A Work Project, presented as part of the requirements for the Award of a Master's degree in International Management from the Nova School of Business and Economics.

BUSINESS IN PRACTICE:

Performance analysis of Novamotive's transition to sustainable success and self-reflection

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Abstract

This work project critically analyses NovaMotive's performance and development. NovaMotive is a fictive car manufacturer created within the *Business in Practice* business simulation. The observation period covers six years of simulation and three weeks of the overall program. The project places particular emphasis on the functions of strategy, marketing and operations, as the firm undergoes a strategic transformation to enhance sustainability and expand its presence in markets with high growth potential. In addition, it examines both business and team-related challenges, offering detailed reflection to organizational learning and personal development.

Keyword

Business Strategy, Business Simulation, Automotive, Marketing, Operations, Sustainability, Theory in Practice, Personal Reflection, Team Dynamics

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1. Changing consumer preferences aim at new industry standards

Automotive market and consumer preferences - The automotive industry is a key sector for the global and European economy and highly competitive. In Europe alone vehicle manufacturing is set to grow yearly by around 5% and future mobility up to 21,9% until 2028 (see graph 1). The industry employs 13,8 million employees and represents 7% of the European Union's (EU) Gross Domestic Product (GDP) ('Automotive Industry - European Commission', n.d.). Yet, the automotive market is increasingly disrupted by Chinese electric vehicle (EV) manufacturers. Their success is based on smart supply chains, fast innovation cycles and low cost solutions that have become a severe threat to global automotive firms (Steiber and Teece 2025; Thoma and O'Sullivan 2011). Deloitte's new study finds important changes in consumer preference in mobility. Consumers' willingness to switch car brand increased, suggesting the significance of marketing decisions in the industry. Autonomous driving has regained interest from consumers, yet their concerns remain (Deloitte Insights 2025). These changes represent opportunities as well as challenges for automotive manufactures.

Company introduction – NovaMotive is global a vehicle manufacturer that operates in Europe, Americas and Asia. It has undergone a strategic transformation over the past six years. The firm now prioritizes high capital investments innovation, sustainability as well as accessible vehicles for the broad population. This was a necessary decision the board had to make to stay competitive, develop towards consumer preferences and increase presence in the Asian automotive manufacturing business. NovaMotive is a fictive company that was created as part of the *Business in Practice* business simulation, a master thesis program at Nova SBE.

Structure – This chapter reviews NovaMotive's company strategy, the marketing department as well as the operations department performance. Each functions initial strategy, performance,

strategy adaptions and final review will be analyzed and evaluated. The information for this analysis will come from simulation data, personal notes as well relevant theory. In a next step NovaMotive's performance will be set in context to real companies. Finally, this chapter concludes with a final discussion including cross-functional correlations and collaborations.

1.1. NovaMotive's new strategy focuses on EV and sustainability to stay competitive

As the automotive market and consumer preferences evolve into a complex environment, it is essential to define an efficient strategy. Common mistakes are lack of involvement and accountability, and inadequate monitoring (Twum 2021). Therefore, the strategy development process was guided by Richard Rumelt's kernel to a good strategy. It defines that firstly the problem or challenge must be *diagnosed*, secondly a *guiding policy* needs to be created and lastly the *coherent actions* must be developed (Rumelt 2017). Additionally, it is essential that cross-functional collaboration and alignment among board member is ensured (Yin et al. 2023).

1.1.1. Increasing demand for EVs is an opportunity for NovaMotive

Diagnosis - To identify the challenges in the EV market, four key frameworks have been applied, including a PESTEL analysis (Gupta 2013; Tsangas et al. 2019), Porters five forces (Porter 2008), SWOT analysis (Tsangas et al. 2019) and the Ansoff Matrix (Ansoff 1973; Martinet 2010).

A closer look at the *macro developments* shows that regulations, purchasing power and sustainability are key trends. Regulations affect the CO_2 emission limits, safety and privacy laws. The purchasing power is determined by exchange rates, cost of living and economic conditions. And sustainability is driven by EV subsidies, infrastructure as wells a shift in consumer preferences and increasing raw materials demand (see figure 1).

The *competitive environment* is characterized by intense competitive rivalry and strong power of suppliers, while the power of buyers and the threat of new entrants are less relevant. NovaMotive must address the high initial investments in the EV market and demanding suppliers (see figure 2).

The *SWOT analysis* shows that NovaMotive is well-positioned due to its profitability, product portfolio and EV market entry. Yet, the product maturity, inventory management and sustainability rating could lead to challenges. NovaMotive might face threats such as regulations, cost pressure and fluctuation in material prices, while increasing demand in sustainable mobility, broad technology access and unmet demand are major opportunities (see figure 3).

1.1.2. A broad portfolio, sustainability and high innovation are strategic key pillars

Guiding policies – After conducting the strategy analysis the opportunities as well as potential challenges were identified. Therefore, three key policies had been developed:

1) NovaMotive focuses on a broad target group with a differentiating product portfolio (see figure 4) to make EV mobility and vehicles more accessible.
2) The firm aims to achieve differentiation through premium vehicles led by autonomous driving.
3) NovaMotive seeks to achieve sustainability leadership to better navigate through regulations and shifting consumer preferences.

Coherent actions – The three policies provide NovaMotive with guidance and key performance indicators (KPIs), see figure 5. From policy 1, action points include the development of EV models that correspond to all key car types (SUV, sport, pick-up trucks, city car etc.) and expand sales globally, especially Asia. Policy 2 commits to high capital investment in innovation as

well as the target to reach level 4 of autonomous driving for all vehicles. Policy 3 ensures to only manufacture electric vehicles and publish an annual ESG report. Furthermore, the firm's vision and mission are provided in figure 6.

1.1.3. The strategy was successfully implemented, yet two actions are still pending

Three factors are essential for a successful strategy execution: full leadership support, clear goals with strategic planning and effective communication (Vigfússon et al. 2021). At NovaMotive, the board fully supported the new strategy by following Richard Rumelt's kernel to a good strategy.

Implementation - The current product portfolio (see Figure 7) included three combustion vehicles in Q4 and was replaced in Q13 by a new EV fleet, which reduced the CO_2 fleet emission from 69,32 (g/mile) in Q4 to zero by Q13. The new fleet consisted of seven different car types that all include electric engines (see figure 8). Further, the fleet analysis (see figure 9) emphasized some cars require heavy investments or need to be adapted to better fit consumer preferences. The innovation department successfully followed the strategy and achieved great diversification. The two car models classified as a "question mark" are planned to by replaced by new generations following Q28 (Figure 10). Another significant part of the strategy was implemented as NovaMotive's ESG report was published in year 4.

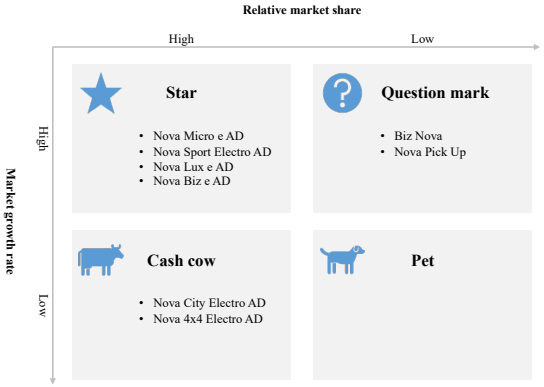


Figure 10: NovaMotive's BCG Growth Share Matrix by Q28; *source: own rendering*

Review – Two of NovaMotive's strategic actions had to be reviewed, as the board faced challenges. First, it was reported that the firm's market shares decreased since Q9 and plummeted by Q18 (see graph 2). A cross-functional analysis concluded that the strategic policies remained valid but highlighted to react more flexible to external changes. This allowed marketing to adapt increase the market share. Second, evaluations indicated, that to meet the Q28 target, key innovation investments had to be made during years 1-3, otherwise the vehicles would not amortize before Q28. Therefore, the annual USD 1 billion target for innovation was stopped by year 2. Overall, NovaMotive's strategy transformation can be evaluated as successful (see figure 11).

1.2. A temporary deviation in price strategy secured NovaMotive's success

The role of the marketing department within a firm is to create value for customers and the organization itself. It includes responsibilities such as identifying customer needs, foster stakeholder relationships, and guiding a company's overall strategy. Additionally, the department holds the responsibility of knowledge-sharing within the firm and works in close alignment with the operations department (Gupta et al. 2016).

1.2.1. NovaMotive is positioned within the premium electric vehicle market

NovaMotive's marketing strategy had been directly derived from the firm's overall strategy. Therefore, it had to ensure that it leads the company towards a differentiation product portfolio, accessible and premium vehicles that support autonomous driving.

Segmentation targeting positioning (STP) - The firms ideal target group was defined through the STP process, which builds a strong brand identity, ensures efficient marketing resource allocation and identifies key market opportunities (Luthfiandana et al. 2024). Segmentation

showed a focus on a broad consumer base aimed at making EVs accessible, supported by governmental regulations and subsidies (see figure 1 & figure 2). The target customer is a conscious individual who values innovation, technology and sustainable mobility across all life phases (e.g., for business, city-centers, off-road, family etc.). The consumer should reside within the firm's three active regions and should have the willingness to pay a premium price. The positioning strategy directly aligns with the firm's overall strategic focus (see figure 5).

In Q5, NovaMotive was positioned as a medium-priced car manufacturer without a clear strategic focus on engine types. By the end of year 6, NovaMotive as well as the overall market transitioned towards electric engines. Moreover, the firm was able to achieve its positioning as a premium priced vehicle manufacturer (see figure 12).

Nonetheless, it should be noted that to successfully achieve NovaMotive's marketing strategy, close collaboration between the marketing, operations and HR department is needed. This will ensure high service quality, and especially customer satisfaction (Jüttner et al. 2010).

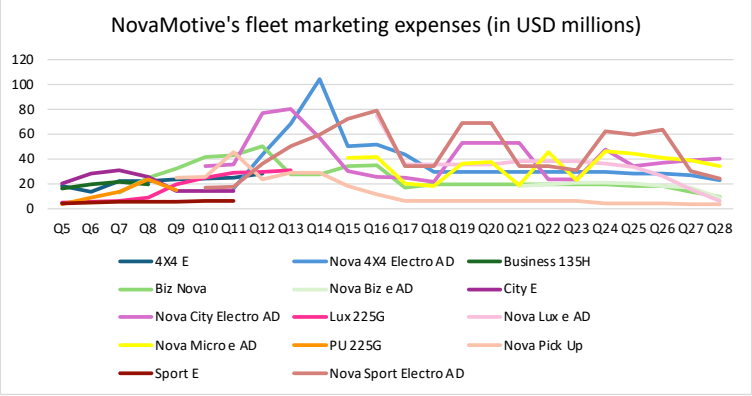
Marketing Mix (4P) – For businesses, success depends on identifying and defining the firm's marketing mix, as it can positively influence sales growth, sustainability and customer loyalty. Therefore, the better firms align their marketing mix, the more effectively they can navigate through transformations and competitive environments (Marušić 2019; Wichmann et al. 2022)

NovaMotive's product portfolio follows a premium strategy with a focus on fully electric vehicles. To meet market demand, the firms fleet expanded from 6 to 8 vehicles (see figure 7 & figure 8) and followed the overall trend to equip all vehicles with autonomous driving level 4. To achieve sustainable leadership, firms should make comprehensive sustainability investments, to signal to consumers, consciousness and responsibility. The premium product

strategy is accompanied by a premium pricing strategy. NovaMotive aims to have price leadership to maintain high contribution margins while strongly investing in innovation. As NovaMotive's product portfolio offers a broad range of vehicles, the firm can cater to diverse consumer groups across all three regions (Americas, Asia, Europe). The main distribution channels will be through car dealerships, but NovaMotive remains open to explore other distribution channels in the upcoming years. NovaMotive's new overall and marketing strategy will trigger a company-wide transformation. To include consumers in this journey and raise awareness around the new strategy, that focuses on electric vehicles and a broad product portfolio, marketing campaigns must be arranged (Bachri et al. 2023). Additionally, marketing expenses for the different vehicles should be adapted according to the DOI and vehicle maturity.

