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EDITORIAL

Intelligent Management

Companies operate in a complex environment characterized by hyper competition, globalization of trade, radical technological change, requiring them to be aware at all times of this setting and potential changes. In order to have a chance to ongoing success, they must as well be pro-active and forward-looking in decision-making. The competitive race is becoming more intense each day, driven by the internationalization of the world economy and the integration of new information and communication technologies. For facing this race, the industrials have developed factors and processes, to allow their enterprises to be more competitive. Among these, the reader will likely be familiar with names such as “business intelligence” and “strategic intelligence”. The enterprises’ anticipative capacity represents the origin of the birth of a new function named “strategic watch” (SW).

Generally speaking, SW is the detection of signals and reasons for change and transformations taking place. According to *Royal Institute for Strategic Studies* (www.ires.ma) SW is based on the systematic collection, analysis and dissemination of relevant and reliable information essential for decision-making. It represents a competitive advantage for individuals and institutions that practice it. Originally applied only to technology, this practice (historically called "competitive watch", "technology watch" and "technology and standards watch") now also includes commercial and competitive environments, finance, and applicable laws and regulations. By using strategic watch, one can keep an eye on markets and new innovations, both of which are critical to a company's success.

Nowadays, SW has applicability in a wide range of sectors and activities: technological transfer, research & development, accessing a new market, investing on an individual or corporate basis, recruiting, and the list goes on. To make the right strategic decisions and seize opportunities that arise, it is important to know about all the events that might influence an activity as early as possible. You should know what your competitors may already be doing out there and take advantage of any available information. This essentially means gathering and analyzing information and using it to help grow a business. It is considered that SW costs 5 to 25 times less than intensive internal research, especially when applied to the field of technology or other capital expenditures-intensive sector, requiring new equipment (*Business Development Bank of Canada*: www.bdc.ca).

Research is a vital element of an effective SW approach. Basically, one has to make sure that it is constantly uncovering new information that can help it stay competitive. It's also important that it is able to quickly review the overwhelming quantity of available data.

Strategic watch is an essential tool when used and applied appropriately. It allows individuals and companies to assess the market environment, to benchmark against top performers and to save time and money when implementing best practice, thus getting ahead competition. However, there is clearly a lot of data out there, and care must be taken to have a clear focus of what the main purpose of each exercise is. By establishing priorities and key desired takeaways, one can focus on the relevant information only.

Furthermore, as this strategy is persistently and continuously carried out, one will become more efficient as it will have a better image and understanding of the market and where to find the relevant information (as long as it doesn't fall into the trap of complacency and is always mindful of the fact that things can, and do, change on an ongoing basis, at an ever-increasing speed).

Ultimately, it's important not to seek out technology/information at any price. You want to make sure your SW policy isn't too time-consuming, delivers results and makes you a stronger company.

Cezar Scarlat

Senior Editor

ABSTRACTS

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT – A STRATEGIC TOOL

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Abstract

At the world level, the human society confronts with an accelerated decreasing of resources. Today, you cannot speak about unlimited or sufficient resources, no matter the domain of activity.

On the other hand, in a market with strong competition, the success and the stability of an organization depend on the way it use its available resources (materials, money, information, technologies, energy, and people). Its main goal is to have an efficient activity. Moreover, of course, the level of an organization’s performance correlates with the level of resources usage.

From those available resources, the most valuable are the human resources. The level of capitalization of the rest of the resources depends on the way each employee acts daily on his/her job. Practically, people are the only resource of an organization that cannot be measured in money. Using other words, an organization cannot exist without this special resource and, furthermore, its results crucially depend on employee performance, mostly on management performance.

Keywords: performance management, human resources, performance appraisal

A REFERENCE MODEL FOR INFORMATION SYSTEMS

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Abstract

The operation management category in information management is characterized by its improvement into the informatics management. It is in practice represented by IS/ICT Reference Models process descriptions, competencies and responsibilities. IS/ICT Management Reference Model is designed to maintain detail information about enterprise informatics structure and management (e.g. services, documents, licenses, management processes, measures etc.). The most important advantage of such model (compared to "traditional" metainformation systems) is that in the beginning of implementation does not contain empty structures, but "reference" content. The content represents in this context generalized knowledge ("best practices") of model developers in the area of IS/ICT management. Reference Models should play a key role during implementation or improvement of management processes in enterprise informatics. Implementation based on Reference Model is much faster and easier than traditional "building from scratch" approach. Then the implementation process of structured IS/ICT management using this Reference Model is discussed. Paper is finished by discussing the open issues to be solved in the future development of the Reference Model. Special attention is given to the open issues remaining in the implementation of the model.

