IOCOM Chair/ President’s Message

The third issue of volume 02 is continuing to provide articles under the theme of “A holistic approach to Business and Organisational viability” with a sub-theme of Planning for Outcomes.

In supporting this sub-theme, I have provided an overview of how the federal government of Canada does its annual business planning and reporting of outcomes to Parliament and Canadians to justify the expenditure on programs and services. The annual planning for the next three fiscal years begins in early October with the Departmental Plan (DP), previously known as the Report on Plans and Priorities (RPP). The Plans are developed with the guidance of the Treasury Board Secretariat of Canada (TBS). The DP is driven by government priorities, environmental scans, strategic planning and Corporate Risk management considerations. DP provides key planning highlights are linked to priorities and supported by program initiatives and actions and a Performance Results Management Framework (PMF). The Minister responsible for the federal government Department or Agency will table the plans for approval by Parliament in February/March. When approved the Department or Agency will implement the plans and are accountable for the resources allocated and in achieving priority driven outcomes (results).

A complimentary document, the Agency of Departmental Operational Plan is prepared based on the notional budgetary allocations. This process also begins in September and ends in February/March. The operational plan is a more detailed document which includes annexes on Planned Budgeted Resource Levels for past, current and future fiscal years, Human Resource Requirements, Investment, Information Management and Information Technology (IM/IT) Requirements Plan, and a Real Property Requirements (Accommodation Plan). This plan is used by program management to monitor on-going progress on program initiatives and projects. A mid-year review report on a selected number of priority driven outcomes and their status is presented to the head of the Department or Agency in a dashboard summary format for dialogue by senior management and action as required. At the end of the fiscal year which is March 31st, the Departments and Agencies begin the reporting of performance in April/May. The Minister presents the Departmental Report to Parliament in October. This closes the loop of the government planning and reporting annual cycle of events. These planning and reporting products are made available to the public in the Departmental/Agency website. Also, you may visit the TBS website at (https://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca).

Private and not for profit sector organizations follow their own planning and reporting of financial and non-financial performance information to shareholders or investors. Whether it is government or non-government organizations need to plan, perform and report on desired outcomes to stay viable.

In this issue of IDD, I have written an article to illustrate how Logic Models could be used as a powerful outcome management planning methodology and a communications tool. Other Articles discuss how business modeling, Niche Marketing and Information Technology could facilitate the achievement of optimum business outcomes. We also have a case study on Outcome Management in the Malaysian Health sector. I thank the contributors to this issue.

Once again, I am delighted to present this issue for your reading pleasure. The Editorial team continues to serve you well and values your feedback. We encourage all of you to write short articles for future issues of IDD.
Logic Model a Powerful Outcome Management Planning Technique

Sandiran Premakanthan

I will begin with basic definitions of outcome management for the reader to understand how logic models facilitate the achievement of outcomes.

**Outcome**
- An outcome is “something that follows as a result or consequence.
- An outcome involves an intentional change being imposed on the system (people, processes, technology), with a resulting end state that can be measured.

There are several synonyms for outcome: aftermath, consequence, results, and score. The word “benefit” is commonly substituted for outcome (Positive Result). “Outcome” is neutral and can represent a positive or negative effect.

**Logic Model**
Logic models are the instruments of change when executed results in the desired end state of a system.
This article presents an overview of logic modeling and introduces to a very simplistic approach to this technique referred to as the Standardized Logic Model with an application and a brief introduction to performance measurement strategy (PMS).

**Performance Results Evidence Logic Model**
Here is my definition of Logic Model which I developed in November 2009.

“Logic Model, also referred to as Performance Results Evidence Chain Logic Model or Log Frame is a graphic representation of the causal or logical linkages and relationships between inputs: resources; and money: key results: core and enabling activities and transformation or conversion processes of a policy, program, project or initiative that leads to the achievement of intended program and organizational impacts and effects, the performance results: outputs, immediate, intermediate and final outcomes supported by a performance measurement strategy.”

In the 90’s logic models were referred to as the instrument to understand the theory of change. However, there are some differences between the logic model and theory of change approach.

**Traditional Logic Models (Figure 1)**
Components or Elements of a traditional logic model of a program or project include: inputs: resources (people, material etc.), key-results activities or transformation or conversion processes (4 or 5), outputs and outcomes: immediate or now (1-2 years); intermediate or later (3-5 years); and final or ultimate (intended and untended impacts and effects - 5 years or more). Definitions are provided in an Annex.
Organizations have greater control over the resources they utilize to produce the desired outputs which are directly attributed to the immediate outcomes of the program or project. The program or project may only contribute to the achievements of the intermediate or long term impacts and effects due to influences external to the organization.

**Figure 1**
Source: Treasury Board Secretariat, Canada.

The template could be used to construct and display the logic model in a vertical or horizontal plane. See figure 3 for an example.

**Benefits**
There are a number of benefits from developing logic models.
- Clarifies the objectives of a policy, program or project.
- Facilitates program and project planning, measurement, monitoring, evaluation and reporting of performance results.
- A visual representation or a map of program and project theory and action.
- Shows logical performance results sequence or chain.
- Stakeholder consensus on performance measures, evaluation and reporting focus.

A powerful communication tool (one pager) to provide stakeholders the rationale for the program or project investment.

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**Figure 2 Template**

**Logic-model Structure**

**Program Components**

**Inputs**

Resources: FTEs, O&M, Contributions $s

**Outputs**

**Immediate Outcomes**

**Intermediate Outcomes**

**Final Outcome**

**Limitations**

There are some limitations; it is a linear Newtonian causality model with the challenge of causal attribution. It is a snapshot of a program at a given point in time and it is based on program assumptions.