1.2.2. Marketing strategy adaptations enabled NovaMotive's recovery

Starting in Q13 the firm observed skyrocketing DOI reaching a peak in Q14 with an average of 175 DOI (see graph 3). Car models particularly affected by the increase in Q14 were Nova 4X4 Electro AD with 425 DOI and Nova City Electro AD with 267 DOI (see graph 4). This resulted in an intervention that had to be launched.



Graph 4: NovaMotive's DOI per vehicle from Q4 to Q28; *source from: own rendering, data from (Industry Masters Ltd. 2025)*

The firm had to deviate from its corpote strategy, to reduce DOI by lowering prices (Israeli et al. 2021) but only for the duration of the extreme DOI. This led to a short-term strategic pricing

shift from premium pricing to low pricing. NovaMotive's decline in average selling price become evident in Q16 (see graph 4). The strongest price decreases can be observed for the Nova 4X4 Electro A (-3%), Nova Sport Electro AD (-10%) and Nova Lux e AD (-3%) in Q17 and Q18 (see graph 5). The DOI recovered by Q20 with average DOI of 55, after only five quarters (see graph 3). At the same time sales prices began increasing after Q20 (see graph 4). While the recommended DOI are between 55-65 (Libby 2022), the firm faced the challenge of an excessively low DOI, with an average of 41 DOI (see graph 3). NovaMotive was not able to recover from inventory shortage by the end of year 6. Nonetheless, by Q20 the initial company and marketing strategy was restored.

Between Q14 to Q20 high marketing expenses can be observed. This is the outcome from an ineffective allocation of marketing expenses. Once NovaMotive identified the increasing DOI the firm increased their marketing expenses as well. This was repeated quarterly until Q18. After Q20 the marketing expenses stabilized (see graph 6 & graph 7).

1.2.3. Premium positioning in the EV market enables market leadership

While the marketing department had to overcome multiple challenges over the past six years, significant achievements were accomplished by Q28. By the end of year 6, NovaMotive was premium price leader with an average sales price of USD 74.806. As mentioned prior, the firm was able to stabilize the days of inventory with an average of 41 DOI, indicating high unmet demands. NovaMotive successfully implemented a subscription model. This led to market share increases in Americas (+5,07%) and Europe (+9,57%).

1.3. Operational flexibility led NovaMotive to unprecedented successes

Operations strategy refers to strategic decisions and actions that define a company's long-term resources and capabilities. Clear alignment among managers is essential, as it positively affects

the firms overall organization (Boyer and McDermott 1999). Cost efficiency, flexibility, innovation and employee training and skills are significant areas affecting a firms operational success (Abdul Wahab et al. 2020).

1.3.1. Inventory days form the strategic foundation of the operations

To define the operations strategy, it is of great significance to understand customers expectation when it comes to time of delivery. The majority of customers in America, Germany and Asia expect vehicle delivery within 3-4 weeks (Deloitte LLP 2023a; 2023b). In particular, Chinese and American consumers demonstrate high expectations regarding delivery times, often a week or less (see graph 8). These findings increase pressure on NovaMotive's delivery time. Therefore, NovaMotive's key operational strategic components are represented and summarized in a strategic pyramid (figure 13). The foundation of the operations strategy is built by the *DOI*, due to the high customer expectation. It is considered best-practice to maintain DOI between 55 to 65. *Factory utilization* represents the next level of the firm's strategic pyramid. Underutilized or idle plants increase costs, as the fixed costs must be allocated across fewer units. Research shows that excluding the unused factory capacity can reduce unit costs by 6% and increase gross margins by 26% (Ederhof et al. 2020). Therefore, it is of very high importance to run NovaMotive's factories at full capacity. The third level represents NovaMotive's commitment to sustainable operations and supply chains. The development of the electric fleet and becoming CO_2 emission free, is one of the firms greatest within the new strategy. Lastly, it is significant to NovaMotive's operations strategy to stay profitable and become cost efficient. Therefore, the operations pyramid is clearly aligned with the firm's new company strategy.

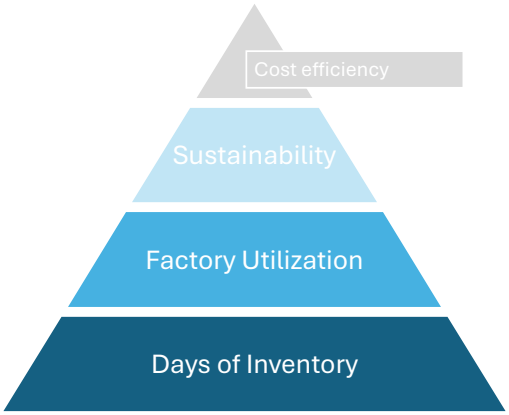


Figure 13: NovaMotive's operations strategy pyramid; *Source: own rendering*

1.3.2. NovaMotive surpasses factory utilization expectations

The review of NovaMotive's operations strategy will be conducted using the 4 Vs of Operations framework (see figure 14). It evaluates operational processes and services by analyzing the firm's **v**olume, **v**ariety, **v**ariation in demand and **v**isibility (Slack and Lewis 2019).

Even though, a strong drop in volume in Q17, 54.000 vehicles, had been observed, NovaMotive achieved a significant increase by +63% in production volume from Q5 to Q28 (see graph 9). The firm recorded the second strongest increase, Competitor C increased its production volume by 203%. With NovaMotive's 11 factories in all three regions, the firm was able to produce 11 different vehicles. Compared to its competitors the firm has the highest product variety. Nevertheless, there is improvement potential, as Audi has 78 and BMW 59 different car models in production (autoevolution, n.d.). While the firm is not affected by seasonal fluctuations, it continues to face challenges arising from the bargaining power of buyers (see figure 2). A preliminary evaluation of the firm shows, low to no external visibility of their operation processes and supply chains, leading to the assumption that further operations visibility could be supported by the marketing department. Overall, the four dimensions indicate strong growth and a successful implemented operations strategy.

Days of inventory and factory utilization – Monitoring the DOI is an important metric, as it indicates the effectiveness of operations management and therefore financial performance (Aljaaidi and Bagais 2020). In close relationship to the DOI is factory utilization. Research indicates that firms face a trade-off situation between the two. Either they follow a strategy that includes higher days of inventory and therefore calculates buffer in case of strongly increasing demands, this would lead to steady and high factory utilization. Or firms build less inventory and are not flexible to react to demand increases and potentially face volatile factory utilization (Meijer et al. 2024)

As mentioned prior, NovaMotive faced very high DOI in Q14 with an average of 175 DOI. To mitigate and lower the inventory, operations management decided to stop producing vehicles with high DOI. To avoid increasing the DOI for vehicles performing moderately to well, the production of other vehicles had not been increased further. As a result, factory utilization fell to 68% in Q14. By Q20 the firm was able to recover to 100% factory utilization and kept this utilization for the following two years (see graph 10). NovaMotive encountered the trade-offs highlighted by research, as its factories operated at full capacity, indicating the need for further factories as no buffer to increase production is available.

1.3.3. Operations departments leads a successful sustainability transformation

Sustainability represents a central aspect of the automotive industry. This not only affects the CO_2 emission of manufacturer, but the complete supply chain focusing on renewable, recycled and visibly sustainable materials (Wellbrock et al. 2020). The latest findings are reflected in NovaMotive's overall strategy as the target is to be a sustainable and innovative car manufacturer as well as CO_2 emission free. A key responsibility of the sustainability agenda lays within the operations department. Not only are they responsible, in joint efforts with the

innovations department and human resources (HR), to develop and produce electric and sustainable vehicles, but acquiring Scope 1,2 and 3 investments. The firm was able to acquire 8/9 investments (figure 15).

Scope 1	Scope 2	Scope 3
Production investments	**Energy Investments**	**Supply Chain Investments**
Water Consumption Reduction	Energy Efficiency Investment	Offset Suppliers CO2
Waste Reduction	Install Solar Panels	Sustainable Suppliers
ISO14001 / EMAS Certificates	Energy Management System	External Battery Recycling

Figure 15*:* NovaMotives Scope 1,2,3 investments by Q28*; Source: (Industry Masters Ltd. 2025)*

Additionally, NovaMotive was CO_2 emission free by Q13 and increased its sustainability skill level by over 400% to 34,6. This reflects the firm's strong engagement for sustainability and proves to be a successful sustainability strategy and approach.

1.4. NovaMotive faced challenges common within the automotive industry

NovaMotive is not the only car manufacturer producing electric vehicles that faced similar challenges. In general, the average DOI in the US increased by 12 days to 82 days in July, which increases pressure on pricing (Fitzpatrick 2025). Tesla faces similar overall difficulties as NovaMotive. In the European market Tesla has registered decreasing sales by 82% (Sweden) and 50% (Netherlands), while the overall EV market continuously growths (Carey and Orusov 2025). This could reason in such high inventories, that Tesla had to rent parking lots in the US to manage vehicle inventories (Lambert 2025). A similar situation can be observed with BYD, a Chinese low-cost EV manufacturer. Due to rising inventories the manufacturer scaled down production (Bobylev 2025). This resulted in pricing wars for BYD affecting profitability. The firm reduced prices by 34% in May (Carson 2025). Additionally, the firm faces external pressure, due to increasing price competition (Chia 2025).

Nonetheless, China remains the biggest EV market, as 69% of cars sold globally are from

China. But the market faces backlash as well, as market growth is slower than predicted, especially due to policy changes in the US. Predictions say that 70% of passengers vehicles will EVs by 2040 (Hay 2025).

1.5. NovaMotive's cross-functional collaboration enables success

NovaMotive faced one main challenges over the past six years, that had a ripple effect to all departments. The firm was overproducing the majority of their vehicles, resulting in strongly increased DOI. To manage the situation, five departments had to collaborate closely. For marketing the decision was made to strongly decrease prices and increase marketing expenses. Next, operations reduced or temporarily stopped production of car types with high DOI. This lowered DOI long-term and decreased cost. The production stop affected the human resource (HR) department as well. In a first step, factory staffing had to be adapted. In a second step, manager allocation and salaries had to be revised. Both HR measures increased costs. In a final step to support NovaMotive's recovery, the finance department adjusted the sales expectations, due to lower prices and increased costs, and modified the payment terms to create additional cashflow for the firm. Customer credit terms were reduced to 15 days and supplier payment terms extended to 40 days. A key takeaway for the management team was to stay flexible and open-minded, especially during times of crisis. Moreover, the close collaboration with NovaMotive's management, enabled a quick recovery and positioned the firm for future success and market leadership.

After the recovery, the firm encountered a new obstacle that it has not been able to resolve yet. The products developed generated strong demands, resulting in DOI levels of around 30-50, an indicator of unsatisfied demand. Since production capacity was already maximized, NovaMotive depended on other variables to increase profits and achieve economies of scale in

the premium sector. Consequently, prices and production capacity were maximized, while marketing expenses were reduce. Nevertheless, even, after this intervention, DOI remained at stable levels between 30-50. In the future, NovaMotive should expand production capacity, while keeping prices stable at premium pricing levels.

