SMACS (Social, Mobile, Analytics, Cloud and Security) Technologies for Business

Block

6

APPLICATIONS OF SMACS

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BLOCK 6: APPLICATIONS OF SMACS

Block – 6 Applications of SMACS is a crucial block detailing some major application areas for the reader to perceive and propagate the SMACS in the work domain. This block covers crucial business function areas spanning applications for top management, marketing, operations followed by services department.

While there are wide range of application areas for SMACS, a case based learning which exposes a learner on three select areas like marketing, operations and top management will give an overview of its impact in other business areas.

There are three units in this block.

Unit 19: Various functions in the organization have continuous activities related to decision making, strategic planning and business modeling at various levels of management. SMACS technologies offer state-of-the art approaches in similar situations. Thus learner needs to be exposed to use of SMACS for top management. *SMACS Applications to Top Management* explains meeting business cost, time and complexity using SMACS, using big data analysis for talent management, framework for data-driven decision-making and impact of SMACS on business models.

Unit 20: As part of digital technology, social media is aiding the current day marketing to reach exponential numbers of prospective customers. Thus learner needs to be exposed to SMACS to put these technologies for use in marketing activities. *SMACS for Marketing* integrates marketing, sales and services, improving customer experience at every touch point. It also explains use of SMACS for evolving sales methodologies, using it for sales enablement and agile selling. It covers two case studies to reinforce theoretical concepts through practical cases.

Unit 21: The area of operations is redefining itself with supply chain, customer relations, green operations and reduced inventory (Just in Time). Social, Mobile, Analytics, Cloud and Security technology areas aid the learner in understanding these technologies for integrating these into operations for optimal results at all stages of the operations. *SMACS for Operations* describes impact of cloud computing on product design, manufacturing and sales, marketing operational decisions using big data, impact of social media, achieving excellence using digital strategies and adapting of cloud in operations.

Unit 19

SMACS Applications to Top Management

Structure

"The world is being re-shaped by the convergence of social, mobile, cloud, big data, community and other powerful forces. The combination of these technologies unlocks an incredible opportunity to connect everything together in a new way and is dramatically transforming the way we live and work."

- Marc Benioff, the founder, chairman and CEO of Salesforce

19.1 Introduction

SMACS technologies offer state of art approaches that can be adapted by various business functions at different levels of the management in the organization. These technologies help to have continuous activities related to decision making, strategic planning and business modelling aimed at cost, time and complexity management.

In the previous unit, information security management and governance framework, monitoring and measuring information security program, and steps involved in building information security in clouds were discussed.

This unit aims to give an overview of how SMACS technologies can help organizations, especially top management in data analysis and decision-making process so as to gain a competitive advantage. Implementation of SMACS technologies will support organizations in delivering their products and services in an appealing, coherent and personalized manner to customers irrespective of time and location.

19.2 Objectives

By the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- Define meeting business cost, time and complexity using SMACS
- Relate to retain knowledge and talent management using Data analytics
- Define the framework for data-driven decision-making
- Define the analytics capability building for new entrants
- Define the use of SMACS for building business models

19.3 Meeting Business Cost, Time and Complexity Using SMACS

A new evolving model for business, is SMACS (Social, Mobile, Analytic, Cloud and Security Technologies). SMACS built business models are very attractive and most preferred trend in digital marketing networks. The business owners are accepting the SMACS as a dominating force that could drive their businesses towards productivity. SMACS based enterprises are able to develop an attractive customer engagement process and it subsequently reveals vast revenue opportunities for business.

SMACS uses five drivers of digital marketing innovative channels, namely social, mobile, analytic, cloud and security technologies. Combining these five drivers for business productivity gives you a complete solution in changing the organization as a highly functional and productive unit with the ability of handling future business encounters.

Social sharing increases the fame of business in the social networks through the speedy sharing of business products and services. Social marketing also improves the collective knowledge for business where brand interacts with potential customers, giving them the opportunity to share feedback and insights on how to improve the products and services. These activities help in connecting valued data coming from customers which helps in building better marketing strategies for the business.