**Standardized Results-based Logic Model (Generic Template - Figure 3)**

The standardized approach to building logic models results in a few high level generic key-results activities with standardized descriptions. There are two types of key-results activities, core and enabling which are linked to a few standard key outputs (end products or services) based on 80/20 Pareto’s law\(^2\). These key outputs lead to a few common or generic outcome statements with a suite of common performance measures/indicators. This approach will ensure

\(^2\) The **Pareto** principle (also known as the 80/20 rule, the **law** of the vital few, or the principle of factor sparsity) states that, for many events, roughly 80% of the effects come from 20% of the causes. 20% of the input creates 80% of the result. For example, in general, 20% of your customers represent 80% of your **sales**.
consistency of measurement, evaluation, and reporting of performance information with cost effective data collection and analysis processes.

The example (Figure 3) shows one core activity with a generic description of design, develop, deliver, coordinate and evaluate policies, programs and initiatives. This activity could be customized to describe the specific program or initiative.

There are three enabling activities, Collaborate with Federal Provincial and Territorial (F/P/T) authorities and organizations, educate and create awareness of policies, programs and initiatives (promotion) and build capacity (develop skills of workforce).

Both the core and enabling activities lead to standard outputs for example, agreements, policies, plans, awareness campaigns, and training material which are listed in each of the boxes linked to the specific key result activity.

In a similar fashion, the standard outputs are linked to a set of common or generic outcome statements in figure 3 for the three levels (immediate, intermediate and final). These generic statements could easily be transformed in to customized statement to reflect the program objectives.

**Application of the Standardized Performance Results Evidence Chain Logic Model to the International Transfer of Prisoners (Inmates) Program**

**Program Profile**
The International Transfer Program is a Canadian Federal government program. Correctional Service Canada is responsible for the implementation of the International Transfers of Offenders Act, related treaties, and the International Transfers of Offenders Program which includes the processing of applications for transfer, the actual transfer of the offenders, and their subsequent incarceration in Canada. Canada has been a party to Transfer of Offenders Treaties since 1978. Transfer of Offenders Treaties enable offenders, with their explicit consent and with the discretionary approval of the sentencing country and of the country of citizenship, to serve their foreign imposed sentence in their country of citizenship. Once transferred, the offender's sentence is administered in accordance with the laws of the receiving country.

**Program Components:**
- Collaboration with all levels of the Canadian and International Criminal Justice Systems;
- Transfer policy and procedures (organization and administration);
- Treaty negotiations;
- Transfer of offenders (operations management);
- Offender and Public education and awareness;
- Public relations; and
- Building of international transfer human resources capacity: correctional escort officers, consular officials and community agency personnel

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3 International Transfers Program, Correctional Service Canada. (http://www.csc-sec.gc.ca/international-transfers)
Program Activities of the International Transfer Program
Core Result Activity
Design, develop, implement, co-ordinate and evaluate International Offender Transfer Program and services.
Enabling Results Activities
- Collaborate with Federal, Provincial, Territorial and International Criminal Justice System Authorities and organizations.
- Educate and create offender and public awareness of the benefits of international transfer of offenders (prisoners).
- Build capacity of international transfer escort officers, consular officials and community personnel.

Standard Key Outputs (end-products or service) associated with key results activity (Core and Enabling) of the International Transfer of Offenders

Core Result Activity – International transfer Program: International transfer policies, Commissioner’s directives, procedures, standards, guidelines, frameworks, plans, projects, reports, Consular visits, transfers completed, transferees

Collaboration: Agreements: signed and ratified treaties; and administrative agreements

Education and awareness: Offender and public education and awareness material, (international transfer information booklets), Campaigns/information sessions: offender information exchange

Capacity Building: Trained Officials: Correctional Service Escort Officers; Consular Officials and Community Agency personnel.

International Transfer Program Outcomes (immediate or now, intermediate or later and final or ultimate)

Standardized immediate or now outcomes:
- increased and improved collaboration and networking;
- improved international program delivery;
- Target audience increased awareness of the benefits of international transfers.
- increased capacity to deliver international transfer program: trained escorts (prison guards), consular and community agency services officials.

Standardized intermediate or later outcomes:
- increased behaviour changes of international transferees;
- increased participation of countries and offenders; and
- improved access to quality well-coordinated international transfer program

Standardized final or ultimate outcome
International transfer program contributes to the successful rehabilitation and reintegration of offenders in to society.

Exercise
Using the information for all elements, you may populate the standardized logic model template (Figure 3) to construct the International Transfer Program Logic Model.
Logic Models and Theory of Change
Logic Models don’t always identify indicators (evidence to measure whether outcomes are met or not). Theories of change require identifying indicators or a performance measurement strategy (PMS).

Some examples of performance indicators of the performance measurement strategy to support the theory of change of the International Transfer Program are provided.

Performance Measurement Strategy (PMS) International Transfer Program
PMS is the selection, development and on-going use of performance measures to guide corporate decision-making. The range of information in a performance measurement strategy could include: reach; outputs and outcomes; performance indicators; data sources; methodology; and costs.
PMS should answer the following questions.
- How will we objectively know whether we are making progress towards out objectives. It is by developing key Performance Measures/Indicators.
- Where will we get the information to support the indicators. By identifying reliable data sources.
- How will we measure and analyze, and at what costs. Consideration must be given to the data collection methods and tools and costs.
- Who will be responsible for data collection. (data ownership) and timing/frequency of data collection

Key Output Performance Measures/Indicators
Examples of key result core and enabling activity outputs and performance indicators.
- Number and type of formal collaborative agreements established.
- Number and type of joint projects established.
- Number and type of policies developed;
- Number and type of reports produced (examples: best practices, evaluation, research and environmental scans)
- Number and type of projects completed (examples of projects mentor cultural activities)
- Number and types of awareness campaigns conducted.

