

Strategic Role of Product Line Expansion in Business Growth: A Management Perspective from Consumer Goods Enterprises

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Abstract - Product line expansion has become a prominent growth strategy among consumer goods enterprises operating in highly competitive and saturated markets. While expanding product offerings can create new revenue streams and strengthen market presence, it also introduces managerial complexity related to coordination, control, and resource allocation. As a result, product line expansion is not merely a marketing or product development decision but a strategic management challenge with significant organizational implications. This paper examines the strategic role of product line expansion in business growth from a management perspective, focusing on consumer goods enterprises. Drawing on business management and strategic decision-making literature, the study develops a conceptual framework that explains how managerial judgment, organizational capabilities, and process alignment influence the outcomes of product line expansion initiatives. The analysis emphasizes that growth through product line expansion depends on the firm's ability to manage complexity, integrate functions, and balance strategic trade-offs between focus and variety. The paper argues that successful product line expansion requires deliberate managerial coordination rather than opportunistic product proliferation. Enterprises that align expansion decisions with organizational capacity and control mechanisms are more likely to achieve sustainable growth and protect brand equity. By positioning product line expansion as a management-driven growth mechanism, this study contributes to business management literature and provides actionable insights for executives in consumer goods industries.

Keywords - Business Management, Product Line Expansion, Consumer Goods Enterprises, Growth Strategy, Managerial Decision-Making

I. INTRODUCTION

Consumer goods enterprises operate in environments characterized by intense competition, rapid product imitation, and evolving consumer preferences. Within such markets, sustaining growth often requires firms to look beyond price competition or geographic expansion and toward strategic initiatives that leverage existing brand and operational

capabilities. Product line expansion has emerged as one of the most frequently adopted growth strategies in this context, enabling firms to address diverse consumer needs and capture incremental demand within established market positions.

Despite its widespread adoption, product line expansion presents a complex managerial challenge. While adding new products or variants may appear to be a straightforward response to market opportunities, expansion decisions generate cascading effects across organizational functions. Supply chains must accommodate increased complexity, marketing strategies must preserve brand coherence, and management control systems must adapt to greater operational variety. Consequently, product line expansion cannot be understood solely as a product or marketing decision; it is fundamentally a business management issue that reshapes how organizations coordinate activities and allocate resources.

From a growth perspective, product line expansion offers both opportunity and risk. On one hand, it can enhance revenue diversification, strengthen customer retention, and improve competitive positioning. On the other hand, excessive or poorly managed expansion may dilute brand identity, erode margins, and strain managerial attention. The tension between growth potential and organizational burden underscores the need for a managerial lens that examines how expansion decisions are evaluated, implemented, and governed.

Existing research on product line strategies has largely focused on market-level outcomes such as consumer choice, competitive response, and pricing effects. While these insights are valuable, they provide limited guidance on the internal management challenges that accompany expansion. Less attention has been paid to how managerial judgment, organizational capabilities, and control mechanisms influence the success or failure of

product line expansion initiatives, particularly in consumer goods enterprises where scale and speed amplify complexity.

This paper addresses that gap by examining the strategic role of product line expansion in business growth from a management perspective. It conceptualizes expansion as a process that requires alignment between strategic intent and organizational capacity. Rather than treating expansion as an isolated decision, the study emphasizes the cumulative impact of multiple expansion initiatives on managerial coordination, decision-making, and performance control.

The analysis presented in this paper is guided by three central objectives. First, it seeks to clarify why product line expansion has become a dominant growth strategy in consumer goods enterprises. Second, it examines the managerial and organizational conditions under which expansion contributes to sustainable growth rather than operational overload. Third, it develops a conceptual framework that integrates product line decisions with managerial control, process alignment, and risk management considerations.

By framing product line expansion as a management-driven growth mechanism, this study contributes to business management literature and offers practical insights for executives navigating growth in complex consumer markets. The sections that follow situate consumer goods enterprises as a distinct growth context and build toward a systematic analysis of how product line expansion shapes organizational performance and strategic outcomes.