Mobile technology supports the business competence to connect with the customers. The businesses have a huge potential of increasing revenues with mobile marketing as part of business marketing strategy since at about 60 to 80 percent of consumers use their mobile devices for shopping and looking for services online. Using mobile devices, the consumer enters the mobile marketplace where shopping can be done with comfort.

Analytics can help the businesses to improve supply chain and strengthen the capability to improve customer experience. It is possible to extract valued information of the customer that enhances customer engagement with the brand, products or services using analytics. This data extracted using analytics helps as an important guide in marketing decisions.

Cloud computing is another valued factor that provides businesses a cost effective way of building flexibility and enterprise agility for better productive outcomes for business. The cloud technology helps in creating a more cost effective IT ecology and infrastructure for organizations with the ability of businesses to cut down the costs for maintaining a physical server.

Security technologies reduces complexity for businesses by moving data to satisfy needs. Security technologies defend crucial business information from external and internal attacks like email hacking, phishing, vishing, stealing of data etc. thereby simplifying the use of digital services.

The internet has created an opportunity in dissemination of technology applications such as open source platforms that can be used for various business strategies. With this, advanced business solutions became available. The SMACS model has evolved for integrating various platforms for business applications.

SMACS technologies represent the new wave of information technology, which is a combination of social, mobile, analytics, cloud and security technologies. When a combination of these technologies is implemented judiciously, it helps organizations in two ways. First, to deal with the challenges of business to stay competitive and then to transform the businesses for better productivity.

Social technologies build a system of engagement (SOE) among the employees, which is a people-centric system that is designed to fit naturally into an employee's workflow and social context. It's the main reason for top executives to adopt the social technology. If an organization does not offer social technology as a way to meet these expectations, employees could feel that the company is behind the times. When experts and executives are made readily available to employees via social technology, it takes far less time to facilitate knowledge transfer also.

Mobile technologies enable customers as well as organizations to interact with each other and stay connected irrespective of time and geography. Mobile has brought businesses closer to their customers in ways inconceivable just a decade ago. As top management is keen on increased customer satisfaction, mobile is the essential choice.

Analytics empowers organizations by helping them in analyzing data regarding their product or service, customer, and market, etc. by identifying current trends and patterns as well as by predicting future trends. The new AI-based analysis

helps data mining for increased business analytics. As metrics and measures are essential for continuous improvement, analytics is an essential activity top executives need to focus on.

Cloud computing represents technologies that enable ubiquitous, convenient, on-demand network access to a shared pool of configurable computing resources (e.g., networks, servers, storage, applications, and services) that can be rapidly provisioned and released with minimal top management effort or service provider interaction. Cloud-based tools and mobile-first technologies have made it far cheaper to start and scale a business, with metrics showing that companies using mobile technologies hit growth and export milestones faster than those that don't. This permits the dynamic growth of assets without purchase. It is also a secure expandable space permitting quick and strategic decisions.

Security technologies play an important part in ensuring the confidentiality, integrity and availability of critical information of an organization. The process helps in risk analysis and makes personal work devices secure. Top executives own learning on security helps to understand the virus, phishing and thus vulnerability; which helps in building right policies for device movement, BYOD (bring your own device), work from home, etc.

In recent years, business processes and operational activities of an enterprise have had to merge seamlessly in this ubiquitous data-driven world. With the advent of SMACS solutions, it has become easier for businesses to analyze, interpret and transmit the right data to the desired audience. Undoubtedly the choice for CTOs (Chief Technology Officer), CIOs (Chief Information Officer) and technocrats is getting fraught with the complexity that came up because of the evolution of new frameworks, technologies, tools and devices in SMACS. This calls for customized solutions that address such complexities. Let us see how SMACS can help businesses meet the cost, time and complexity challenges.

19.3.1 Cost

Cost is a key concern for every business. The cost can be classified into two categories, one which is involved in managing and operating internal processes and the other which involves in dealing with stakeholders, be it suppliers or customers. SMACS technologies help organizations in managing and considerably reducing both these types of costs. For instance, the use of social media to market products and services helps in reduction of the cost involved in print ads, television commercials, banners and hoardings. In addition, mobile technologies can help in selling products saving the cost of setting up a physical store at each location. Cloud-based technologies can help in providing applications such as customer relationship management (e.g. Salesforce.com), enterprise resource planning (e.g., ERP - SAP), and supply chain management as

a service which reduces the cost of maintaining required infrastructure within the organization and which would rather require only an internet connection and web browser. Finally, analytics can help organizations in predicting the demand of products and future industry trends which will result in manufacturing only what is required, thereby saving a lot of costs involved in manufacturing and inventory of unsold goods.