The firm had set ambitious targets to increase its market share by at least 3% per region. However, the target was not achieved in the Asian market, representing a significant missed opportunity. The Asian market grew at a higher pace than the other two region, 2% yearly. As forecasts predict further strong growth in the Asian market, specifically Chinese EV market, NovaMotive should revise their marketing strategy (marketing mix) to increase market shares.

A key component of NovaMotive's new strategy was heavy invest in innovation and product development. While this was pursued during the first years, innovation spending declined to zero in the final years. In order to keep the momentum up and stay close to consumer preferences and habits, the firm should return to its roots and invest with high capital commitment in the innovation. Nonetheless, the company succeeded in equipping all vehicles with level 4 autonomous driving, representing the most significant consumer preference.

To conclude, NovaMotive still has areas of improvement, where strategies and approaches need to be re-evaluated. However, following the new strategy implementation the firm achieved the transformation towards a sustainable manufacturer, leading the premium electric vehicle market. Over the past six years, the product portfolio was fully transformed towards EV, enabling the firm to serve a broad customer base while achieving peak employee motivation and full factory utilization. This demonstrates the success of the firm's strategy and suggest, with appropriate adaptations, NovaMotive is well positioned for continuous success.

2. Self-reflection enhances communication and collaboration

High functioning teams - To work successfully as a team it is essential to create a supportive environment, a team-reward scheme and encourage collective success (Duncan 2024; Haas and Mortensen 2016). Especially for high functioning teams it is important to identify a clear goal, efficient communication, clear rules and effective feedback handling (Bakke and Johansen 2024). Therefore, research shows that successful and high performing teams need multiple requirements to navigate opportunities and challenges. Additionally, self-reflection is an important tool to improve team performance, it helps to enhance decision quality, team satisfaction as well as error avoidance (Baviera et al. 2022; Leblanc et al. 2024).

Critical incidents - During the *Business in Practice* business simulation, we were operating in a complex and time-constrained environment. Hence, we faced various challenges that at first negatively affected our work, but we were able to resolve. These challenging incidents will be referred to as "critical incidents". I will reflect on my own actions and behaviors, as well as those of my team. This will be analyzed through self-reflection and relevant theory. This will help to better understand the incidents impact, how to improve as a high-performing team and move forward. The following two critical incidents will be analyzed: 1) During the simulation I reacted snappy and defensive towards my group members due to poor stress management and past experiences, 2) As a group we faced challenges among others due to cultural differences and lack of trust.

Structure - This chapter will explore two different critical incidents. These incidents represent significant moments in individual and group developed and enhanced the team environment, communication and success. Therefore, both incidents will include a detailed incident

description, my personal response, an analysis and a reflection and my personal learnings. The analysis will explore relevant theory combined with reflective thoughts from the simulation.

2.1. Managing personal experiences and behaviors enables team success

My first critical incidents consist of two situations and occurred during and after the year 3 business simulation. It focuses on my feelings and my reactions to **stress management and uncertain situations** during group meetings.

2.1.1. Description

The first situation of the critical incident happened in the second week of the simulation after the sales workshop and assignment briefing. As a group we had remaining work time and were deciding how to use it best. It was a decision between preparing for a roleplay or our business strategy. I had one opinion, and the others were for the other option. As no one seemed to understand my argument, I lost my patience in the heat of the moment and accepted the decision but left the room angry.

The second situation took place in the same week during the group meeting of Q2 in year 3. I was in the marketing department with another group member. The two of us were discussing the next steps of our department. The general mindset was tense as our business was confronted with various challenges. Him and I then came across a key decision, where we had opposite opinions. In order to get my argumentation across I mimicked him and reacted snappy.

2.1.2. My response

Both situations show that my response to missing empathy and understanding is to react nervous, annoyed and impulsive at times. I felt misunderstood and not seen by the other group members. Additionally, I felt personally attacked even though the others only voiced their

opinions. In that moment I was thinking of all the situations where people didn't believe in me, which discouraged me and to overplay my true emotions I react strong and over-confident. For me the overall situation translated that they did not have enough trust in my capabilities and expertise to trust my arguments. This seems to be a trigger for me and results in a strong reaction from me. In these situations, I was also often under a lot of stress, as key decisions for our business had to be made. During the last years of the business simulation, it became obvious that I don't cope well with stress and feel overwhelmed fast. This aligns with my perfectionism, which hinders my decision-making, as the fear of making the wrong decision overtakes my thinking-process. Closely related to the perfectionism is my handling with uncertain situations. This can be traced back to my childhood as I moved a lot as a child, even between different countries. Since then, I liked routines and planned situations, once I deviate, I feel uncomfortable and don't know how to cope with these circumstances.

2.1.3. Analysis

Managing stress - Research shows that training, coping mechanisms and social resources strengthen individual resilience. Resilient individuals can also built resilient teams by developing a shared identity, fostering collaborative habits and providing mutual support (Singh et al. 2024). As coping mechanisms are essential to managing stress, it is important to identify, whether stress is perceived as a threat, which causes negative effects or as a challenge, which can be a source of motivation. Three main coping strategies exist: problem-focused (planning, social support and responsibility), emotion-focused (distancing, self-control and humor) and maladaptive coping (avoidance, denial and social withdrawal), the first being the most efficient (Бондарчук et al. 2024). I unfortunately relied on the maladaptive approach, which weakened the success of my team, as I was not able to fully build personal resilience.

Perfectionism – Academics mention three different dimensions of perfectionism, the self-oriented (SOP), the other-oriented (OOP) and the social-prescribed perfectionism (SPP) (Hewitt and Flett 1991). My evaluation indicates that I am a SPP, as I belief others (in this case my group members) demand perfection. This dimension also explains my resentment and fear of negative evaluation (Hewitt and Flett 1991). This fear also came true when we received the results of our peer evaluation, as I had a deviation between my self-evaluation and the average peer-evaluation at question D) expected quality. That my peers evaluated me lower than I did myself, increased my perfectionism during the remaining three years (see figure 16). Consequences I faced are aligned with the latest research on SPP and the fear of failure (FOF). I was confronted with procrastination, reduced motivation and stress as a result (Preston et al. 2023) .

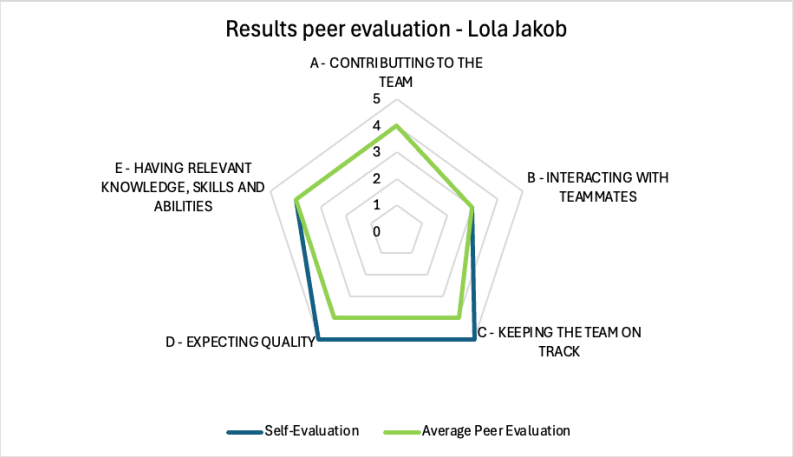


Figure 16: Lola Jakob peer evaluation after year 3; *source: own rendering, data from (Arêde 2025)*

Peer evaluation - My peer evaluation showed that on hand in some dimensions I am very self-aware and in other there are deviations. This especially concerns me, as I evaluated myself better than peers (see figure 16). They evaluated me lower in the dimension of expected quality and keeping the team on track. While the former directly strikes a nerve, as this is a big insecurity of mine, I can understand the latter. Especially at the beginning of the simulation I was challenging multiple contributions of group members without reasoning. This held up the

whole team and affected efficiency. The deviation in the expected quality, I cannot understand as I made key contributions, that had great impact on the firm's performance and balanced out my department partner's errors.

Power of past experiences – A large study by Cheung and Wong (2022) highlights that moving increases stress and frequent movers face increased stress levels, poorer well-being and affect mental health (Cheung and Wong 2022). Children who experience relocation often face mental health concerns and behavioral difficulties (Morris et al. 2017). Overall, past experiences influence our coping and future decisions, as they are influenced by biases and self-perception. Behaviors are often adjusted after being executed, linking them back to decision and behaviors experienced in the past. This affects peoples' future habits, decisions and persuasions (Albarracín and Wyer 2000). Self-esteem is also influenced by milestones, challenges and overall individual experiences. Sensitive life stages, e.g., childhood, teenage years etc., form the foundation of self-esteem. Thus, a person's past strongly matters, as it is shaped by personal interpretations and observations (Reitz 2022). Accordingly, the multiple relocations during my childhood, together with my experiences and interpretations during my sensitive periods, shaped my behavior, stress management as well as self-esteem. This is not intended as an excuse for my behavior but rather an explanation of the roots of my actions.

2.1.4. Reflection & learning

Through the business simulation I reflected and learned a lot about myself. I now recognize repeating patterns in my reactions and behavior, and understood that to personally grow I must develop my own coping strategies. My strong reactions toward my team members where never about what they have done, but rather about how I interpreted them and how I let them affect my confidence. In hindsight, I am ashamed of my behavior, as it disrupted our work, efficiency

and success as a team. As successful teams need resilient individuals, I have to improve my own resilience, stress management and self-esteem. Therefore, moving forward I will actively implement a problem-focused coping mechanism by actively taking responsibilities for actions and to think of strategies that will navigate me back to calm waters.

2.2. Diversity as a double-edge sword

The second critical incident occurred after our team clinics session, and our teams debrief. It was a critical breakthrough, as it significantly increased cooperation and supported me in better understanding my team. The root of this incident is rooted in **prejudice and big egos**.

2.2.1. Description

During one lunch break, before the team clinics, a Portuguese group member felt hurt by others and said that she feels German man are entitled and pretentious. One German group member replied by saying that he feels the only person being entitled is her. This created a huge rift within the group. In that moment we lost honest communication and trust as a group. In general, the first three years of the simulation we were struggling with a lot of long detailed discussions and disagreements. We also faced cultural differences, as we were two Portuguese and 5 Germans and therefore missing balanced diversity. During the team clinics we received vital feedback for the continuous collaboration as team. We sat down afterwards and debriefed the feedback. We learned that managing our personals egos and recreating and building trust form the foundation of our successful teamwork. Therefore, we knew, we had to rebuild trust to function as a successful team.

2.2.2. My response

From the first conversations onwards we had, we were stuck with discussing details, me included. I had the feeling, that I had to prove a point to the other of how deep my knowledge is. My intuition said that the more I challenge the others, say my opinion and explain everything, the more I can prove my expertise. This fueled long and unproductive discussions. Especially, as four other group were reacting the exact same way. After some hours of work, it not only drained all my energy and motivation out, but began to affect my mental health. I felt extremely overwhelmed and exhausted from the situation. Additionally, from the beginning of our collaborative work I felt prejudice towards Germans from one Portuguese member. It was little jokes or condescending comments about us, while we never mentioned the opposite. It not only made me feel uncomfortable, but it started to hurt my feelings as I never mentioned anything of this kind. The more comments were said, the stronger I started to distance myself from said group members. The divide of the group only got better once we had our team clinics session. It helped us to identify the root causes of our differences and provided us with tools to navigate those. Key factors that affected our past actions were clashes between our egos, lack of trust and cultural differences.