II. CONSUMER GOODS ENTERPRISES AS A GROWTH CONTEXT

Consumer goods enterprises operate within market environments defined by high product turnover, strong brand competition, and continuous pressure for differentiation. Unlike capital goods or service-based industries, consumer goods markets are characterized by frequent purchase cycles and low switching costs, which intensify rivalry and reduce the durability of competitive advantage. In this context, growth strategies must address both demand volatility and the need to sustain consumer relevance over time.

A defining feature of consumer goods enterprises is their reliance on portfolio-based competition. Firms rarely compete with a single product; instead, they manage collections of related offerings that target different price points, usage occasions, or consumer segments. This portfolio logic creates a natural inclination toward product line expansion as a means of capturing incremental demand without abandoning established brand positions. From a management perspective, growth is often pursued through internal portfolio development rather than through external market entry alone.

However, the same characteristics that make product line expansion attractive also amplify managerial complexity. Consumer goods enterprises typically operate large-scale production, distribution, and marketing systems designed for efficiency and consistency. Introducing additional products or variants increases the number of stock-keeping units, complicates demand forecasting, and raises coordination requirements across supply chain and commercial functions. Growth in this sector therefore places substantial demands on managerial systems and organizational processes.

Brand architecture further shapes the growth context of consumer goods enterprises. Strong brands represent valuable strategic assets that can be leveraged through line extensions, yet brand dilution remains a persistent risk. Managers must balance the desire to exploit brand equity with the need to maintain clarity and coherence in brand meaning. Product line expansion decisions thus intersect with brand management considerations, requiring coordination between strategic intent and marketing execution.

Consumer goods enterprises also face intense pressure from retail partners and distribution channels. Shelf space constraints, retailer performance metrics, and promotional expectations influence which products are launched and sustained. As a result, product line expansion is often driven not only by consumer demand but also by channel dynamics that reward assortment breadth and responsiveness. This external pressure reinforces the strategic appeal of expansion while simultaneously increasing operational and managerial burden.

Importantly, the growth context of consumer goods enterprises is shaped by scale. As firms grow,

marginal gains from additional products may decline while complexity costs increase. Managing this trade-off requires sophisticated decision-making frameworks that account for both growth potential and organizational capacity. Firms that lack such frameworks risk pursuing expansion beyond their ability to execute effectively.

In summary, consumer goods enterprises constitute a growth context in which product line expansion emerges as both an opportunity and a challenge. Portfolio-based competition, brand leverage, channel pressures, and scale dynamics collectively drive expansion strategies while amplifying managerial complexity. Understanding this context is essential for analyzing how product line expansion functions as a strategic growth mechanism. The following section examines how business management literature has conceptualized product line expansion and highlights gaps that motivate the present study.

III. PRODUCT LINE EXPANSION IN BUSINESS MANAGEMENT LITERATURE

Product line expansion has been examined across multiple streams of business and management research, including marketing strategy, industrial organization, and strategic management. Early studies primarily focused on market-level outcomes such as consumer choice, price competition, and demand substitution. Within this tradition, product line expansion was often framed as a competitive tactic aimed at increasing shelf presence, deterring entry, or segmenting heterogeneous consumer preferences.

From a strategic management perspective, product line expansion has been associated with growth, diversification, and resource leverage. Scholars have emphasized the role of existing assets—such as brand equity, distribution networks, and manufacturing capabilities—in reducing the marginal cost of introducing new products. This line of research highlights how firms exploit economies of scope to pursue growth within familiar market domains. However, these analyses often treat organizational capacity as a given rather than as a constraint that evolves with expansion.

Business management literature has gradually shifted attention toward the internal implications of product line decisions. Studies examining

organizational design and managerial attention have suggested that increased product variety imposes coordination and control challenges that can offset growth benefits. As product portfolios expand, firms must allocate managerial attention across a broader set of activities, increasing the risk of decision overload and execution inconsistency. This perspective underscores the importance of management systems in mediating the relationship between expansion and performance.

Despite these advances, existing literature remains fragmented. Marketing-focused research tends to emphasize consumer response and brand effects, while operations and supply chain studies focus on complexity and efficiency trade-offs. Strategic management research often addresses expansion at an aggregate level, with limited attention to the micro-level managerial processes that govern product line decisions. As a result, there is a lack of integrative frameworks that connect expansion strategy with managerial capability and organizational control.

