has a significant negative impact on cross-border e-commerce exports, and the problem of trade distance can be effectively solved by strengthening infrastructure construction and improving the time of product transportation. Enterprises should make full use of the advantages of RCEP, combined with the "Belt and Road" development strategy, to increase infrastructure assistance to the relatively backward countries in the RCEP member countries, to provide the corresponding technical and financial support, to build an interconnected cross-border logistics network, to simplify customs clearance, to improve cross-border transportation efficiency, and to reduce the cost of logistics and transportation. At the same time, we will vigorously promote the construction of overseas warehouses, jointly build an efficient and fast logistics system, enhance the consumer shopping experience, and improve the problem of returning and exchanging goods.
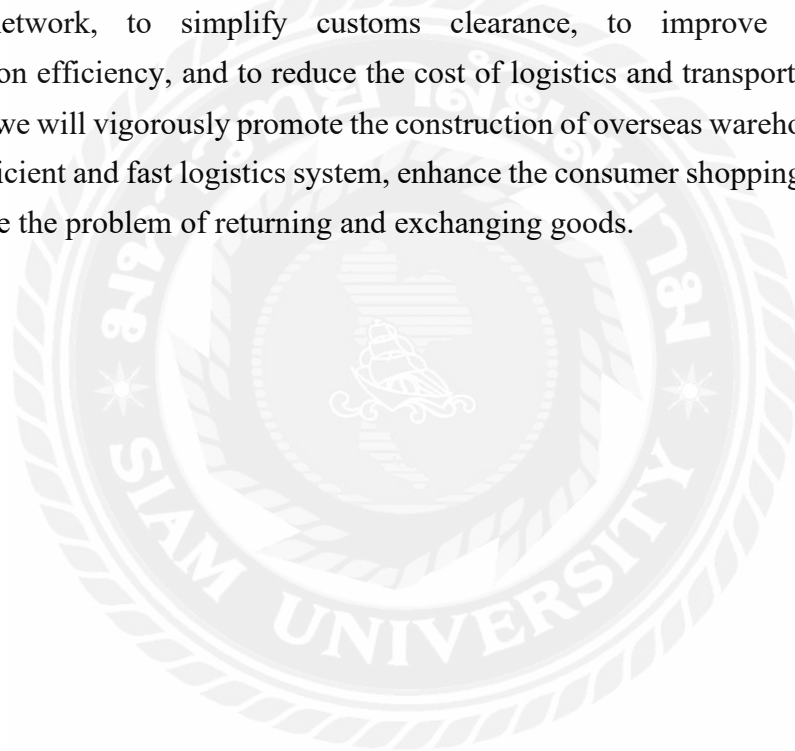
Chapter 5 Conclusion and Recommendation

5.1 Conclusion

This paper explores the analysis of various factors in the field of cross-border e-commerce for TIKTOK in the context of the successful landing of the RCEP, in order to arrive at a more favorable development strategy. The research questions focus on the impact of RCEP on cross-border e-commerce, the SWOT analysis of TIKTOK in the current cross-border e-commerce environment and the corresponding development strategies.

5.1.1 Impact of RCEP on Cross-border E-commerce

First, the signing and entry into force of RCEP marks the successful launch of the world's largest free trade area. It has an obvious encouraging and promoting effect on cross-border e-commerce. Second, the RCEP's tariff reduction commitments, customs procedures and trade facilitation measures and other policies have been put in place to bridge the gap between the industrial chain, value chain and supply chain for enterprises, which will greatly promote the increase in the scale of cross-border e-commerce imports and exports in the region and reduce the difficulty of cross-border e-commerce transactions. Finally, by recognizing electronic signatures and electronic authentication, it not only helps to improve the transparency of cross-border transactions, but also helps to improve efficiency and reduce transaction costs.After RCEP came into effect, customs of the countries in the region adopted more convenient customs clearance procedures such as pre-determination, pre-arrival processing, information technology application, and hierarchical management of enterprises to further improve the efficiency of customs clearance and to form a synergy with the rules related to the chapter on e-commerce to guarantee the efficiency of cross-border The timeliness and stability of cross-border e-commerce logistics have been ensured, which in turn promotes the development of intra-regional trade.