After the clinics, the cooperation between the marketing, operations and HR department significantly improved. We developed a routine that was efficient and yet included everyone's opinions if needed. I felt very comfortable, my motivation strongly increased, and I had a lot of fun and enjoyed the remaining time of the simulation with my team members.

2.2.3. Analysis

Team clinics – The team clinics was turning point in our collaboration as a team. We had the chance to honestly communicate our feelings and receive constructive feedback in a safe space. We received guidance from Miguel Fernandes, who diagnosed our main concerns as being lack

of trust and mismanagement of our egos. Four thoughts were especially valuable: considering how important my own ego is in a situation, identifying what can be done to rebuilt trust, examining how we can structure our decision-making process, and establishing a "time-keeper" to manage discussion time.

Cultural differences, prejudices and biases – Cultural differences often come from demographic diversity (e.g., nationality, gender, age etc.) and result in improved problem-solving and innovation skills (van Dijk et al. 2012). Faultlines are hypothetical lines that divide teams in groups based on similar attributes, a subgroup. If the hypothetical lines are strong it could lead to members to feel more connected to their subgroup, then the overall team. On the one hand, teams with strong faultlines experience lack of communication, weak cohesion and conflicts. On the other hand, teams with weak faultlines experience positive integration and collaboration (Lau and Murnighan 1998). The categorization into groups can lead to prejudice-driven outcomes damaging teamwork (Joshi and Roh 2009). But diverse teams with cultural differences can also lead to categorical thinking potentially resulting in reduced trust, cooperation and teamwork (van Dijk et al. 2012). Diverse teams thrive in complex and intensive environments, but successes need accountability, strong leadership and an inclusive climate are required (Knippenberg et al. 2020). When this balance is achieved, prejudice and biases are less present (Joshi and Roh 2009). In our team strong faultlines initially emerged, between Germans and Portuguese, males and females identifying more with their subgroups, causing conflicts and bad communication. Once we weakened our faultiness, collaboration improved, leading to better problem-solving skills and communication.

Lack of trust – Trust enables teams to focus on a common goal, reduces uncertainty and vulnerability. In contrast, if teams face lack of trust, it affects the teams outcome negatively, as

it empowers low cooperation, blocking information and defensive behaviors (de Jong et al. 2016). Trust can be lost through disrespect, unmet expectations and failed leadership but can also be restored through three different types: 1) explanations and apologies, 2) repairing actions and 3) structural changes (Kramer and Lewicki 2010). The most efficient type to rebuild trust in teams is to show consistent trust-enforcing actions, for example by promising a change in behavior. However, studies found that apologies are not helpful to rebuild trust and do not affect the outcome directly (Schweitzer et al. 2006). In my case, I lost trust in some of my teammates due to lack of respect towards me and unmet expectations I had on them. As a team we were able to restore trust by setting the scene for open communication and change the way of working.

Managing egos – Striving for status and personal egos can lead to team members to focus on personal successes rather than group accomplishments. Especially, when teams are in the orientation phase one tends show traits such as competitiveness, jealousy and resistance (Dixit et al. 2014). Group members identified coworkers with high egos as the biggest barrier to team success and effectiveness (Stewart et al. 2023). In order to manage different egos, it is important that to ensure that an environment is created that only allows differences related to the challenges and opportunities faced but avoids conflicts between different egos (Dixit et al. 2014). With more than half the group having strong egos we faced a high barrier to success and especially effectiveness, as we had endless and detailed discussion about everything.

2.2.4. Reflection & learning

To prevent cultural differences from undermining quality and a positive environment, we should have created an inclusive climate that focus on cultural strength rather than differences. I should have acknowledge the prejudice against Germans and addressed their roots in order to

reduce our teams faultlines and rebuild trust. Increased communication and especially a more flexible routine helped us navigate these challenges in the end. Being challenged based on my cultural background set-off a greater sense of learning, as I know will try to actively avoid prejudice. Especially, the lack of trust was a significant source of problems in our team. I learned that first it must be acknowledged that a lack of exist, then trust has to be actively rebuilt. If we would have done so, we could have saved hours of unnecessary discussions and second guessing. Our egos were working against us, that was a huge blocker to our teamwork. I should have reflected at the beginning of the simulation, why me and some team members were challenging every idea. I would have noticed that it was not about me trying to contribute to every topic, but rather a push for my ego. Additionally, I learned about myself that I jump to conclusion and interpretation of other people too quickly. In the future I should rather clarify how it was meant. This will avoid conflict and clear communication.

2.3. Conclusion

To conclude, the simulation has highlighted the importance of early and clear communication, to prevent deepening the faultlines. It is important to work on my behavioral patterns, while also establishing realistic coping mechanisms to strengthen my resilience, stress management and self-esteem. Additionally, it is significant to create a safe environment that fosters inclusion and efficient communication. Reflecting on individual egos can be key factor in group success, while trust must be actively rebuilt to restore a collaborative platform. My immediate action points will be to develop personal coping strategies for multiple situations to establish a safe space for family and friends in my environment. I will apply the learnings to my entry job starting October. This work project was a great chance to self-reflect and develop counteraction points to be a valuable future colleague.

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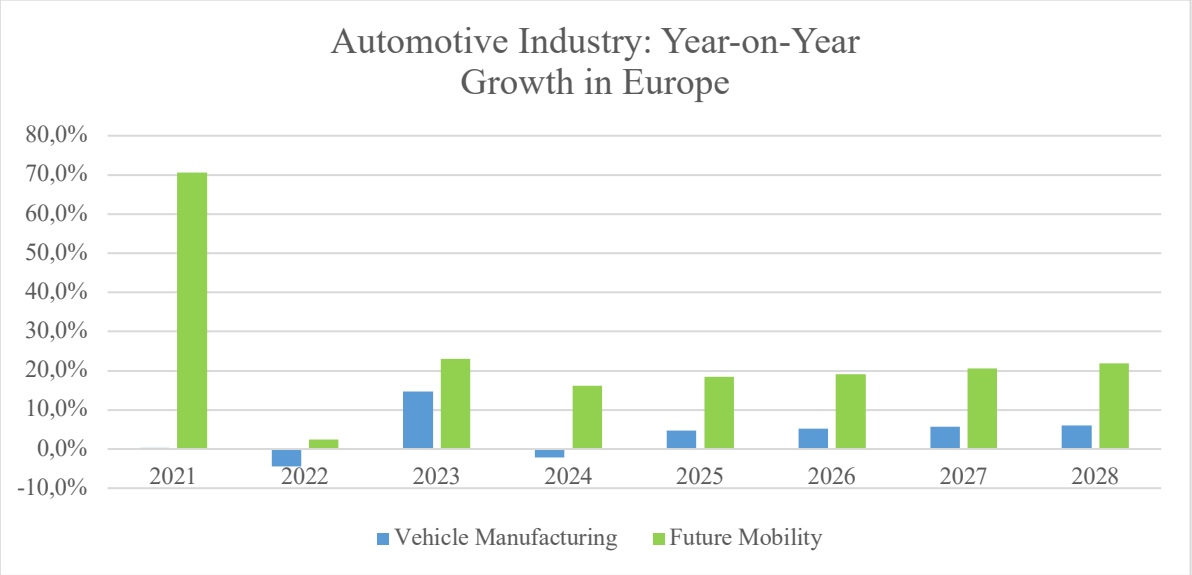
Appendices table of contents

Appendix A: List of abbreviations

CO_2	Carbon Dioxide
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
DOI	Days Of Inventory
ESG	Environmental, Social and Governance
EU	European Union
EV	Electric Vehicle
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HR	Human Resources
HV	Hybrid Vehicle
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
MaaS	Mobility-as-a-Service
Q	Quarter
STP	Segmentation Targeting Positioning
USA	United Stated of America

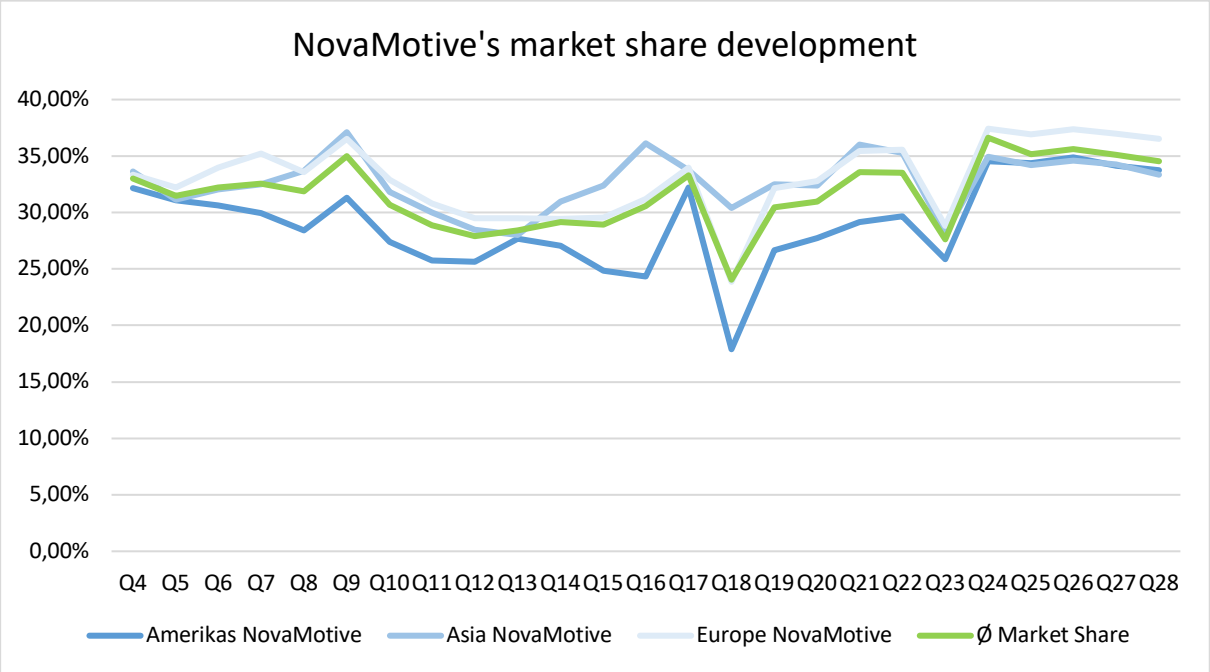
Appendix B: Graphs

Graph 1: Europe's growth rates of the automotive industry by sector from 2021 to 2028.