Key Outcome Performance Indicators
Here are few outcome performance indicators from the International Transfers program.
- International transfer participant satisfaction.
- % increase/decrease in the number and type of trained/skilled escorts, consular officials and community agency personnel.
- Incremental change in offender criminal behaviour.
- Ultimate Outcome Measure: Recidivism rates of transferees

Concluding Remarks
Standardized approach to building logic models provides a suite of common performance measures or indicators which are universal in application. You can customize the output and outcome indicators by naming them appropriately. For example, international Treaties could be named as Canada-USA Treaty Agreement. Limiting the number of performance indicators to a
relatively small number of well defined standardized performance indicators associated with key results outputs and outcome has a direct impact on the cost of managing performance results information.

The standardized approach supports evaluation and reporting strategies for evidence-informed decision making and accountability through a common performance management language and consistency. It is complementary to other performance management tools such as activity based costing.

The standardized logic model is a simplified and fast method of capturing the program or project profile on one page. It serves as an excellent communication tool and a powerful way to understand the outputs and outcomes (results) of a program or project.

**Annex –Traditional Logic Model Definitions**

- **Input**: Resources: human; material; and financial, etc. used to carry out key-results activities to produce outputs and/or accomplish results.

- **Key-Results Activity/Transformation or conversion Process**: an operation or work process that an organization uses to convert the resources (inputs) in to specific outputs: end products or services. Key-Results Activities are the primary link in the chain through which outcomes are achieved.

- **Output**: end products or services that result directly from the activities/transformation or conversion processes of a policy, program or initiative, and delivered to a target group or population (beneficiaries).

- **Outcome**: An external consequence attributed to an organization, policy, program or initiative that is considered significant in relation to its commitments. Outcomes may be described as: immediate, intermediate or final, direct or indirect, intended or unintended.

- **Effectiveness**: The extent to which an organization, policy, program or initiative is meeting its planned intended performance results.

- **Cost Effectiveness**: The extent to which an organization, program, project or initiative is achieving its planned intended outcomes in relation to expenditure of resources.

- **Efficiency**: The extent to which an organisation, policy, program or initiative is producing its planned outputs in relation to expenditure of resources.

- **Efficiency**: Is the ratio of input to output. Usually expressed as a percentage.

- **Standardized Performance Results Evidence Chain Logic Model Definitions**

Types of Key Results Activities:

- **Core Key-Results Activities**: the activity or activities that produce the key program or project end products or services.

- **Enabling Key-Results Activities**: the activities that support the core key-results activities of the program or project Examples: collaboration with different levels of government; promotion and prevention, community capacity development; etc.

- **Performance Measure/Indicator**

It is a unit of measurement (a statistic or parameter) that provides performance information in quantitative and or qualitative terms on the extent to which a policy, program or initiative is achieving its intended performance results: outputs; and outcomes - immediate or now; intermediate or later and final or ultimate.
Developing a Business Model for Best Outcomes

Atiq ur Rehman

Powerful business ideas

Just a good idea is not enough. You have to have a game changing idea. “The smartest CEOs are concentrating on breakthrough, or game-changing, innovation” (PWC, 2014). A business idea is just like a seed for a plant. We know that not every seed brings out a fruit bearing plant. Secondly, no fruit bearing plant can be grown everywhere. Hence, a powerful and workable idea is crucial for providing a strong foundation to the business. There are many forms of business ideas. Some of them suggested by Ovans (2015) are as follows:

- **Affinity club** – find any successful organization, make arrangement with it and sell its products. You get royalty;
- **Brokerage** – bring buyers and sellers at a platform and facilitate a deal. You get your fee;
- **Bundling** – Make a package of related goods and services and sell. You get a value added price;
- **Leasing** – Purchase expensive usable items and rent them out. Your reward is a rental fee;
- **Product to service** – Sell the services the product performs; and
- **Subscription** – Charge a subscription fee.

Sometimes a single business model shakes up an entire industry. For example, digital transport system launched just a few years back has challenged the business model of entire transport industry (PWC, 2015). For example, in Malaysia with the introduction of Uber and GrabTaxi, the business models of traditional taxi drivers has been severely challenged. GrabTaxi was established in 2012. Within four years, the company has experienced unprecedented scale of growth. It has expanded its operations to Singapore, Vietnam, Thailand, Philippines and Indonesia. As of July 2016, the company had 350,000 drivers in its network. As far as users of the service is concerned, the mobile application of GrabTaxi had been downloaded by 19 million users (Russell, 2016),

Approach to business idea development

In developing a power idea, it may be kept in mind that people can tell you about tools and techniques of idea development but they will rarely share any workable idea. At best, if they give any idea, it is more likely to be either tested-and-discarded one or found practically non-feasible or is very expensive to execute. Hence, you must be smart enough to get a right business idea. However, what is suggested is that three considerations must be kept in view while developing a business idea:

- Extensive and intensive market research;
- Use of thinking techniques – critical examination including creative and or lateral thinking and judicial thinking; and
- Customer focused thinking
It is not enough to have a game changing idea but you have to put it into action before anyone else takes advantage of it.

**Business model**

There are many ways in which you can classify business models. It could be nature of business or format of model or technology to be used. For example, Job (2016) has identified four types of business models: 1) manufacturer; 2) distributor; 3) retailer; and 4) franchiser.