Another limitation of prior research lies in its treatment of expansion as a discrete event rather than as an ongoing process. Many studies analyze single expansion decisions or short-term outcomes, overlooking the cumulative effects of repeated product introductions over time. In consumer goods enterprises, product line expansion is rarely a one-time initiative; it is a continuous strategic practice that reshapes organizational routines and performance trajectories. Understanding this dynamic requires a management perspective that accounts for learning, adaptation, and path dependence.

Recent work in organizational theory has begun to address these gaps by examining how complexity influences managerial effectiveness. Concepts such as attention-based views of the firm and dynamic capabilities suggest that growth strategies must be aligned with the organization's capacity to sense, seize, and coordinate opportunities. Product line expansion, when viewed through this lens, becomes a test of managerial systems rather than merely a market opportunity.

In summary, while business management literature provides valuable insights into the strategic rationale and market effects of product line expansion, it offers

limited guidance on the managerial mechanisms that enable sustainable growth. This study builds on existing research by integrating strategic, organizational, and managerial perspectives to examine how product line expansion functions as a management-driven growth strategy in consumer goods enterprises. The next section explores the strategic motivations that drive firms to pursue product line expansion despite its inherent complexity.

IV. STRATEGIC MOTIVATIONS FOR PRODUCT LINE EXPANSION

Product line expansion is commonly pursued by consumer goods enterprises as a strategic response to growth pressures in competitive and mature markets. While expansion decisions may appear opportunistic, they are typically driven by a set of underlying strategic motivations that reflect both external market conditions and internal organizational objectives. Understanding these motivations is essential for evaluating why firms expand product lines and how such expansion aligns with broader growth strategies.

One primary motivation for product line expansion is revenue growth through demand capture. By introducing new variants, sizes, or complementary products, firms seek to address unmet or emerging consumer needs within existing market segments. Expansion allows firms to extract additional value from established distribution channels and brand recognition without incurring the full costs associated with entering entirely new markets. From a management perspective, this approach leverages existing assets to generate incremental growth.

Market coverage and competitive positioning represent another strategic driver. Expanding product lines enables firms to occupy more shelf space, reduce opportunities for competitors, and deter entry by increasing the intensity of assortment-based competition. In consumer goods markets where visibility and availability strongly influence purchase decisions, breadth of offerings can function as a defensive strategy. Managers may therefore pursue expansion to protect market share as much as to stimulate growth.

Product line expansion is also motivated by the desire to diversify revenue streams and reduce

dependence on a narrow set of products. Consumer demand can be volatile, and reliance on a limited portfolio exposes firms to greater risk. By broadening the product line, firms aim to stabilize revenues across different consumer segments, price points, or usage occasions. This diversification logic reflects a risk management perspective embedded within growth strategy.

Brand leverage plays a central role in motivating expansion decisions. Strong brands create opportunities for line extensions that capitalize on existing consumer trust and awareness. Managers often view product line expansion as a way to amplify brand value by extending its presence across related categories. However, this motivation carries implicit trade-offs, as excessive extension may dilute brand meaning if not carefully managed.

Internal strategic considerations further influence expansion motives. Product line expansion can provide a mechanism for utilizing excess capacity, deploying innovation capabilities, or motivating internal teams. In some cases, expansion is driven by organizational momentum, where established routines and incentives favor continuous product introduction. Such internally driven motives highlight the importance of managerial oversight in ensuring that expansion aligns with strategic priorities rather than becoming an end in itself.

Importantly, strategic motivations for product line expansion are rarely singular. Firms often pursue multiple objectives simultaneously, combining growth ambitions with competitive defense and risk mitigation. This multiplicity complicates managerial decision-making, as trade-offs among objectives must be evaluated and prioritized. Expansion initiatives that lack clear strategic intent risk generating complexity without commensurate performance gains.

In summary, product line expansion in consumer goods enterprises is driven by a combination of growth-oriented, competitive, and risk-related motivations. These motivations reflect both external market pressures and internal strategic considerations. Recognizing the strategic logic behind expansion decisions provides a foundation for examining how managers evaluate and implement product line expansion initiatives, which is the focus of the next section on managerial

decision-making.