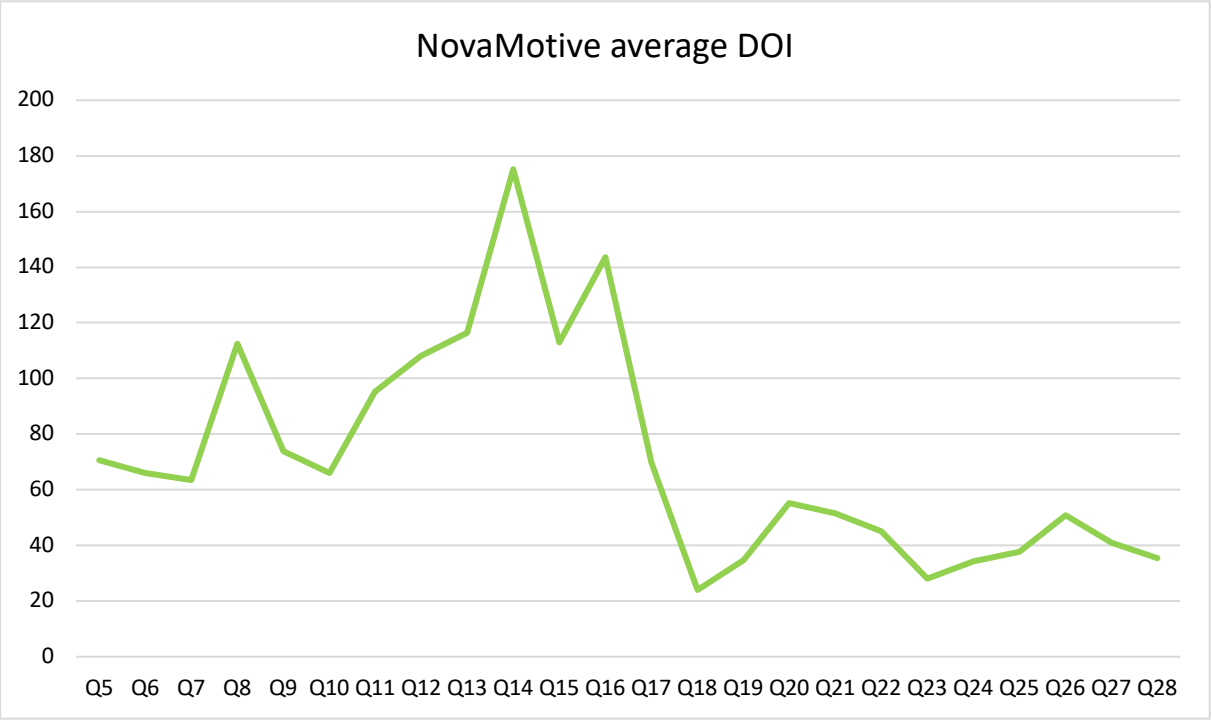
Source: own rendering, data from

Graph 2: NovaMotive's market share development by region from Q4 to Q28.



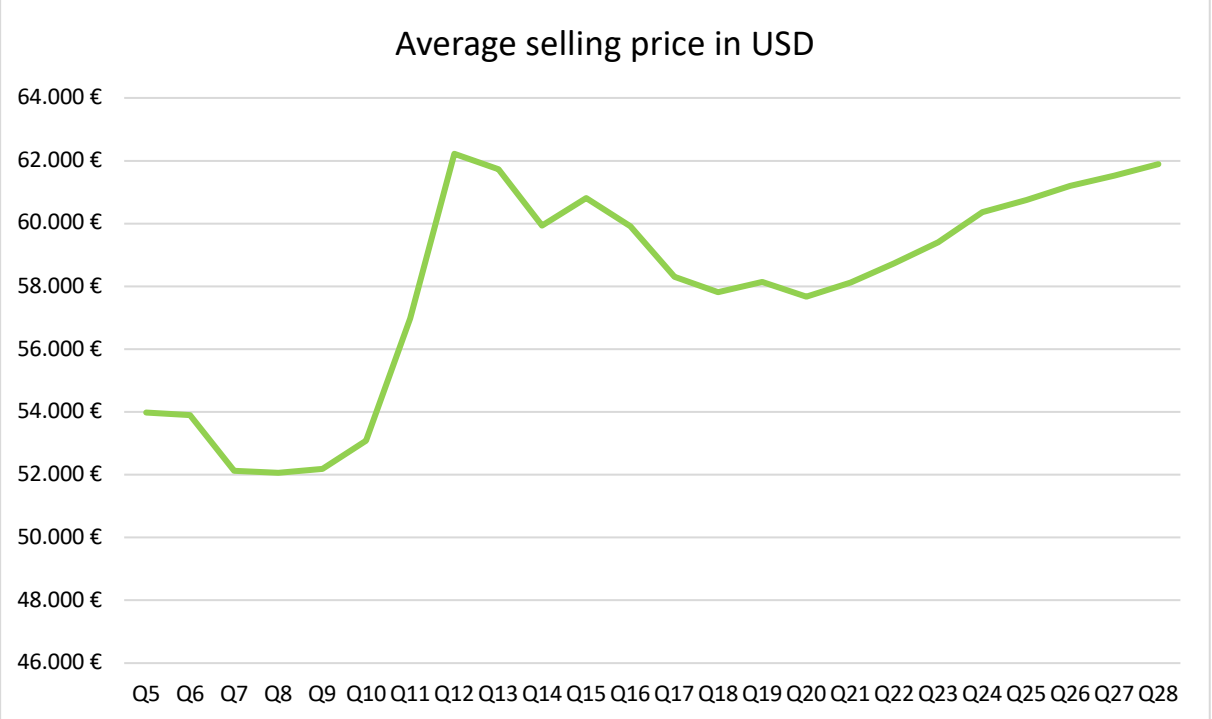
Source: own rendering, data from (Industry Masters Ltd. 2025)

Graph 3: NovaMotive's average DOI from Q4 to Q28.



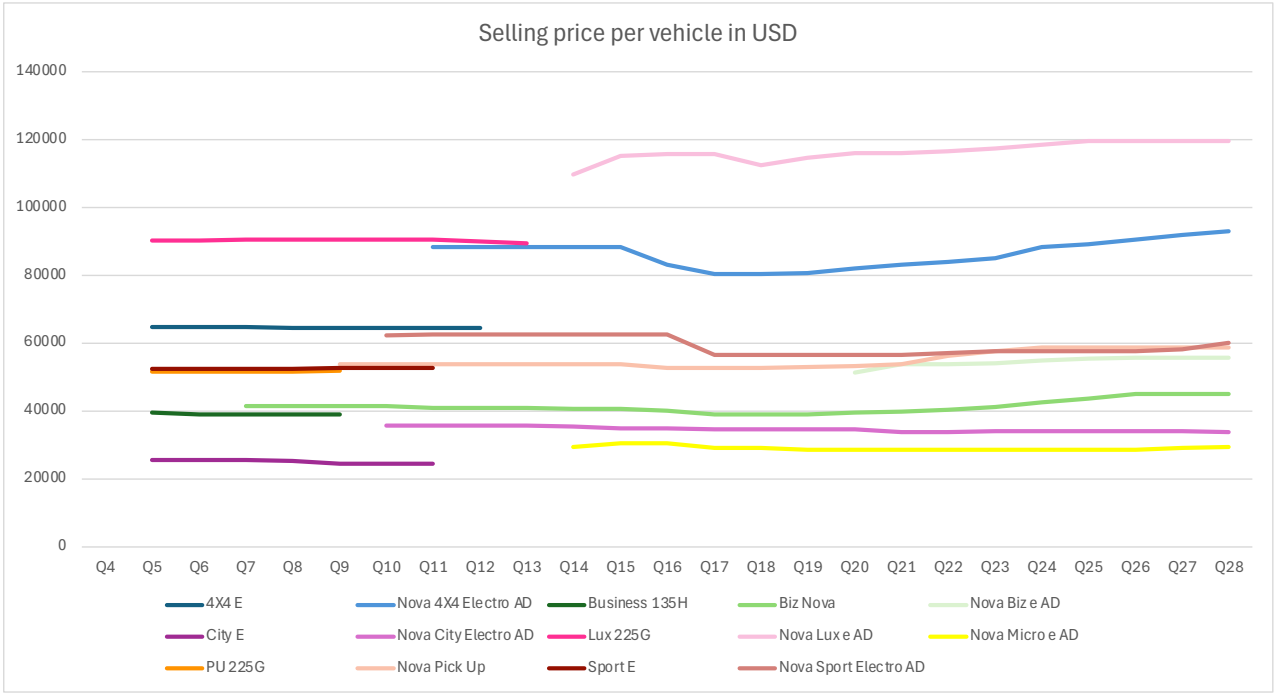
Source: own rendering, data from (Industry Masters Ltd. 2025)

Graph 4: NovaMotive's average sales price from Q4 to Q28.



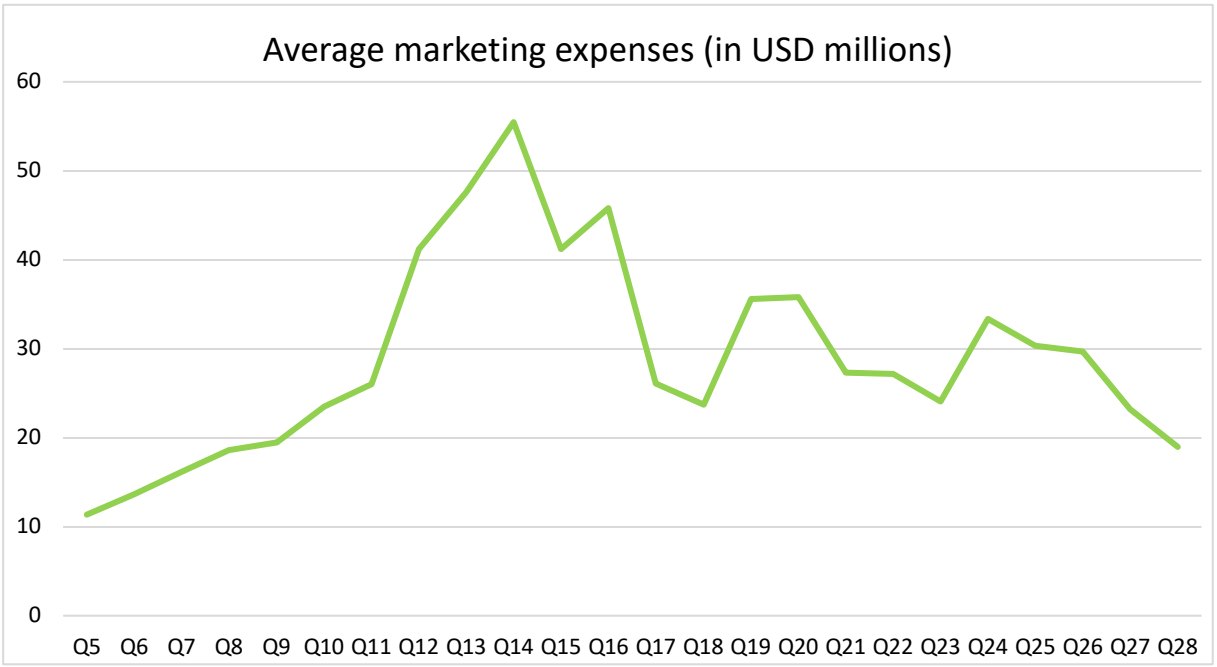
Source: own rendering, data from (Industry Masters Ltd. 2025)

Graph 5: NovaMotive's selling price per vehicle from Q4 to Q28.