To avoid any shocks during the execution phase, you need to transform your idea into a good business model. It is true that developing a good business model continues to be one of the major challenges for the entrepreneurs. A good business model does not simply depict your dream but is also compatible with the ground realities.

You should determine the customers of your business model. Business customers may include investors, management of the enterprise and the employees.

Does every business venture necessarily have a business model? The answer is yes. However, it could be explicitly stated or may exist in implicit form. In some cases, there may not be enough documentation but the blue print of the model might be present in the minds of leaders. Teece (2010) argues that: “Whenever a business enterprise is established, it either explicitly or implicitly employs a particular business model that describes the design or architecture of the value creation, delivery, and capture mechanisms it employs”.

**Benefits of business model**

Developing a business model produces many benefits. It helps in:
- refining the concept of the business idea and in the identification of gaps in the logic of the business;
- testing the assumptions, based on which entire building of the business is to be founded i.e. in identification of the risks;
- inspiring the investors to invest; and
- guiding smooth execution of the idea.

**Elements of business model**

It should be kept in mind that a business model is more conceptual in nature than financial in nature (Teece, 2010). Hence, serious efforts are devoted to evolve a good conceptual model. There are many templates of the business models are available on the internet. For example, Strategyzer has developed a template which is available at: [https://strategyzer.com/canvas/business-model-canvas](https://strategyzer.com/canvas/business-model-canvas). They call it business model canvas. Many leading companies including General Electric (GE), Procter & Gamble (P&G), and Nestlé are using the canvas (Osterwalder, 2013). Its major elements are:
- Key partners
- Key activities
- Key resources
- Value proposition: It is the value you would offer to the customers in return for the price.
- Customer relationships
- Channels
- Customer segments
- Cost structure
- Revenue stream

However, the above-mentioned elements are not enough. One critical element which is missing is the risks associated with the concept.

**Testing of business model**

Many times, business models look wonderful on paper. They may not look so beautiful when put in to action. It is a general tendency among the idea creators to shun away from all possible negativities. Excitement completely overwhelms them and tends to insulate them from any criticism. That is why they tend to ignore the idea of testing the basic assumptions around which the whole idea has been weaved. They wake up only when the idea is put into action and they see it sinking in their own sea of self-deception and find themselves in awkward position. Hence, it is very crucial that you need to clearly identify and examine the assumptions on which the model is to be built. In other words, an initial version of a business model may comprise several hypotheses which must be tested before the model is put into action.

**Characteristics of an effective business model**

An effective business model has the following characteristics:

- It is based on a very strong business idea;
- It identifies customers and competitors and what they (customers and competitors) value (Ovans, 2015);
- It delivers value to the customers (Teece, 2010; Ovans, 2015). Value could be achieved through: 1) introducing a completely new idea/product/service; 2) employing a new method to produce or deliver an existing product higher cost effectiveness or better quality;
- It entices customers to pay for the value (Teece, 2010; Ovans, 2015);
- It converts those payments to profit (Teece, 2010);
- It achieves advantageous cost and risk structures (Teece, 2010); and
- It integrates all of its elements (see Strategyzer’s template of business model canvas)

**Life of the business model**

No business model has indefinite period of life. Life of business models may vary depending upon the uniqueness of the idea and response of the market (i.e. interaction of the supply and demand forces). If your product has stopped giving you desired level of growth, it is a clear warning signal that you need to immediately revalidate the model and improve its alignment with the new ground realities.
Concluding Remarks

Global political and economic landscape is highly volatile and is continually changing, which exposes the business models to new risks. Change in the landscape obviously disturbs the equilibrium between the business model and the external environment of the business, eroding away its relevance and validity. The 19th Annual Global CEO Survey released recently in 2016 highlights that almost three fourth (i.e.74%) of the CEOs are much concerned about the geopolitical uncertainty and 66% of the CEOs are feeling more threats to their businesses than before (PWC, 2016).

The point of caution is that concerns not only vary from region to region and change from year to year. For example, in 2016, the top most concerns in Asia Pacific are the exchange rate volatility and non-availability of skills, while other regions have some other concerns at the top of the list. Just one year ago, the CEOs of Asia Pacific had rated the speed of technological change as their top most challenge (PWC, 2015). So stop thinking of over-generalizing the sensitivity of the risks.

References


Outcome Management in Malaysian Health Sector: A Case Study of Persatuan Kamban Seremban’s Health Program: “My body my treasure”

Thevaraj Subramanium

Introduction

Persatuan Kamban Seremban’s Health Program was launched with the financial support of the Ministry of Health, Malaysia. Its basic objective was to create awareness among the society of the importance of healthy lifestyle in molding a healthy nation. The program targeted the youth in the program area and made use of interventions like yoga exercises, traditional games, lectures, seminars and workshops.

Program Rationale

The younger generation today tends to go wayward in their attitudes and choice of unhealthy living as they lack proper guidance and with the exposure to anti-social activities. The situation is made worse with the availability of technology and networking which are at their fingertips. This can be seen with the increase of crime rates among teenagers whereby parents have no control over their attitudes. Involvement in drug abuse and petty crimes are a common subject among teenagers.

Obesity among teenagers is another big challenge for the society. Body Mass Index (BMI) rate of more than 23 prevails mainly in primary school students. According to standards of the National Heart, Lungs and Blood Institute, United States Department of Health and Human Services, 23 is clearly on higher side of the normal range. Their standards are described as follows (NIH, ud):

- Underweight = <18.5
- Normal weight = 18.5–24.9
- Overweight = 25–29.9
- Obesity = BMI of 30 or greater

Major causes include improper eating habits, choice of fast food over home cooked meals and snacking. To add on, children lack physical activities as compared to 20 years ago. The millennials (also known as y-generation – borne between 1977 and 1994) love spending most of their time watching the television or using the internet.