5.1.2 SWOT analysis of cross-border e-commerce

This section will comprehensively synthesize the content of each factor in the SWOT analysis.

First of all, in terms of advantages, Thailand has a demographic dividend, the population is young, the emerging shopping mode is easier to be accepted and absorbed, easier to develop; and the Internet penetration rate is high, the penetration rate of e-

commerce is low, for the cross-border e-commerce to continue to develop rapidly equipped with good conditions.

Secondly, cross-border e-commerce in China and Thailand also has certain disadvantages, logistics costs are large, the logistics level is still relatively backward, while the shortage of talent is also the bottleneck that non-local enterprises are most likely to encounter in overseas development. The social media attribute of TIKTOK also limits its introduction of sellers and buyers to a certain extent, and the supply chain is still not perfect.

Once again, there are huge opportunities in the development process, as the tariffs on goods exported by cross-border e-commerce companies will be significantly reduced as a result of RCEP, which will usher in a vast space for growth in the types and quantities of goods that can be exported. At the same time, China's comprehensive national strength and international influence continue to rise, all of which can improve overseas consumers' sense of identification with China's economy and trade in Chinese goods.

Finally, there are also threats to the development process. Due to the different geographic locations of China and Thailand, the living habits of residents, religious beliefs, traditional culture has a certain degree of variability, and this variability further amplifies the path of consumer dependence on local platforms, making it more difficult for foreign cross-border e-commerce operations. At the same time, Thailand's e-commerce supporting shortcomings are obvious, making it difficult to meet the logistics service requirements for the export of cross-border e-commerce goods from both sides.

5.1.3 Cross-border e-commerce development strategy

This section describes TIKTOK's development strategy.SO strategies combine the advantages to seize the opportunity, i.e., seizing the demographic dividend and expanding the scale of cross-border e-commerce exports. Thailand's population is young, which is typical of a young country with a rising population, and can bring a huge consumer demographic dividend for cross-border e-commerce. The youthful population will bring the prevalence of social media culture, TIKTOK should deeply understand the Thai social media culture, increase the foreign social media marketing efforts, to seize the demographic dividend development period. ST strategies to develop the advantages of avoiding threats, that is, according to the localization of customized promotional programs, increase publicity. IKTOK needs to integrate local culture in

many aspects, publicize through various ways and provide corresponding preferential policies, increase the penetration rate of e-commerce, create a new business model, and support excellent local brands to improve the acceptance of the local population, thus promoting the development of WO strategies to address the disadvantages of the development of opportunities, i.e., to formulate the standards for cross-border e-commerce talents, and establish a multi-level cross-border e-commerce talent training system. Accelerate the development of cross-border e-commerce talent standards, integrate cross-border e-commerce-related courses into the talent training system, target the needs of cross-border e-commerce enterprises in various positions, and increase the cultivation of "foreign language + cross-border e-commerce" talents through the integration of professional resources of various colleges and universities. wt strategies to address the disadvantage of avoiding the threat of perfecting cross-border infrastructure construction and shortening the trade distance. Infrastructure construction, shorten the trade distance. Strengthening infrastructure construction and improving product transportation time can effectively solve the problem of trade distance. Build an interconnected cross-border logistics network, simplify customs clearance, improve cross-border transportation efficiency and reduce logistics and transportation costs. At the same time, we vigorously promote the construction of overseas warehouses and jointly build an efficient and fast logistics system to enhance the consumer shopping experience and improve the problem of returning and exchanging goods.

5.2 Recommendation

Under the framework of RCEP, the cross-border e-commerce industry of China and Thailand has shown the development trend of expanding trade scale, diversified investment direction and increasingly close cooperative relationship. At the same time, the two countries also face some challenges, such as insufficient cross-border e-commerce infrastructure construction and talent shortage. To address these issues, China and Thailand need to actively promote the construction of cross-border e-commerce infrastructure, optimize the logistics network and payment system, as well as strengthen talent training and the legal system to ensure safety, security and compliance. At the same time, both sides should continue to work closely together to solve current problems and continuously improve their respective capabilities and mechanisms. In the future, the success of cross-border e-commerce between China and Thailand will serve as a model for the complementary advantages of the two economies, further stimulate the huge potential of cooperation between the two sides, lay a solid foundation for sustainable development, and promote cross-border e-commerce cooperation to a new stage.