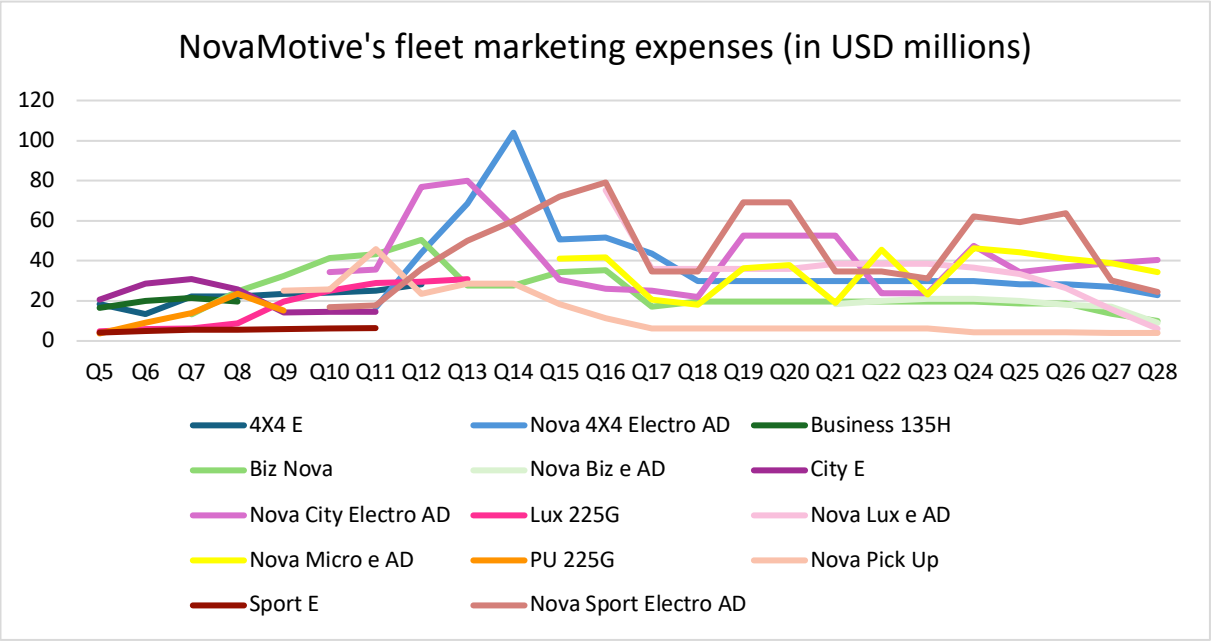
Source: own rendering, data from (Industry Masters Ltd. 2025)

Graph 6: NovaMotive's average marketing expenses from Q4 to Q28.



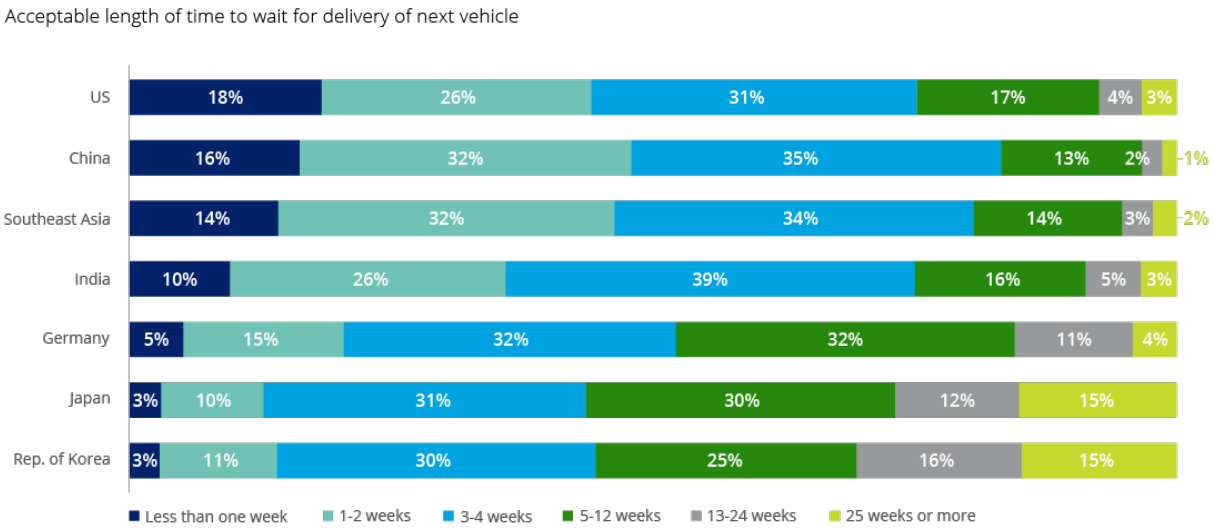
Source: own rendering, data from (Industry Masters Ltd. 2025)

Graph 7: NovaMotive's marketing expenses per vehicle from Q4 to Q28.



Source: own rendering, data from (Industry Masters Ltd. 2025)

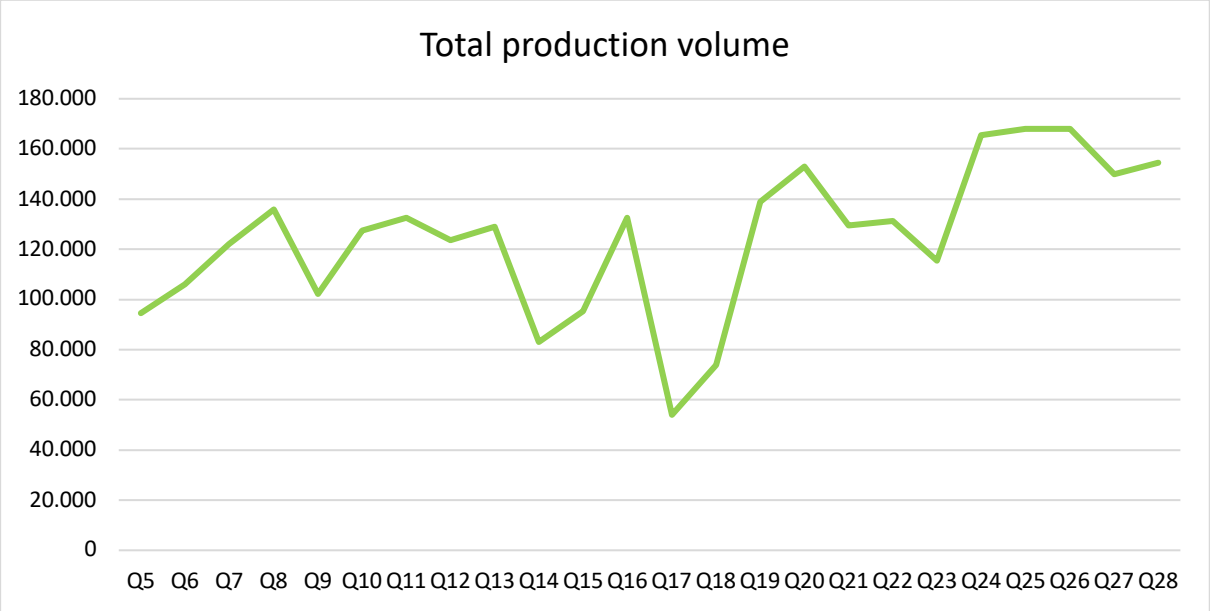
Graph 8: Survey results that show the acceptable length of waiting time for vehicle delivery.



Q37: In your opinion, what is an acceptable length of time to wait for delivery of your next vehicle if it meant you got exactly what you wanted (i.e., features, color, etc.)?
Sample size: n= 707 [China]; 1,278 [Germany]; 957 [India]; 670 [Japan]; 893 [Republic of Korea]; 5,264 [Southeast Asia]; 1,881 [US]

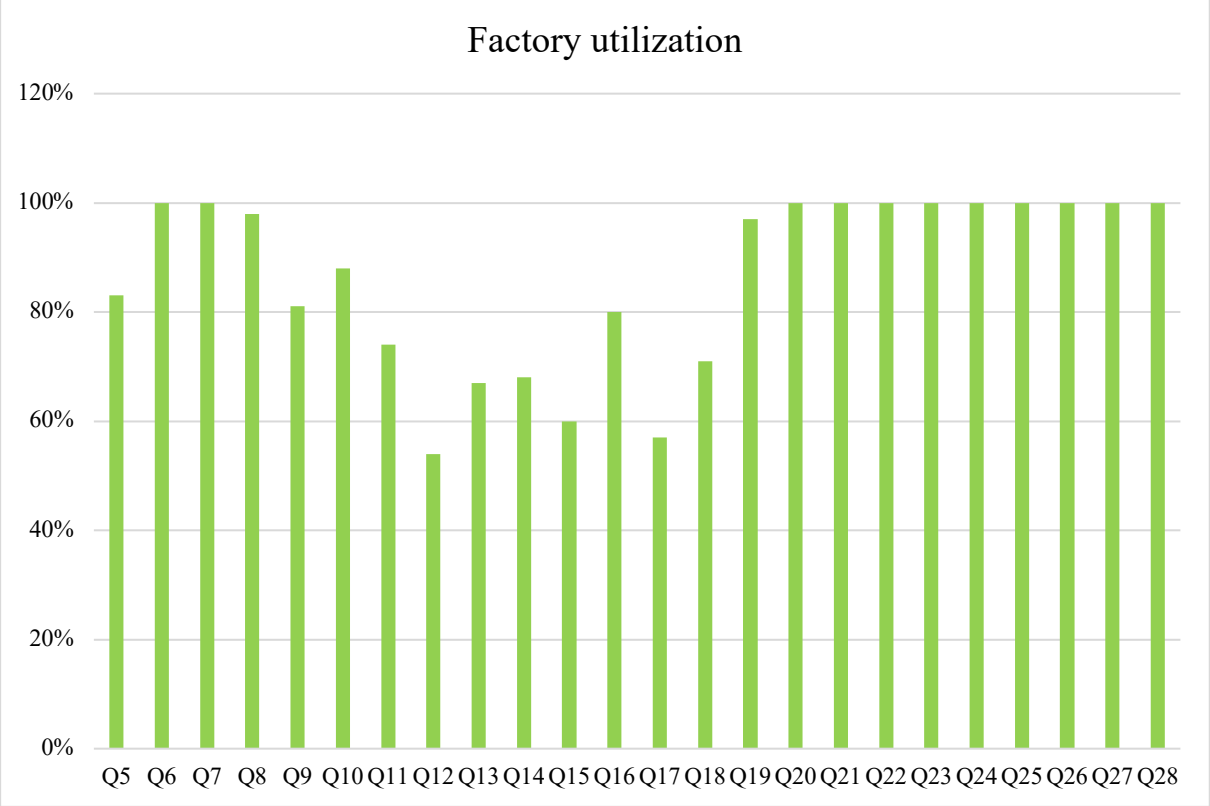
Source: (Deloitte LLP 2023a)

Graph 9: NovaMotive's total production volume from Q5 to Q28.



Source: own rendering, data from (Industry Masters Ltd. 2025)

Graph 10: NovaMotive's Factory utilization from Q5 to Q28.



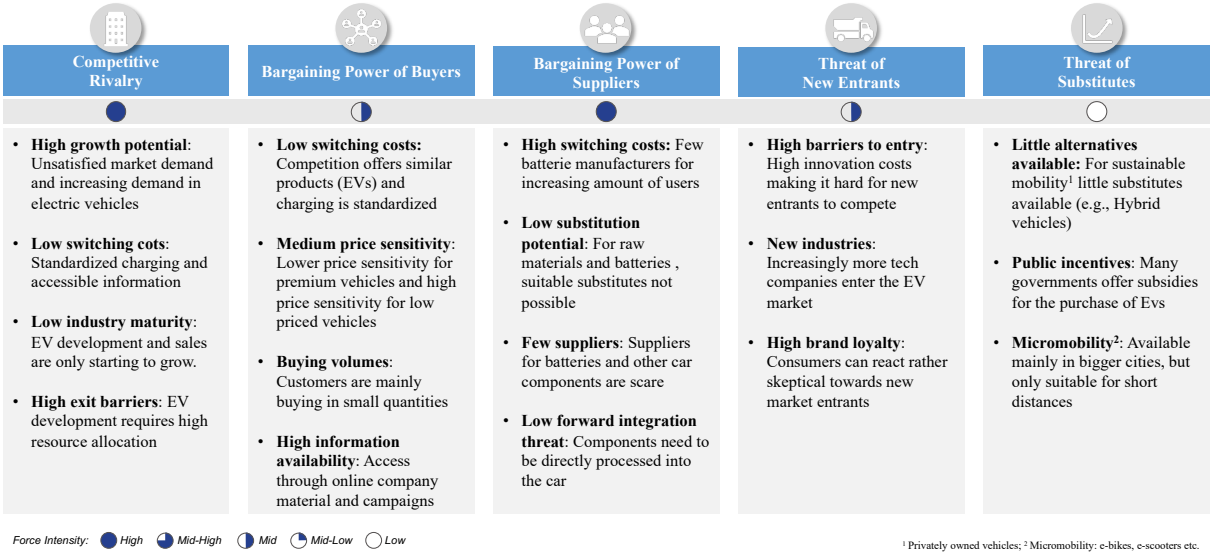
Source: own rendering, data from (Industry Masters Ltd. 2025)

Appendix C: Figures

Figure 1: A PESTEL analysis of the mobility and electric vehicle environment.