Bearing all these factors in mind, we had decided to curb these problems by way of

- Educating and instilling awareness among the children in primary schools (age 5 to 12) mainly in the suburban areas, on the prevalence of illness due to lack of physical activities and proper diet based on the Food Pyramid (a dietary plan plotting health diets
– most frequently to-be-used food items are placed at the bottom of the base, while food items to be avoided or used least frequently are placed at the top of the pyramid).

Instilling moral values taught in Kamba Ramayananam (a Tamil epic written by Kamban – a poet of the 12th Century) among children as guidance to lead healthy life physically, mentally and socially.

**Program Outcomes (Performance Results)**

The program was designed to achieve the following short term outcomes (performance results):

- Reduced BMI of 200 students and parents (target population)
- Improved achievement rates of students (target population)
- Increased knowledge and skills of vegetable cultivation (home gardening) of students (target population)
- Increased number students prepared their breakfast
- Increased number of students participated in state level oratory competitions

**Program interventions**

In 2009, the program started a 3-month (twice a week = 24 days, Fridays 1pm-3pm & Saturdays 7.30am-11am) on SJKT Repah, Negeri Sembilan (Repah Tamil Primary School) with a total of 200 Students and Parents. The location to conduct this program in suburban schools was strategically convenient for both students and parents as the school was situated near their residence thus 100% attendance was guaranteed. The plantation settings were conducive for outdoor activities such as 10,000 steps a day and yoga exercises. At the beginning of each program, we identified students who have a high BMI level, the students are then monitored closely and physical activities such as skipping, aerobic and traditional dances are given according to their needs and capacities. They are also monitored periodically for any changes in weight and the intensity of physical activities was increased accordingly. The students carry out these exercises on a regular basis.

**Physical Activities**

- Sunlight is rich in Vitamin. D thus it is important to do these activities in the morning in natural surroundings. Therefore, each Saturday morning, our Yoga Master trains students to practice Yoga for children so that they can do it on their own daily. In the early stages of this exercise, 36 Asanas (postures) are taught to all participants. These Asanas helps strengthen the body, mind and soul, it also strengthens the memory of an individual.

- Aerobic dances with its frequency and intensity helps to burn calories. This activity is done indoors on Fridays. On alternate Saturdays, the students are brought for walks (10,000 steps a day) around the plantations nearby.
Workshops

- During the first three sessions, students showed partial interest and indulgence in the physical activities and food preparations. However, when they were given choices of bread, greens and spreads and was asked to prepare their own breakfast, they could come up with a balanced breakfast, although they chose to neglect the tomatoes and salads. Upon investigations, we found that their parents always bought breakfast from the local vendor or the tuck shop, thus the children had difficulties in making sandwiches. As such workshop sessions included parents’ participation.

- Each group of individuals were given polybags and trays and taught how to plant chilies, brinjals, tomatoes, ladies fingers and plantains. Gardening also creates awareness among the students on how vegetables and food is produced. Through gardening they could see that the result of tillage in their own homes not only provides income in financial terms but they can also use these products for use at home daily. Through this activity, the Government’s GREEN BOOK goal was achieved.

- Music is a universal language and one cannot deny the influence it has on youth today. It is through this concept that we could connect the students to poetry and literature in combination with music and its relevance in the media today.

- Students were divided in groups and each student was given a role in reciting poetry, drama and debates. Student showed interest and could perform with guidance. This workshop prepared them in their exams.

- The workshops also included homework to produce handcrafts made from recycled materials. Each handcraft was graded and rewarded accordingly.

- During the workshop, students were also shown how to prepare a Newsletter / Individual Journal. Best Newsletter was rewarded based on content, writing style and handwriting. This Newsletter / Journal also served the purpose for the students to reflect their experiences.

- Students were taught the importance of hygiene and how it can affect the individual. Personal hygiene was also included – hand washing before and after toilet use, environmental hygiene as well as hygiene at home.

Program Participants Findings on Day 1

- Students’ body weight showed 18% (15) with BMI < 19, 54% (64) with BMI ranging from 19.1-20, 40% (30) with BMI ranging from 20.1, and 12% (11) with BMI > 23.
- Adults’ body weight varied from 40% (5) with BMI < 19, 41.6% (42) with BMI ranging from 19.1-20, 21.6% (27) with BMI ranging from 20.1, and 48% (6) with BMI > 23.
- 43% students were average achievers whereas 17% students did poorly in almost all class tests.
Although they have a GREEN BOOK Program in school, they lacked the basic information on how vegetables are cultivated.

82% students bought breakfast in school canteens while the rest brought home cooked meals or bought from local vendors.

Students did not show interest in state levels Literary Fair competitions as they lacked self-confidence.

Performance Results on Day 23

- Students could reduce their body mass weight from 1.5 kg to 3.5 kgs while adults could reduce 3kgs to 6.5kgs respectively.
- Showed significant improvement in academic results where 9 students who were from average achievers managed to get at least 2 ‘A’s in their exams.
- They could do gardening at home – they could sell the vegetables at the local shop for a small profit which was then divided among the students.
- They prepared their own breakfast at least 3 times a week which they brought to school.
- Participated in state level oratory competition and won first 2 top prizes.
Based on feedback from teachers and parents, students showed increased awareness in their food selection, made significant improvement in their academic achievements and they also tend to their own gardens at home which yields vegetables for their own use.