19.3.2 Time

SMACS technologies help organizations to deal with the pressure of time. It may be to manufacture, deliver the product and/or service, or reach new markets. Using analytics, organizations can analyse the industry trends as well as purchase patterns of their products or services by their customers. This will help in designing strategy for their existing or new products for existing or new markets. Time can be saved by implementing analytics as these technologies have capability to analyse large amount of data. It helps organizations reach new markets faster than their competitors and gain a competitive advantage. Social media and mobile applications can be used by organizations to market their products because these allow customers to purchase conveniently.

Additionally, implementing secure online transactions ensures safety of customer data and encourages them to perform online transactions. After product is launched in the market, social media helps organizations to understand views of customer about products or service. This reduces time in getting customer feedback and based on the feedback organizations can scale themselves to deal with increasing demand or take corrective measures to improve the product. Finally, cloud technologies can be used to integrate and implement analytics, mobile and social technologies within no time, as organizations can purchase these as services and start using the same as soon as they make payment without worrying about the implementation of IT infrastructure.

19.3.3 Complexity

Every business is unique and has complexities that vary based on the industry they operate in. Present digital economy is one where every business tries to capture the best of both digital and brick-and-mortar way of doing business so as to capture both local and global customers. Along with that, organizations need to ensure that they have a presence on the web through websites, social networks and can be accessed through mobiles, tablets, and smartphones, etc. This increases the complexity in terms of managing different technologies, dealing with the challenges of business scalability and 24/7 availability of services to customers. Combination of SMACS technologies helps organizations in dealing with these complexities.

Check Your Progress - 1

1. In case of cloud technologies, what is true for organizations?
    a. Need to set up technology infrastructure within an organization.
    b. Need to pay only for applications they are using
    c. Need a lot of time for the implementation
    d. Do not need an internet connection.
    e. Need a lot of time to scale up/down IT services
2. Analytics can help organizations in understanding industry trends as it has a capability to manage and analyze which of the following?
    a. Existing database of products
    b. Existing customer data
    c. Market research data
    d. Potential customer data
    e. Data pertaining to customers, products, market, and potential customers

19.4 Productive Business Use of Social Media

From the various social media usages across organizations, we learn here about the advantages with the function-wise use of business.

HR: Employee engagement and employee communication can be accelerated with social media:

- Social media is transforming the entire recruiting process and the candidate/company relationship
- Learning is an enormous opportunity by leveraging social media
- Social media can transform performance and talent management
- Human Resource service delivery can be improved through emerging technologies
- Contrary to popular belief, if controlled appropriately, social media has shown to increase productivity and employee engagement, and foster innovation through collaboration
- Quite large % of companies use social media for recruitment. And, all most all of them use LinkedIn

R&D: Depends on social media as a market research tool for eliciting feedback on new product and service concepts. Social media is used a little less extensively

to improve existing offerings and even less to identify new product or service opportunities, and least as a way for consumers to submit ideas for new offerings.

- Customer service functions see social media's greatest benefit in that it allows them to respond personally to unhappy customers, and help consumers get guidance from other consumers on how to use the company's products. Customer service was least likely to use social media to reduce service costs. Social media has greater benefits in helping consumers learn to use the company's products or services, and in identifying problems with consumer support processes.
- Risk professionals see social media's value greatly in its potential to highlight early trends in potential risks to the firm's brand reputation.