Source: own rendering

Figure 2: Porters five forces evaluate the competitive environment of the EV market.



Source: own rendering

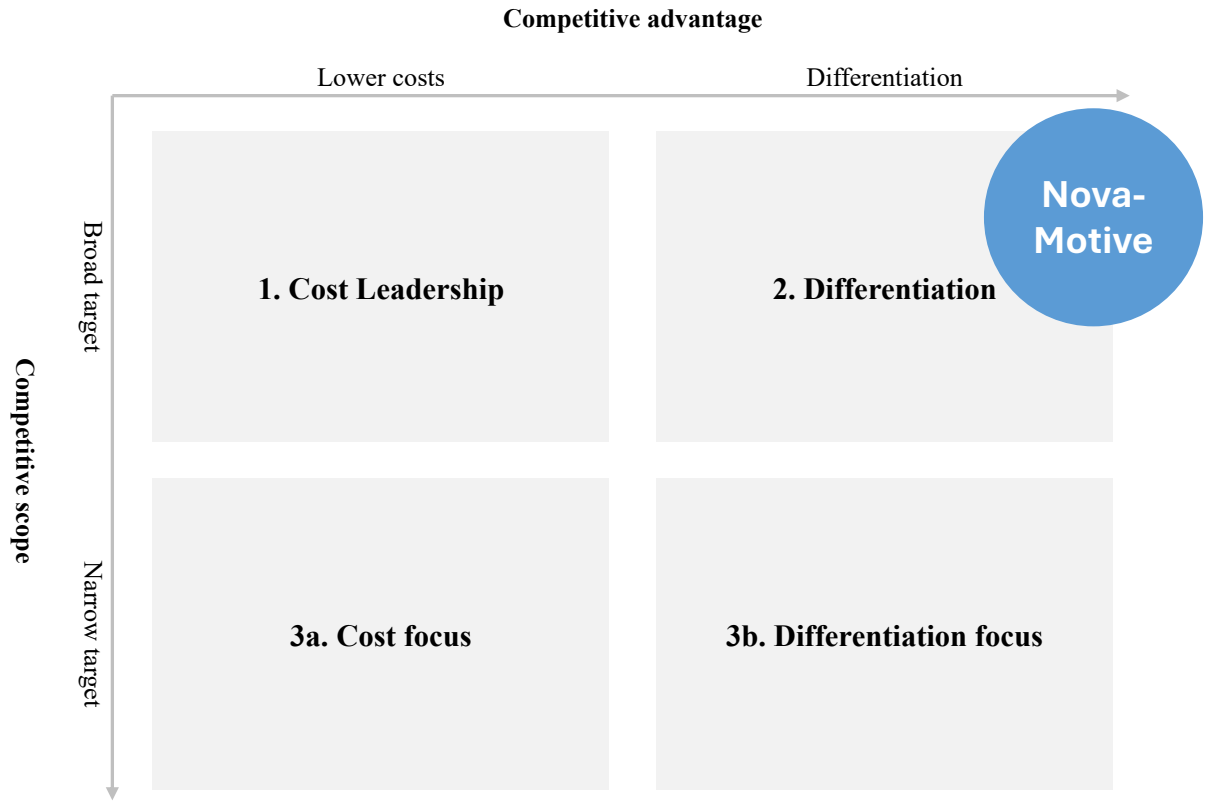
Figure 3: The SWOT analysis evaluates NovaMotive's internal status.

Strength	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
• **Diverse portfolio**: Wide ranging product portfolio • **Global presence**: Sales and production facilities in Europe, Americas and Asia • **Market leadership**: Highest overall market share in all three geographical regions by Q4 (EU[1]: 33.4%, US[2]:32,1%, AS[3]: 33.6%) • **Exclusive products**: Only manufacturer that offers a pick-up truck • **EV market entry**: Producing three electric production lines • **Profitable**: 22% EBIT margin	• **Outdated product portfolio**: 3/6 products have combustion engines • **Mature vehicles**: Average maturity of 75.00% • **Dated strategy:** Firm's strategy not aligned with new market conditions and consumer preferences • **Poor inventory management**: Vehicles with either too low or too high DOI • **Low CSR rating**: 50%	• **Sustainable mobility**: increasing demand in electric vehicles • **Technology access**: China global leader in EV manufacturing and technology • **Low competition**: Only 3 competitors • **Green investments**: Access to green bonds • **Asian market**: 14.8% of unsupplied demand in Asia • **Autonomous driving**: A consumer preference in all 3 regions	• **Environmental regulations**: Fees for cars sold about CO_2 emission limit (USD 20) • **Tariff implementation**: Unknown future tariff development • **Consumer preferences shift**: New trends or changing costs can affect consumer preferences • **Cost pressure**: Competition (especially from China) that could produce cheaper • **Fluctuating material prices**

[1]EU: Europe; [2]US: Americas; [3]AS: Asia

Source: own rendering, data from (Industry Masters Ltd. 2025)

Figure 4: NovaMotive's strategic positioning using Porter's Generic Strategies framework.



Source: own rendering

Figure 5: NovaMotive's coherent actions and KPI dashboard.

Coherent action	KPI
Developing EV models that correspond to all key car types.	Number of different car types in the fleet
Further increasing sales in all geographical areas, especially Asia.	Market share increase by 3% per geographical area
Fully committing to high capital investment in innovation depending on consumer preferences.	Investment sum of min. USD 1 billion for innovation
Targeting to reach level 4 of autonomous driving for all vehicles.	Number of vehicles with level 4 of autonomous driving
Only manufacturing electric vehicles.	Number of EVs in the fleet
Publishing an annual ESG report.	Annual ESG report status: 1-published, 0-not published

Source: own rendering

Figure 6: NovaMotive's company vision and mission.

Vision

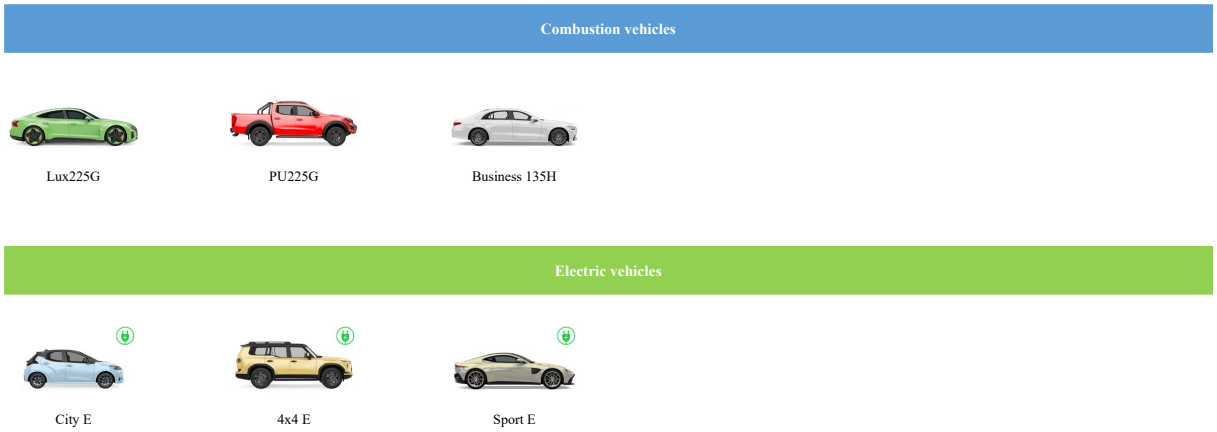
Our goal is to shape future mobilityy to be more sustainable, accessible and innovative.

Mission

We create groundbreaking electric vehicles that are fully sustainable and offer autonomous driving. Through adaptability we meet consumers preferences and set the foundation for a smarter and greener future,

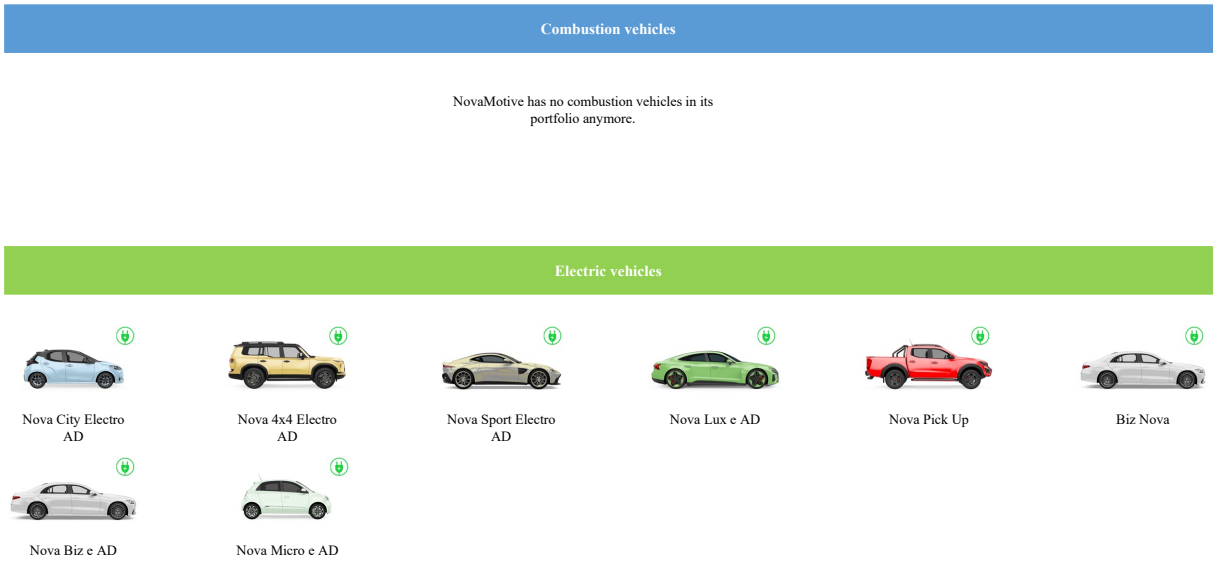
Source: own rendering

Figure 7: NovaMotive's vehicle fleet by Q4.



Source: own rendering

Figure 8: NovaMotive's vehicle fleet by Q28.