V. MANAGERIAL DECISION-MAKING IN PRODUCT LINE EXPANSION

Product line expansion decisions represent complex managerial choices that extend beyond technical assessments of market demand or product feasibility. In consumer goods enterprises, these decisions require executives to balance strategic ambition with organizational capacity, often under conditions of uncertainty and competitive pressure. As a result, product line expansion is best understood as a managerial decision-making process shaped by judgment, experience, and institutional constraints.

A defining characteristic of expansion-related decision-making is uncertainty. Consumer preferences evolve rapidly, competitive responses are difficult to predict, and operational implications may not be fully visible at the time of decision. Managers must therefore rely on imperfect information when evaluating potential expansions. This reliance elevates the role of managerial judgment and increases the importance of decision frameworks that help structure analysis and mitigate cognitive bias.

Resource allocation constitutes a central dimension of managerial decision-making in product line expansion. Introducing new products requires investments in development, production, marketing, and distribution, often diverting resources from existing offerings. Managers must assess whether anticipated growth justifies these commitments and whether the organization can absorb additional complexity without compromising performance. Such evaluations require cross-functional input and executive-level coordination.

Decision-making authority also influences expansion outcomes. In some organizations, product line decisions are centralized to ensure strategic coherence and brand consistency. In others, authority is distributed across business units or functions to encourage responsiveness and innovation. Each approach entails trade-offs between control and flexibility. Effective management involves aligning decision authority with the strategic importance and risk profile of expansion initiatives.

Organizational incentives further shape decision-making behavior. Performance metrics tied to revenue growth or innovation output may encourage expansion, while cost-control incentives may discourage it. Managers operating under misaligned incentives may pursue product line expansion for short-term gains despite long-term organizational strain. This dynamic underscores the need for governance mechanisms that align managerial incentives with sustainable growth objectives.

Temporal considerations add another layer of complexity. Expansion decisions often involve long development cycles and delayed performance feedback, making it difficult to evaluate success in real time. Managers must commit to expansion paths before outcomes are observable, increasing the risk of escalation of commitment. Structured review processes and milestone-based evaluation can help organizations reassess expansion initiatives and adjust course as needed.

Importantly, managerial decision-making in product line expansion is influenced by organizational learning and prior experience. Firms with histories of successful expansion may develop confidence and routines that support subsequent initiatives, while those with negative experiences may become overly cautious. Leadership plays a critical role in interpreting past outcomes and ensuring that learning informs future decisions rather than constraining strategic options.

In summary, managerial decision-making in product line expansion involves navigating uncertainty, allocating resources, and aligning authority and incentives. The quality of these decisions depends not only on market analysis but also on organizational context and leadership judgment. Understanding these decision-making dynamics provides a foundation for examining the organizational capabilities required to support product line expansion, which is addressed in the following section.

VI. ORGANIZATIONAL CAPABILITIES REQUIRED FOR PRODUCT LINE EXPANSION

Successful product line expansion depends not only on strategic intent but also on the presence of organizational capabilities that enable firms to

absorb increased complexity. In consumer goods enterprises, expansion initiatives place additional demands on coordination, execution, and control, making capability development a critical determinant of growth outcomes. From a business management perspective, organizational capabilities function as the infrastructure that translates expansion decisions into sustainable performance.

Operational capability represents a foundational requirement. As product portfolios expand, firms must manage greater variety in production processes, inventory configurations, and distribution requirements. This necessitates standardized yet flexible operations that can accommodate variation without sacrificing efficiency. Enterprises with mature operational systems are better positioned to scale product lines while maintaining service quality and cost discipline.

Supply chain capability is closely linked to operational readiness. Product line expansion increases the number of inputs, suppliers, and logistics flows that must be coordinated. Effective supplier management, demand forecasting, and inventory planning become essential to prevent bottlenecks and stock imbalances. Firms lacking integrated supply chain capabilities often experience disproportionate complexity costs that undermine the benefits of expansion.

Marketing and brand management capabilities also play a critical role. Expanding product lines requires consistent communication of brand meaning across multiple offerings. Managers must ensure that new products reinforce rather than dilute brand equity. This requires coordination between product development and marketing functions, as well as disciplined portfolio governance to prevent overextension. Strong brand management capability enables firms to leverage expansion for growth while preserving strategic coherence.