  The two most extensive uses of social media by risk managers are identifying and reducing early trends in brand reputation problems and spotting consumers (or consumer groups) that may represent a threat to corporate reputation. Fewer instances are cited where social media is used to identify employees who might present the firm with their anticipated problems in the future. Social media has more than moderate benefits in identifying early problems in brand reputation.
- Manufacturing and operations professionals value social media most as a tool to detect possible shifts in consumer demand. And they use social media to spot problems with their suppliers less often (less than 'moderate' use).
- Production managers said they received between moderate and high benefits from using social media to identify changes in consumer demand and quality problems. And they had less than moderate benefits using social media to identify flaws with their suppliers' products and services.
- Distribution managers are using social media to a moderate extent to find problematic distributors of their products or services and identify other logistical problems.
- Finance and accounting professionals' usage of social media is getting a first-hand understanding of consumer perceptions about the company. Next is getting a more accurate picture of demand forecasts. In terms of benefits achieved, they use social media as a tool for gaining unvarnished consumer opinions about the company, and to some extent, as a way to improve demand forecasting.

The highest benefit is seen in marketing and customer contact and engagement.

- Marketing uses social media largely to increase the number of consumers viewing its messages and to get consumers to discuss their positive experiences with the firm publicly.
- Sales functions use social media mostly to convert prospects to customers and identify potential customers.

Example: JioMart Integrates with WhatsApp

JioMart provided a Whatsapp based Business application that helped shoppers in select cities by sending a "Start Shopping" prompt and a catalog of groceries and other items of daily use. Shopping Orders will be forwarded to the nearest Reliance Retail's stores. JioMart's integration with WhatsApp, could change the customer shopping behaviour in the country's online and offline retail trade.

JioMart Business Account is acting as an Online distributor by supplying products to retailers nearer to the customer. The company intends to shake up retail distribution business and sooner or later it may supersede e-commerce companies like Amazon and Walmart Inc in India.

Source: https://www.hindustantimes.com/business/jiomart-integrates-with-whatsapp-101639603776041.html, December 16, 2021, Accessed on 9th September, 2022

Check Your Progress - 2

3. Through which of the following, as an organization you can interact with your customers?
   a. Twitter
   b. Facebook
   c. Corporate website
   d. Blogs
   e. Blogs, Facebook, Corporate Website, and Twitter

19.5 Talent Management Using Big Data Analytics

Today's digital era poses a challenge of finding and retaining a smarter workforce while dealing with the challenges of employees located in different geographies and representing different cultures and working norms. The challenge lies in managing such a workforce across geographical locations and ensuring that they work in alignment with common organizational goals and objectives. Analytics play a catalytic and enabling role in developing such a workforce which develops deep and committed relationships with clients and delivers measurable, long-term business benefits. But as organizations grow, the data related to the workforce also gets complex. With thousands of employees located globally working on different projects in different time zones, a huge amount of data is generated every day.

19.5.1 Data Analysis

Data may be related to employee qualifications, experience, interaction with customers, suppliers, or the training they have attended and the targets they have

achieved. Clearly, analysis of such vast troves of data is the key in managing the organization and big data analytics is channelized to deal with the hidden patterns, market trends, unknown correlations, customer preferences and other vital information which can help organizations make more-informed business decisions. "Big data analytics is the process of examining big data to uncover hidden patterns, unknown correlations and other useful information that can be used to make better decisions". Three main attributes of big data are volume, variety and velocity. Big data analytics has the capability to analyse huge volumes of data that conventional analytics and business intelligence solutions are unable to tackle (Russom, 2011).

19.5.2 Performance Analysis

Analytics plays a very important role in analyzing the performance of employees which involves a variety of data. Employee performance measurement depends on the industry they work in and their profile. Performance evaluation may include sales targets achieved, interaction with customer and peers, performance in training, and self-appraisal, etc. Analytics can analyze this variety of data and generate reports and data which can help managers in making decisions regarding how well or bad a person is performing and decide the compensation and future action accordingly. In addition to that, analytics can also provide insights on employees who are performing well and are loyal to the organization. This will help managers in devising the strategy to retain them as they are the ones who are important for long-term profitability of the organization.

Example: HR Tech Startup EdGE Networks is Solving Organizations' Workforce Related Challenges Using AI and Data Science

EdGE Networks is in the business of providing right skilled personnel to companies. It uses Data Science algorithms to analyze Job equirements and retrieve Profiles based on skills to rank a set of people suitable for the job. EdGE Networks uses source-validate-connect algorithms built on neural networks which works together with Natural Language Processing (NLP). EdGE Networks can process huge volumes of data and can provide quick, sharp insights inorder to optimize talent acquisition costs and plan for existing or new employee skill development programmes. In short, EdGE Networks provides an artificial intelligence layer to HR systems that can prepare a company's workforce to meet job challenges.