**Conclusion**- choosing healthy lifestyle ensures a healthy Society and Nation

It is evident that an individual’s attitude towards healthy lifestyle begins during the early years of life with proper guidance from not only their parents and teachers but the society at large and that healthy community helps build a healthy nation.

Based on the results we had received from the program, we moved on to other schools and to-date, we have conducted health programs in 11 suburban Tamil schools (primary level).

**Acknowledgements**

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- Ministry of Education Malaysia
- All the Principals/ Headmasters / Teachers of the respective schools
- Parents and students
- Media (Minnal FM) and Tamil Daily (Malaysia Nanban)

**Reference**

Niche Marketing for Optimum Business Outcomes

Syed Masroor H. Shah,

Introduction

Establishing and running a business is an enterprising yet challenging goal. It does not happen as easier as it is expected. It needs vision, patience, commitment, consistency and most importantly continuous innovation to engage and retain the customer. Success of a business depends upon one more factor that is central to the entire equation and it is which segment of the population or customer a business will target to produce and sell its product. In marketing terms, we name it niche marketing. As a business norm, a product is aimed at targeting a certain segment of the entire consumer base.

Historical perspective

“The study of the history of marketing as an academic field emerged in the early twentieth century. The publication, in 1976, of Robert Bartel’s book The History of Marketing Thought marked a turning-point in the history of marketing thought.”

“The history of Marketing Strategy is as old as the history of business itself, even though the concept was not formally formulated until recently. However, the concept is still evolving and there isn’t complete agreement as to what the concept is all about. The history of marketing strategy is described from its roots in early marketing management & later corporate marketing to its present state. The historical perspective demonstrates how various strategic approaches can be integrated into a comprehensive conceptual framework for marketing strategy. We are going to divide the history on Marketing Strategy into two broad phases: Before Liberalization, Privatisation & Globalisation (LPG) (1898- 1991) and From Liberalisation, Privatisation & Globalisation (LPG) (1992- till date).”

At personal level, I have experienced informal approaches of niche marketing particularly in rural areas. Those doing small businesses send free samples of their products to the neighbours and relatives. Announcements are made either by those selectively chosen for this purpose or the business owners themselves during the informal family and village gatherings. The products are displayed at the selected points where village men, women or children gather in the evening every day. But, this trend has changed rapidly as the wings of urbanization have expanded its wings into the rural areas where people think differently having an increased access to mediums of communication, education and resultant awareness.

Determining a Customer Need

Determining a customer need is a delicate process. There is a thin line between the perception of the thinker or producer and the need of the customer. It can be more explicit if it is loud and clear
through voice and expressions of the customer. Or if the producer is smart and undertakes the assessment process in a way that the customer is motivated or instigated to express their need in more vocal terms. The need can come up either through extreme frustration of the customer with another similar product or service thus clearly outlining the need and creating an opportunity for the producer. This is a smart way to determine customer need and identify a niche for a certain product or service.

**Donald Trump’s Niche Marketing Strategy**

Recent good example with global impact is the US election where Donald Trump, the elected President adopted a niche marketing strategy to win his vote bank.

Trump’s election strategy was different, smart and practical. He was fully aware of his audience, a selected crowd who wanted to listen to a different thought and ideas. He was fully aware of his brand and had a complete knowledge of himself. And, he demonstrated consistency in sharing his ideas. Being bold, confident and audacious was the corner stone of his campaign. Trusting owns self and the idea one is talking about with confidence was another important factor. Taking a stand on what is said was central to his election campaign. Overall, it was a complete package.

Few excerpts from an article on the subject are placed below:

> “Lots of Republican primary voters are feeling frustrated and are passionate to take back the White House. Trump is giving voice to feelings that are widely shared in that political party.”
> “Love him or hate him, Donald Trump knows who he is.”
> “Your brand needs to stand for something. Lots of people are not fans of Trump, but even people who oppose his candidacy find themselves grudgingly admiring the consistency of his brand message. What you see is what you get.” (Schwartz, 2015)

**Others Examples**

Other examples include TV channels for different audiences (sports, news, geography, discovery, kids, fashion etc.), food chains, online grocery, fashion, stationery and other stores, online tuition centres, different educational institutions for business, medical, engineering and so on.

**People Talent Tech Marketing Strategy**

Another example of niche marketing is the strategy adopted by the People Talent Tech based in Malaysia. Unlike big IT companies, it has a vision to provide IT and business solutions to Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in Malaysia. The Company has a business management solution that facilitates small and medium business to effectively manage their customers, inventory, sales, employees and different reports. Another solution is to track performance of the field workforce that is run and supported through Global Positioning System (GPS). Another IT application is to support management of HR having modules like employees data, recruitment and selection, payroll and benefits management, leave management and performance management.
Niche Marketing Strategies for Businesses

Niche marketing is customer focused. Business targets are easier to be set and achieved. Product’s concept, design and modification are easier. Design and change of business plan and strategy is manageable. Solving customers’ problem is less challenging (Wikipedia).

1. **Deeper knowledge of target market**
   Segmentation within the niche market is important. Knowing only about the age, income level, marital status is not enough. Deeper understanding is much needed. For example, creating niche market for toys needs further thinking and segmenting. What type of toy with a different shape, material, colour and which segment of the children can narrow down the focus of niche market.

2. **Optimum Customer centrism**
   Small market is more competitive and challenging. Excellence in conceptualizing the product, its design, manufacturing passion, speciality feeling (realize the customer that this product is made for you), hassle free transaction and delivery of product is important.