Managerial and organizational integration capabilities further distinguish firms that succeed in expansion from those that struggle. Product line expansion cuts across functional boundaries, requiring alignment among research and development, operations, marketing, finance, and sales. Firms with established cross-functional coordination mechanisms can integrate new products more effectively, reducing delays and execution errors. These integrative capabilities are particularly

important as the number of concurrent expansion initiatives increases.

Control and performance management capabilities provide oversight as complexity grows. Expanded product lines require systems that track performance at granular levels, enabling managers to assess profitability, identify underperforming products, and make informed portfolio adjustments. Without robust control mechanisms, firms risk accumulating low-performing products that drain resources and obscure strategic priorities.

Importantly, organizational capabilities for product line expansion are cumulative and path-dependent. Firms develop these capabilities through experience, learning, and deliberate investment. Expansion initiatives that outpace capability development often lead to organizational strain and diminished returns. Conversely, firms that align expansion pace with capability growth are more likely to achieve sustainable performance improvements.

In summary, product line expansion places significant demands on organizational capabilities across operations, supply chains, marketing, integration, and control. These capabilities enable firms to manage complexity and convert expansion initiatives into growth. Understanding their role sets the stage for examining how increased product variety affects managerial control and coordination, which is the focus of the next section.

VII. PRODUCT LINE COMPLEXITY AND MANAGERIAL CONTROL

As consumer goods enterprises expand their product lines, managerial complexity increases in both scope and intensity. Product line complexity arises from the growth in the number of products, variants, and configurations that must be managed simultaneously. While this complexity may support market coverage and revenue diversification, it also challenges existing control mechanisms and tests the limits of managerial oversight.

Managerial control in simpler product portfolios often relies on direct supervision, informal coordination, and aggregated performance indicators. As product variety increases, these approaches become insufficient. Managers must oversee a wider array of product-specific decisions

related to pricing, promotion, production planning, and lifecycle management. Without adequate control systems, complexity obscures visibility into performance and weakens accountability.

One key challenge associated with product line complexity is information overload. Managers must process larger volumes of data across multiple dimensions, including sales performance, cost structures, and inventory levels for each product. This overload can dilute managerial attention and increase the likelihood of delayed or suboptimal decisions. Business management research suggests that effective control systems help filter and prioritize information, enabling managers to focus on strategically relevant signals.

Formal management control systems become increasingly important as complexity grows. Budgeting processes, product-level profitability analysis, and performance dashboards provide structure and transparency. These tools allow managers to compare outcomes across products, identify deviations, and take corrective action. In the absence of formalized controls, complexity may mask inefficiencies and allow underperforming products to persist.

However, control systems must be designed carefully to avoid excessive rigidity. Overly granular controls may slow decision-making and discourage experimentation, particularly in dynamic consumer markets. Managers face the challenge of balancing detailed oversight with sufficient discretion for local adaptation. Selective control—focusing on high-impact or high-risk products—offers a way to manage complexity without stifling responsiveness.

Product line complexity also affects organizational accountability. As portfolios expand, responsibilities may become diffused across functions and teams. Clear role definitions and decision rights are essential to maintain control and prevent coordination failures. Firms that clarify ownership at the product or category level are better positioned to align incentives and enforce accountability.

In summary, product line complexity intensifies demands on managerial control systems. Effective management requires visibility, structured information, and clear accountability mechanisms

that scale with portfolio growth. When aligned with strategic objectives, managerial control enables firms to harness the benefits of expansion while mitigating the risks of complexity. The next section examines how process alignment and execution challenges emerge as product lines expand.

VIII. PROCESS ALIGNMENT AND EXECUTION CHALLENGES

Product line expansion places substantial pressure on organizational processes that were often designed for narrower portfolios. As new products are introduced, misalignment between product development, operations, marketing, and distribution can emerge, undermining execution quality. From a management perspective, the core challenge lies in synchronizing processes across functions to ensure timely and consistent delivery.

Execution challenges frequently arise during product launches, where compressed timelines and cross-functional dependencies increase the risk of coordination failures. Inadequate process alignment may lead to production delays, inconsistent market messaging, or inventory imbalances. Firms that formalize launch processes, clarify handoffs, and establish escalation mechanisms are better positioned to execute expansion initiatives reliably.