EdGE Networks solutions allows the companies to understand how the use of analytics has resulted in improved time, improved costs, and accuracy of talent management and thus, increased business performance.

Source: https://thestartuplab.in/how-edge-networks-is-leveraging-ai-and-helping-companies-take-the-right-talent-acquisition-decision/, November 2, 2020, Accessed on 12th September, 2022

Check Your Progress - 3

4. Big data does not have the following attributes:
    a. Volume
    b. Variety
    c. Viscosity
    d. Velocity
    e. Huge size
5. Which of the following is not involved in talent management?
    a. Workforce planning
    b. Training and development
    c. Performance management
    d. Compensation management
    e. Customer profile analysis
6. Analytics can be used to answer which of the following questions:
    a. How many employees are working in the organization?
    b. How many employees have achieved the target?
    c. Who are suitable for managerial positions?
    d. Who has taken maximum leaves last year?
    e. Who is the manager's favorite employee?

19.6 Framework for Data-Driven Decision-Making

"Data-Driven Decision Management (DDDM) is an approach to business governance. DDDM values decisions those can be backed up with data that can be verified". In recent times, many organizations have adopted the data-driven approach to assessing and solving business problems and especially, while dealing with the vast masses of available data that is generated on a continual basis. A framework is suggested for data-driven decision-making and problem-solving which involves five integrated stages: problem and opportunity identification; collection of relevant data; data preprocessing; analytics model building; and communication of the data analysis for decision-making.

Problem or opportunity identification

The very first step requires a thorough understanding of the domain in which an organization is operating. Organizations can unleash the capabilities of analytics only when they know what type of analysis can be performed and what data

should be captured to perform those analyses. For example, for launching a new shampoo or soap, organizations should have data so that they can get insights regarding customer preferences, market trends, sales patterns, etc., so that they can make decisions.

Collection of relevant data

The second step involves the collection of relevant data for doing the analysis. This is important as data forms the base for analytics and if the data captured is wrong or insufficient, then it will give wrong predictions which may lead to a huge loss to organizations. Organizations may capture data from various sources depending on the way they work. For example, the customer relationship management department of a bank requires doing customer profiling; they should have data collected from various sources which may include: customer account details, services he/she is registered for, how often and the way they access their account, i.e., internet, mobile, ATM, or local branch.

Data Preprocessing

Once the data source is identified, the next step involves data preprocessing and preparing data for the analysis. This includes checking data for missing values, applying data imputation, creating dummy or interaction variables as required for the analysis. The outcome of this will be data, which is ready for applying any analytic technique.

Analytics Model Building

Analytics model building is a process which aims to find the best model for data prediction. In this iterative process, different techniques are applied to the dataset using a different combination of variables to find the model which is able to predict trends with greater accuracy. These techniques may involve clustering, classification, regression, neural networks, etc.

Communication of the Data Analysis for Decision-Making

The final step involves a presentation of the results to the top management for making decisions. At this step, use of graphical and visualization tools play an important role as they may be used to present analysis results through an interactive interface which is very easy to handle and understand.

Example: With AI, Insurance Claims will Soon be Processed in Real-Time by PolicyBazaar

PolicyBazaar has implemented a web application which automated the vehicle insurance claim verification and claim disbursal process. It has cut down claim processing and make payment on time in vehicular insurance space.

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PolicyBazaar automated the claim processing in stages. In the first stage it cut down the manual document verification to three hours and with the use of technology it was further reduced to 30 minutes. Now, PolicyBazaar does all these activities in real-time using an AWS service called Rekognition which was built on machine learning techniques. PolicyBazaar has fine tuned Rekognition to identify dents and scratches in vehicles from images and videos. With the new application, the Claimant uploads the pictures and videos, and the rest of the processing is taken care of by service engines.