3. **Innovate about spreading a word**
   How to spread a word about the product in a unique way should be a continuous rethinking process. Whether it is social media, kiosk, road show, seminars, personal marketing or any other way of promoting the product, it should be done innovatively.

4. **Check the pulse of competition**
   Success of business through niche marketing needs watching the competitors how different they are and how would you approach the customer through your product making it unique and attractive.

5. **Look for new opportunities**
   Business expansion optimizes when one closely watches and grabs new opportunities. Whether a new product line or new market, such possibility should be kept alive.

**Benefits of Niche Marketing**

- Benefits of niche marketing are: it is easier for a company to identify its customer base and plan to attract their attention and work for their satisfaction.
- It reduces competition and a company adopting niche marketing can easily penetrate a segment of the population which it targets.
- Seeking opinions of the customers before and after the launch of product that is focused and more value driven.
- Waste of human efforts and other resources can be reduced and
- Sharing ideas and benefiting from the target market is optimum; managing expectations of the customer is easier.
There can be a downside of the niche marketing as well. A company is taking the risk to target a portion of the population that may not be hundred percent responsive. Second, from a business point of view keeping aside and not targeting the major population is even riskier.

**Concluding Remarks**

My learning throughout professional and personal life suggests that we must create a niche at every stage of life. Starting with life and career, we should keep our goals SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-bound) and we should know where our niche is at any point in time.

Getting into business, identifying a niche is helpful to plan, produce, price, promote and procure or provide a product or service. Focus, consistency, commitment and collaboration being hallmarks of business success can be achieved through a niche approach. Diversity within a niche is much workable as compared to targeting a diverse vision and population.

Business optimizes its performance, if niche marketing is adopted as a strategy. Product or service will be focused for a targeted group. Business planning will be product and target oriented. Operational efficiency and complete business management will increase manifold. Hence, niche marketing not only in business but in all domains of life is recommended

**References**


Information Technology: Impact on Organizational Outcomes

Asif Ahmed

Introduction

Nowadays, the significance of information (both as a strategic and tactical resource in organization and as a major resource of added value) is known well to everyone. Information has always been considered as a competitive advantage in the business environment. But the important thing is that the actual changes that could increase the potential value of information would occur if the organization can use this important resource through the application of new technology.

Information Technology

Information Technology (IT) is a business sector that deals with computing, including hardware, software, telecommunications and generally anything involved in the transmittal of information or the systems that facilitate communication.

IT with features such as storing, processing, marketing, and transferring a large bulk of data can assist managers to improve the organization’s performance. In addition, the significance of productivity and the necessity of its assessment have received much attention given the increasing levels of competition, technology complexity, diversity of tastes, lack of resources, and rapid exchange of information. IT is more likely to have changed someone's work rather than led to them losing their job. People in certain professions have had to be retrained to make use of modern technology:

- Secretaries or dictation writers now use word processors and not typewriters which results more speed less wastage
- Travel agents book holidays by e-mails or by web portals, not by phone or letter, which results time saving and data storage capacity building?
- Tele banking has meant that many bank staff now work by phone in front of a computer, instead of being in a branch, behind a counter results cost minimization and more accessibility to clients.
- De-skilling has taken place. Some jobs which needed a high level of skill in the past can now be done more easily. For example, print workers today can use desktop publishing (DTP) software to lay out their work results more productions.
- Designers now use computer aided design (CAD) software rather than pencil and paper on a drawing board results less time and no wastage of papers.
Information a Valuable Resource

For over two decades, information was perceived as a valuable resource along with other factors of production. Following the expansion of business activities, globalization, and rapid changes in the organizations’ environment, information is now considered as a strategic factor to the extent that today it is a powerful tool in dealing with environmental problems and challenges as well as a tool that makes proper use of opportunities. Skillful information management improves organizational efficiency and business results by delivering measurable competitive advantages such as customer intimacy, supplier optimization, risk mitigation, data-driven decision support and internal transparency. In fact, any business output that is dependent on the delivery of quality, trusted and timely information to the right user or process at the right time in an understandable and interpretable way requires good information management practices.

Technology in Business:

Technology can be used in various ways, businesses can use technology in manufacturing, improving customer care, transportation/logistics, human resource management operations, business communication, securing and transferring of business information, branding and product promotion, with the goal of achieving competitive advantage etc. However, for a business to get the best out of technology, they should plan and manage this technology very well.

Benefits of Managing Information using IT

Accordingly, the establishment of an appropriate information system using Information and Communication Technology (ICT) for collecting, processing and storing of data is of vital importance. Although ICT and the use of computers have never replaced human decision making, their power to help managers and employees to make the right decisions using accurate information and speeding up tasks cannot be neglected. Many organizations have realized the importance of information technology and its impact on speeding up and accurate performance of tasks. The IT approach may result in increasing customer satisfaction, support systems, managers’ decision-making, and especially the organization’s effectiveness. Such awareness has caused most organizations to quickly move towards the application of IT (Porter & Miller, 1985) it shows how

Information technology is changing the way companies operate. It is affecting the entire process by which companies create their products. Furthermore, it is reshaping the product itself: the entire package of physical goods, services, and information companies provide to create value for their buyers”. However, we need to be more careful on extreme uses of technology which may lead us to be machine dependent and may dampen our creativity.

Challenges for small company or Startups

The technology needs of a small company exist in an almost constant state of flux, adapting and changing based on business demands and advancements in the industry. Almost every business relies on technology for day-to-day operations to purchase a new laptop to a growing company's rollout of time-management software. Progressions in computers and technology improve the
efficiency of a business. Organizational structure adapts to these changes by restructuring departments, modifying position requirements or adding and removing jobs. Employers often require training on new software programs or equipment as a job requirement if it becomes industry standard. Web-based businesses may add new departments or jobs to specialize in new areas of technology. On some occasions, implementing new forms of technology may render certain job duties obsolete in some industries.