At the same time, the entry into force of RCEP not only creates better trading conditions for each member country, but also creates a favorable trading environment for large, small, medium and micro enterprises. Enterprises can seize the opportunity to seek better development. Long-lasting and good development also requires the joint efforts of each country to deeply analyze the problems and causes of the development process, and formulate effective countermeasures to promote the better development of cross-border e-commerce. In order to promote the stable, sustainable and rapid development of cross-border e-commerce, countries should strengthen the construction of infrastructure, establish a unified e-commerce platform and payment system, strengthen the construction of cross-border e-commerce team at the same time, optimize the cross-border e-commerce service system, regulate the behavior of cross-border e-commerce enterprises, and promote its progress towards modernization, standardization and integration.
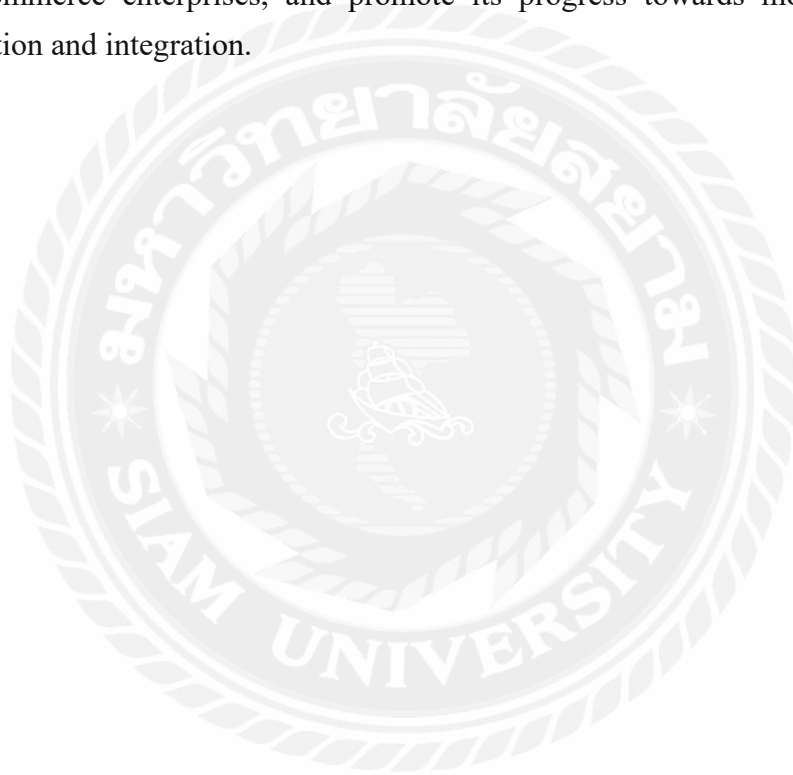
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Appendix

Interview outline

Strengths (S)

1. what advantages does TIKTOK have in the current cross-border e-commerce market between China and Thailand?

2. How does TIKTOK strategically capitalize on these advantages?

3. Can you elaborate on what relevant strategic adjustments TIKTOK has made?

Weaknesses (W)

4. what disadvantages does TIKTOK have in the current cross-border e-commerce market between China and Thailand?

5. How does TIKTOK strategically improve these disadvantages?

6. Can you elaborate on what relevant strategic adjustments TIKTOK has made?

Opportunities (O)

7. What opportunities does TIKTOK have in the current cross-border e-commerce market between China and Thailand?

8. How does TIKTOK strategically capitalize on these opportunities?

9. Can you elaborate on what relevant strategic adjustments TIKTOK has made?

Threats (T)

10. what are the threats to TIKTOK in the current Chinese-Thai cross-border e-commerce market?

11. How does TIKTOK strategically avoid these threats?

12. Can you elaborate on what relevant strategic adjustments TIKTOK has made?

General Questions:

13. In what ways has the entry into force of RCEP affected TIKTOK's operational strategy?

14. From your perspective, what will be TIKTOK's future development in the cross-border e-commerce market between China and Thailand?

15. Looking back over the past few years, what are the most important successes and lessons learned from TIKTOK's growth strategy?