Source https://www.policybazaar.com/general-insurance/articles/artificial-intelligence-and-insurance-industry/, 30-July-2021, Accessed on 07/06/2022

Check Your Progress - 4

7. From which of the following a retail store may not capture customer data?
    a. Credit/debit card information
    b. Membership card
    c. Online purchase history
    d. Customer service center
    e. Customer's organizational HR details
8. Why data visualization tools are used to present results of analytics?
    a. They are very interactive and easy to understand
    b. Tables are easy to read and analyze
    c. Data is presented in summarized form
    d. Interactive, easy to understand and summarized
    e. Summarized, easy to read and analyze

19.7 Creating a Center of Excellence for Analytics

Center of excellence for analytics represents a team of people with analytics expertise with structured or virtual reporting relationships that manage an organization's analytics strategy, program and technologies. Creation of center of excellence for analytics benefits the organization in the following ways:

- It helps in creating internal alignment between business and information technology.
- It ensures efficient use of resources across all lines of business.
- It helps in providing access to timely and accurate information which results in better decision-making.

Achieving analytics excellence is the goal of any organization. This calls for building the relevant analytics Infrastructure. This needs inclusion of data,

processes, people and the attendant technologies required to perform the analytics. Undoubtedly, organization dynamics and the domain the organization operates in, dictate the type of infrastructure for each organization. Some organizations resort to using only basic analytics for certain functions and advanced analytics for certain functions such as sales and marketing, and research and development respectively. On the other hand, some organizations have integrated analytics with all aspects of the organizational working and operations.

Set of people required for the center of excellence for analytics should have both hard skills and soft skills. Hard skills include expertise such as statistics, database programming and business knowledge while soft skills include problem-solving, collaboration and presentation skills. These people may play different roles based on their expertise, be it a statistician, programmer, business analyst, project manager, or trainer. The next important thing is identifying and collecting the right data.

A center of excellence with time needs to start identifying best practices and processes across industries and sectors and then look to share them. This approach includes identifying areas where analytics has played an impactful role in building best practices for different lines of business, including sales, inventory management, customer service and logistics. Technology also plays a very important role in building analytics infrastructure. Finally, change management is essential for ensuring that analytics adoption in the organization is a success, which can be achieved through the support of top management and by creating a culture of analytics throughout the organization.

Example: How analytics helped Cognizant deal with the Aftermath of Covid-19

Cognizant established an Analytics Team at its Corporate HQ to build a data analytics tool to improve visibility on business operations and to ensure Business Continuity. This measure provided a faster data-driven decision-making to quickly respond to the evolving situation. The analytics tool provided quick insights into network availability and employee productivity and enabled the company's operations teams to effectively manage activities such as IT asset supply chain, asset validation, and service desk operations.

Source: https://cio.economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/big-data/how-analytics-helped-cognizant-deal-with-the-aftermath-of-covid-19/78226919, 21-September-2020, Accessed on 10/06/2022

Activity 19.1

Analytics Center of Excellence at GE

General Electric (GE) manufactures many devices and machinery for oil and gas exploration industry. These devices have embedded sensors to collect data about operations of devices. GE uses this data and applies analytics for product

evolution and features definition purposes. In this direction, GE has established a Center of Excellence for Analytics. What are the skills you look for in an individual to work in center of excellence for Analytics? What tools may you use? Can you describe steps to measure the return on investment of this GE's center of excellence? **Answer:**

19.8 Analytics Capability Building for New Entrants

Businesses have come around to accept the fact that big data leading to a larger world of complex and advanced analytics is here to stay. They understand that the long-term strategies for adopting big data have to be configured in alignment with core business objectives and organizational goals and that both structured and unstructured data need to be managed. In big data analytics, the management and success of such programs are incumbent only on the right kind of personnel with the requisite talent and skills.

Kumar, Shenoy, & Pandit (2014) suggest steps to be followed by organizations that are planning to build analytic capability:

- Define analytics strategy
- Build talent
- Build infrastructure
- Identify sources of data and develop data collection plan
- Analytics implementation

First step towards building the analytical capability involves defining business strategy wherein the role of analytics for the organization is developed. It also involves important functional areas within the organization from where the analytics implementation should start. While deciding the strategy for analytics, it is very important that it is communicated throughout the organization so as to build the analytic culture. Once the strategy is developed, the next step is the identification of talent. Organizations may decide to build the talent within the organization or may recruit the required expertise such as statisticians, programmers and business analysts, etc. In addition to talent, planning of proper technology infrastructure is also required. For this, organizations may use cloud-based technologies in combination with analytics and some open source software such as "R". In order to achieve benefits of analytics, right data is required.