There are few areas where technology can help startups to manage the cost:

Productivity

1. Create a digital filing system to make it easier to sort, save, share and find documents.
2. Develop an efficient email management process that makes it easier to stay on top of the flow of messages.

Money Matters

1. Use an online invoicing service to reduce the costs of collecting payment from customers.
2. Use comprehensive accounting software to streamline your business finances.

Marketing

1. Use social media sites like Facebook, Twitter, Google+, Pinterest, YouTube, etc. to promote your business, products and services.
2. Promote your business with a website and/or online advertising.

Customer Service

1. Use social media to conduct customer service
2. Set up an online help desk or ticket system to handle customer issues.

Technology can help startups leverage limited capital in smarter and more effective ways. In some cases, they may need to make some adjustments to reap the benefits of these tech-friendly alternatives. The good news is that the benefits will often outweigh the short-lived challenges of the transitional process, once your new systems are in place.

Efficiency Gains

For employees, technological enhancements often reduce the number of tedious office tasks or improve efficiency. Changes in day-to-day operation may come in the form of an upgrade to desktop computers, faster office equipment or the introduction of a new information system. Business owners increasingly utilize comprehensive software platforms to streamline operations. For example, customer relationship management (CRM) systems provide a cloud-based computing system for project management, assigning tasks and maintaining an accurate log of client communications. Very good example of efficiency gain through ICT is Center for Climate and Energy Solutions (C2ES) analysis “Widely implemented, information and communication technologies could help agencies meet half of their goals for cutting greenhouse gas emissions and save more than $5 billion in energy costs through 2020.” (CCES, ud)
Employees want to be appreciated for their hard work. Business productivity software can bridge the gaps in communication and convey to each member of a team that they are valued. With people working at their highest capabilities and business aligned from top-to-bottom, will be creating a workforce that is engaged, productive and loyal. Feeling valued is the key to employee loyalty which leads to greater business productivity.

**Conclusion**

The decision to purchase or upgrade technology has the potential to put a big dent in company finances for large and small operations. To determine the time frame and scale of adding new computers or software, business owners must weigh the cost of improvements against the perceived added value to the company. Concerns about costs can often lead small businesses to delay upgrades and purchases. However, technology that significantly improves operations can offset costs with an increase in profits. The technologies must be integrated with critical processes such as real-time operations (RTO) monitoring methods, new sensors and continuous monitoring technologies, advanced communications systems, and multidisciplinary workflows that enable decisions to be made efficiently in real time to reduce the risk of cost overruns from unexpected events which drive up operation costs, ruin efficiency, and disrupt production processes.

**References**


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Message from the editorial team

This gives us pleasure in presenting you third issue of the volume two of the IDD. This issue contains articles on logic model, business model, outcome management in health sector, niche marketing and information technology. All articles primarily focus on management of outcomes in the corporate world. We are hopeful that you will find the articles useful. Please provide your feedback on the articles and give suggestions to improve usefulness of this e-journal.

Please send your articles for publications in the next issue latest by 10th February, 2017.

Editorial Team

Atiq ur Rehman, Asgar Bhikoo, Greg Richards and Zicky Hammud
Introduction of IOCOM

IOCOM is a not-for-profit Corporation registered in Canada. An organization of professionals, academia and an alliance of international and national associations, societies and networks engaged in the discipline of outcome management.

IOCOM invites professionals and academics to create a forum for the exchange of useful and high quality theories, methodologies and effective practice in outcome management drawn from all management disciplines. IOCOM encourages management practitioners contributing to outcome management in all fields to make use of our resources, to participate in our initiatives and to contribute to our goals as individuals or through outcome management organizations. We offer global linkages to outcome management professionals, organizations and networks, news of events and important initiatives, and opportunities to exchange ideas, practices, and insights with peers throughout the world.

IOCOM’s Vision

To create a world where professionals, academia, organizations and networks with a focus and interest in effective outcome management, collaborate to strengthen the theory and practice of the discipline that benefit society.

IOCOM’s Mission

To promote the growth of outcome management in the world at large through multidisciplinary professional and academic collaboration and the quest for evidence influenced decision making for business and organizational viability.

IOCOM's organizational and individual memberships are free and enjoy the benefits of professional connectivity worldwide. Please visit our web site at www.iocomsa.org and join IOCOM.

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Please send your write-ups and comments to: editorsIDD@iocomsa.org
IDD Vision

The IDD to be recognized as a world class Outcome Management Journal/Periodical.

IDD Mission

"IDD Mission is to provide useful, timely and thought provoking content in Outcome management driven disciplines that address a broad spectrum of practices for knowledge exchange among academicians, researchers and practitioners".

IDD Objectives

1. To bridge gap between the academicians and practitioners in the discipline of outcome management
2. To provide a platform to the academic researchers and practitioners for disseminating their research work.
3. To promote adoption of innovative outcome management disciplines
4. To highlight challenges being faced by the outcome managers (practitioners)

IDD Scope

1. IDD journal will cover application of the cross cutting themes of Outcome management disciplines. No other journal in the world is having such orientation.
2. IDD journal’s main emphasis is on applied research.
3. IDD journal will accommodate article based on both qualitative and or quantitative approaches. However, preference will be given to mixed methods and action research.
4. Geographical territory of our journal is the entire globe
5. Our target audience include academics and practitioners in outcome management.