

Profiling the US Petroleum Refining Industry

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Abstracts

Petroleum refining has evolved continuously in response to changing consumer demand for better and different products. The original requirement was to produce kerosene as a cheaper and better source of light than whale oil. The development of the internal combustion engine led to the production of gasoline and diesel fuels. The evolution of the airplane created a need first for high-octane aviation gasoline and then for jet fuel, a sophisticated form of the original product, kerosene. Present-day refineries produce a variety of products including many required as feedstock for the petrochemical industry.

The US refining and marketing industry has been characterized by unusually low product margins, low profitability, selective retrenchment, and substantial restructuring throughout the decade of the 1990's. Costs involved in complying with environmental laws have grown substantially during the period and have also affected the profitability of the domestic industry. Profitability from the refining operations of domestic petroleum companies has varied widely, even before the 1990's. Consequently, refiners' abilities to recoup their investment have been impaired.

Starting in the late 1970's and continuing to the present, the US refining majors have invested heavily in their refineries in order to utilize heavier, more sulfurous crude oils as inputs. Over the same period, the US majors have invested in upgrading their refineries to produce greater proportions of lighter, higher valued products, particularly motor gasoline. The actual returns to these investments depend not only on the levels of input and product prices, but also can be strongly affected by the differences in prices of light and heavy petroleum products and high and low quality crude oils.

Aruvian Research's report – Profiling the US Petroleum Refining Industry – analyzes the US petroleum refining industry starting from the basics. The report starts with a descriptive base analysis of the characteristics of the US petroleum refining industry in

terms of economic quantity of demand. The drivers of demand and the traditional resources which are used to fulfill this demand are explained along with the emerging challenge of meeting the global climate change as well emerging demand for petroleum in the world. Add to this rising emission problems plaguing the industry. The report further enables the reader to view the US petroleum refining industry matrix in its present platform and also the inherent consumption patterns which are present in the markets.

A look at the refined petroleum products' industry along with a view on the various processes involved during the entire petroleum refining process, such as distillation, alkylation, hydroprocessing, etc., is described in details in the report. Twenty one leading players of the industry are profiled in-depth in the report, along with brief profiles of some US refineries as well.

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