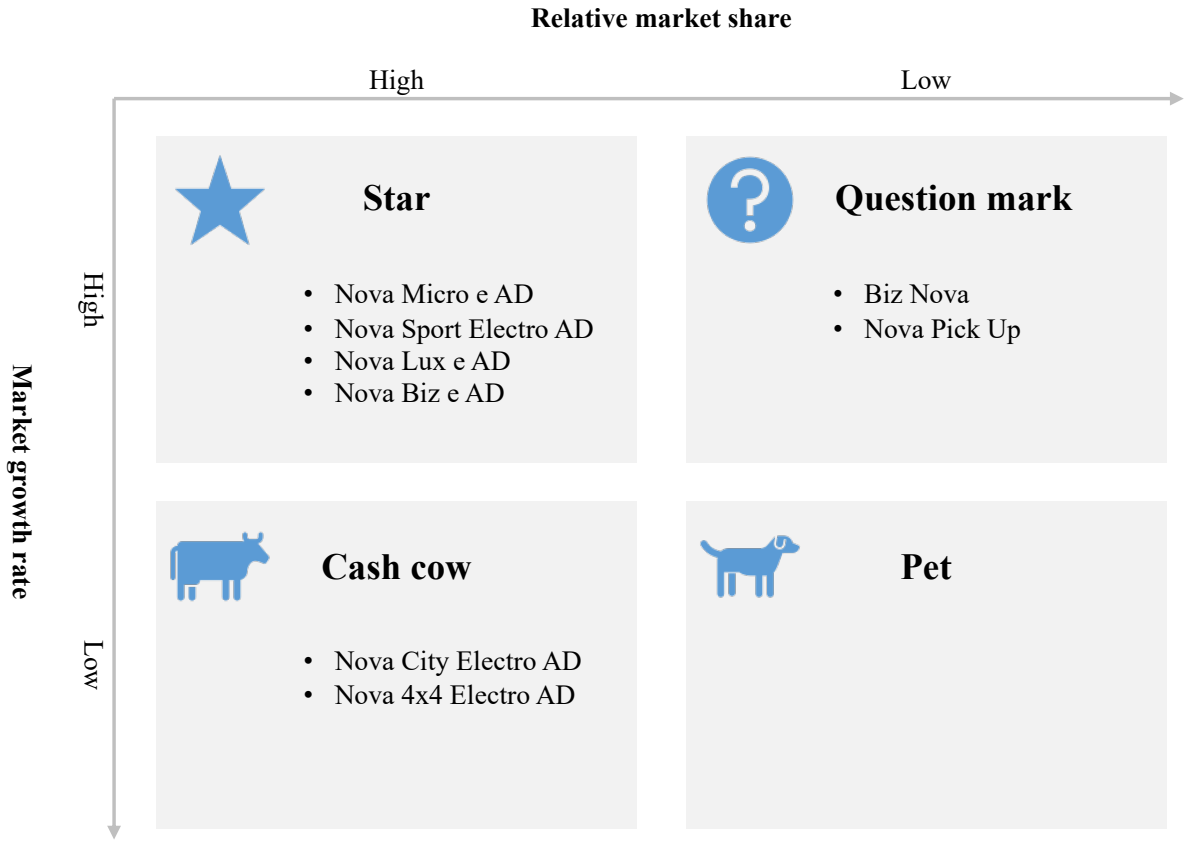


Source: own rendering

Figure 9: NovaMotive's BCG Growth Share Matrix by Q4.

Source: own rendering

Figure 10: NovaMotive's BCG Growth Share Matrix by Q28.



Source: own rendering

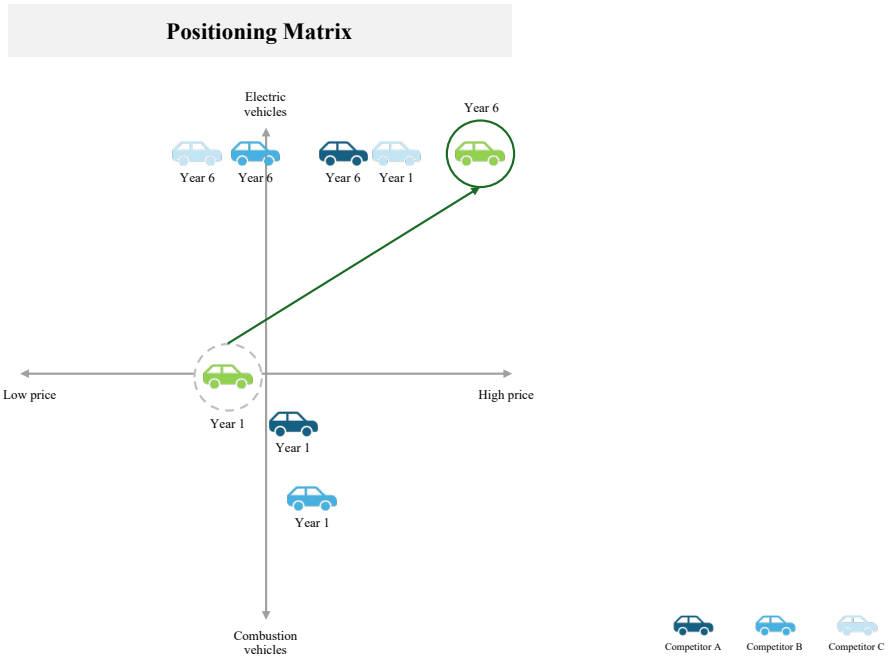
Figure 11: No*vaMoti*ve's coherent actions and KPI dashboard by Q28.

Coherent action	KPI	Status by Q28	Checkbox
Developing EV models that correspond to all key car types.	Number of different car types in the fleet	#7 different car types in the fleet	✓
Further increasing sales in all geographical areas, especially Asia.	Market share increase by 3% per geographical area	Target only reached for Europe	✗
Fully committing to high capital investment in innovation depending on consumer preferences.	Investment sum of min. USD 1 billion for innovation	Target only reached on year 1	✗
Targeting to reach level 4 of autonomous driving for all vehicles.	Number of vehicles with level 4 of autonomous driving	8/10 electric vehicles[1] have level 4	✓
Only manufacturing electric vehicles.	Number of EVs in the fleet	100% of the vehicles are electric	✓
Publishing an annual ESG report.	Annual ESG report status: 1-published, 0-not published	Report was published by year 4	✓

[1] The production of the two vehicles that do not have level 4 autonomous driving will be be stopped after Q28 and replaced by new generations that will include level 4 autonomous driving.

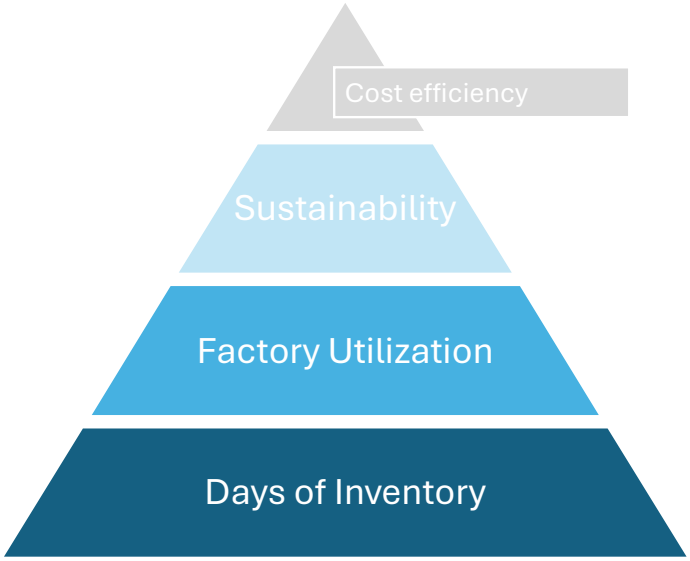
Source: own rendering, data from (Industry Masters Ltd. 2025)

Figure 12: NovaMotive's and competitors positioning transition from year 1 to year 6.



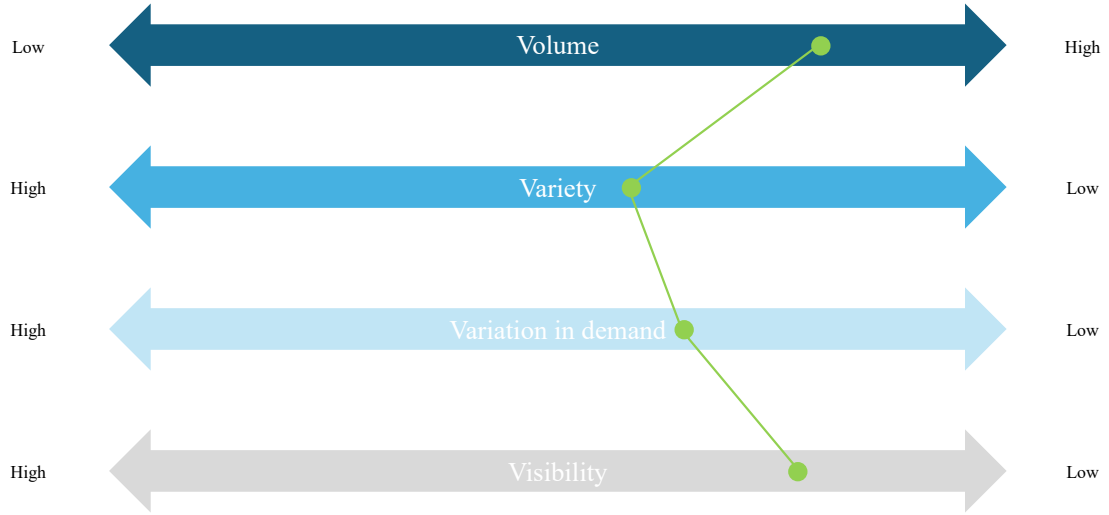
Source: own rendering, data from (Industry Masters Ltd. 2025)

Figure 13: NovaMotive's operations strategy pyramid.



Source: own rendering

Figure 14: NovaMotive's 4 Vs by Q28.



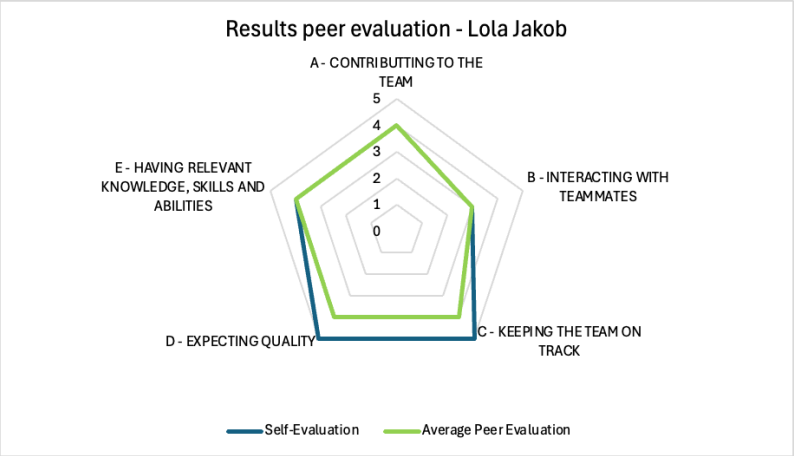
Source: own rendering

Figure 15: NovaMotives Scope 1,2,3 investments by Q28.

Scope 1	Scope 2	Scope 3
Production investments	**Energy Investments**	**Supply Chain Investments**
Water Consumption Reduction	Energy Efficiency Investment	Offset Suppliers CO2
Waste Reduction	Install Solar Panels	Sustainable Suppliers
ISO14001 / EMAS Certificates	Energy Management System	External Battery Recycling

Source: (Industry Masters Ltd. 2025)

Figure 16: Lola Jakob peer evaluation after year 3.



Source: own rendering, data from (Arêde 2025)