Keywords: information systems (IS), information and communications technology (ICT), Reference Models, Information Management.

INFORMATIONAL SIGNALS

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Abstract

We live in a society where information resources play a major role. Companies are interested in data, information, and knowledge. Special attention has been given to weak signals. The article covers how to identify these signals, how to record them and how to process them within the company, as well as the main benefit of their early identification. The article also shows that in order to receive the signals transmitted in the environment, the information system should be developed taking into account this new objective, otherwise the signals will not have any effect in generating the necessary emerging management strategy.

Key words: signal, system information management, benchmarking, statistics techniques

STRATEGIC BUSINESS AREAS

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Abstract

The managers from companies need the analysis of the economic activities' evolution because, on the basis of those assessments, they can establish the policies and strategies on short- and middle-term, both at the level of management and execution. In the global economy the service sector is growing and this situation is reflected in the increase in the number of employees in the domain, on the one hand, and, on the other, in the growth of the percents of incomes from that sector at the level of gross domestic income for the country.

This study aimed to stress the peculiarities of the development/ evolution for the Romanian economy in the period 2010 - 2014. The data for the analysis came from the annual reports of the Office of the Trade Register, the reports of the research institutes, and the existing legislation in the domain. The analysis showed that the Romanian economy follows the tendencies recorded at the world-wide level as regards the development of services sector.

Key words: *service sector, authorized person (PFA), limited responsibility societies (SRL).*

TECHNOLOGICAL SIGNALS AND STRATEGIC GOALS

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Abstract

The aim of this paper is to highlight and stress some relevant relations existing among three entities: scientific-technological progress, environment and economic growth. This paper represents an attempt to contribute to understanding of the specific role of science and technology in the process of economic growth primarily in the light of environmental constraints and issues. We analyse the framework of a general process of setting and realization of societal developmental goals stressing the specific role of technology in that process. We emphasise several important feedbacks explaining the real possibility to reconsider and significantly change once determined and accepted set of societal developmental goals. Our hypothesis, is that the very technology, by means of different feedbacks critically and decisively influences the very process of determining social values, selection of societal preferences and finally setting of developmental goals.

Key words: *technology, science, economic growth, sustainable development*

BENCHMARKING OF EUROPEAN HUMAN RESOURCE

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Abstract

Talking about the quality of human resources is equally talking about progress and sustainable development, efficiency and social protection, present and future and not at least about a society where everyone matters or should matter. The importance of human resource quality derives both from the social and economic reasons. A high-quality human resource lays the foundations of a value-based society and doesn't overload the social and economic costs. This paper aims to approach an indispensable aspect of human resources in Romania, their educational level, and to compare the developments recorded in Romania and other six EU countries that have become in the last 10 years the adoptive countries of a greater or smaller number of Romanian (Spain, Italy, France, Germany and UK) or can be considered a standard of investment in human capital (Finland). To what extent there is a national strategy and how far or fast it will produce useful effects, what are the chances of recovery of human resources no longer found neither in employment nor in education and what are the trends in the EU regarding the quality of human resources, are aspects that will be attained directly and indirectly in the following.

Key words: education, training, human resources

THE EMERGENCE OF THE VIRTUAL ENTERPRISES

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Abstract

In order to be successful, an organization must adapt permanently to market requirements. Adaptation assumes the access to newest information, but also a rapid capitalization of them. For this, a solution can be the possibility that more companies collaborates to form a virtual organization, or in case of one organization only, that one to exist virtually on the internet and not necessarily to have a physical presence. This paper aims to focus on the aspects highlighted by such a "project" and on the way that a virtual organization can eliminate or solve many of the problems that occur for single traditional organization.

Keywords: *virtual organization, information, adaptation, technological support*