Category

Strategy

Core vs Edge Strategy Playbook

Defend, extend, and create — three distinct plays for three parts of the business

- Executive
- Intermediate
- Template Included

- Mithun A. Sridharan

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- 4 minute(s)

Overview

A framework for classifying business activities into core, adjacent, and edge, and applying the right strategic play — defend, extend, or create — to each instead of one uniform strategy across the whole business.

How is this different from the Three Horizons model?

Three Horizons organizes investment by time horizon (near-term to long-term). Core vs Edge organizes it by the business's current centrality to competitive advantage, which is a related but distinct lens — a Horizon 1 initiative can be either core-defending or edge-extending depending on what it actually does.

What counts as "edge"?

Activities genuinely peripheral to current competitive advantage — early-stage experiments, small emerging business lines, or capabilities being tested for future relevance — not simply "smaller" parts of the existing core business.

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Mithun A. Sridharan Thought Leader

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