Process alignment also requires balancing standardization with flexibility. While standardized procedures support efficiency and control, excessive rigidity may impede adaptation to product-specific requirements. Managers must therefore design modular processes that provide common structures while allowing tailored execution where necessary. Such alignment reduces friction and supports scalability as portfolios grow.

IX. RISK MANAGEMENT IN PRODUCT LINE EXPANSION STRATEGIES

Risk management is integral to product line expansion, as increased variety amplifies exposure to market, operational, and financial risks. Market risks include cannibalization and demand uncertainty, while operational risks stem from complexity-induced errors and capacity constraints. Financial risks arise from sunk development costs and margin erosion.

Effective risk management involves identifying risk

profiles at the product level and integrating mitigation measures into decision and execution processes. Scenario analysis, staged investment, and post-launch reviews enable firms to contain downside risk while preserving growth options. Embedding risk considerations into managerial routines enhances resilience in expansion strategies.

X. STRATEGIC TRADE-OFFS IN PRODUCT LINE DECISIONS

Product line expansion forces managers to navigate trade-offs between focus and variety, depth and breadth, and short-term growth and long-term efficiency. Expanding too broadly may dilute managerial attention and brand coherence, while excessive focus may limit growth opportunities.

Strategic clarity is essential to managing these trade-offs. Firms that articulate explicit criteria for expansion—such as strategic fit, capability alignment, and profitability thresholds—are better equipped to make consistent decisions. Trade-offs must be revisited as portfolios evolve and organizational capacity changes.

XI. PERFORMANCE IMPLICATIONS OF PRODUCT LINE EXPANSION

The performance effects of product line expansion are heterogeneous and contingent on managerial execution. Well-managed expansion can enhance revenue growth, improve customer retention, and strengthen competitive positioning. Conversely, poorly managed expansion may increase costs, reduce margins, and complicate operations.

Performance assessment requires product-level visibility and portfolio-level synthesis. Firms that monitor both individual product outcomes and aggregate portfolio performance can adjust strategies proactively, pruning underperforming products and reallocating resources to high-potential areas.

XII. PRODUCT LINE EXPANSION AND COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE

When aligned with organizational capabilities, product line expansion can contribute to sustainable competitive advantage. Economies of scope, brand leverage, and learning effects enable firms to

outcompete rivals with narrower offerings. However, competitive advantage depends on disciplined portfolio governance that prevents overextension.

Sustained advantage arises when expansion reinforces core competencies and strengthens market positioning. Firms that treat expansion as a strategic system rather than a sequence of isolated launches are more likely to achieve durable benefits.

XIII. MANAGERIAL LESSONS FROM CONSUMER GOODS ENTERPRISES

Several managerial lessons emerge from this analysis. Product line expansion should be governed as a strategic process, not delegated solely to functional initiatives. Executive oversight, cross-functional coordination, and capability alignment are critical to success.

Managers should pace expansion to organizational capacity, invest in control and coordination systems, and institutionalize learning mechanisms. These practices enable firms to harness growth while managing complexity.

XIV. IMPLICATIONS FOR BUSINESS MANAGEMENT PRACTICE

For practitioners, this study highlights the importance of integrating expansion decisions with management systems. Clear expansion criteria, modular processes, and product-level accountability improve execution quality. Treating product line expansion as a management capability enhances scalability and performance.

XV. ACADEMIC CONTRIBUTIONS AND RESEARCH IMPLICATIONS

This paper contributes to business management literature by framing product line expansion as a management-driven growth mechanism. It integrates strategic, organizational, and control perspectives to explain heterogeneous outcomes. Future research may empirically test these relationships across industries and examine digital tools that support portfolio management.

XVI. LIMITATIONS AND DIRECTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

As a conceptual study, this paper does not provide empirical validation. Future studies could employ longitudinal designs, comparative case analyses, or quantitative modeling to assess the impact of managerial systems on expansion outcomes.

XVII. CONCLUSION

Product line expansion plays a strategic role in business growth for consumer goods enterprises, but its success depends on managerial capability and organizational alignment. By managing complexity through disciplined decision-making, process alignment, and control systems, firms can convert expansion into sustainable growth. Viewing product line expansion through a management lens advances understanding of growth strategy in complex competitive environments.

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