Thus, organizations need to identify sources of data as well as design a plan for the collection of that data. This leads to analytics implementation in the organization starting from those functions where it can help the most.

Example: Reasons why companies like Amazon & Google invest in People Analytics

Amazon, CISCO and Google are adopting advanced techniques of analyzing workforce related data to increase their competitive advantage. With the use of People Analytics, these companies are able to easily understand how to engage, retain and ensure productivity from their existing staff and their new joinees. Thus, People analytics are an indispensable strategic tool that helped these companies to increase their business performance par excellence.

Source: https://www.crunchrapps.com/resources/blogs/people-analytics-why-invest., 2022, Accessed on 10/06/2022

Check Your Progress - 5

9. Which of the following is not an element among the steps to be followed by organizations that are planning to build analytic capability?
   a. Define analytics strategy
   b. Build talent
   c. Build infrastructure
   d. Identify sources of data and develop data collection plan
   e. Results computation

19.9 Information Security Aspects for Top Management

While the Information Security is coordinated by Chief Information Security Officer (CISO) or a designate, it is necessary that top management is educated on the need, the effects and related risks/mitigation processes. This is basically to ensure complete protection to the data being generated, the documents created, and the knowledge from various projects and the customer-related proprietary information. Especially, in the present day work culture like Bring Your Own Devices (BYOD), Work from Home, extensive use of mobiles at work, and Distributed office work environments, Work in shifts and 24X7 working, Outsourced business processes, there is a greater need to build strict security policies and implement them in toto. While federal agencies have relied on computers for years, businesses and other corporate organizations throughout the world are experiencing security issues in the use of electronic data and networked computer systems. As a result, agencies have become enormously dependent on these systems and data to support their operations, and hence is the need for information security as a strategic move.

Benefits to Top Management

ISO 27001 is the international standard that provides the specification and requirements for implementing an Information Security Management System (ISMS). The following are the various benefits:

- Secures your information in all its forms.
- ISMS protects all forms of information. These include intellectual property, company secrets, data on devices and in the Cloud, digital, paper-based, hard copies and personal information. Even if one is not certified, adopting the standard will help the organization, and top management needs to put in complete efforts.
- ISMS Implementation and maintenance will significantly increase the organization's resilience to cyber-attacks.
- ISMS is the framework for keeping complete organization’s information safe and managing it all in one place.
- It protects the complete organization from technology-based risks. It also addresses other more common threats, such as non-informed staff or practicing ineffective procedures. Unit 19: SMACS Applications to Top Management 17
- ISMS reduces the threat of continually evolving risks, by adapting to changes, in the environment as well inside the organization.
- An ISMS risk assessment and analysis approach of an organization can reduce costs. These may be costs spent on indiscriminately adding layers of defensive technology that may or might not work.
- ISMS standard advises a set of policies, procedures, and physical and technical controls. These help protect the confidentiality, availability and integrity of information.
- The Standard’s holistic approach covers the whole organization, not just IT, and encompasses people, processes and technology. This helps employees to understand risks and adapt security controls as part of their everyday working practices.
- Information Security knowledge and building necessary policies help organizations reduce risk, increase productivity and discipline.

Example: Enterprise Security in the SMAC Era

UIDAI (Unique Identification Autthority of India) ensures that one's Aadhaar card number is not used by anyone else. The measures include using a two-factor authentication on the Aadhaar card, turning on the biometric lock, and using Virtual Identity or VID for authentication.

Contd….

With the confidential business data in danger of being shared in the public with the increased use of SMAC by the companies, organizations relook at their IT architecture to ensure data security across multiple platforms.

Source: https://www.moneylife.in/article/now-that-the-government-has-admitted-to-security-issues-with-aadhaar-people-need-to-demand-better-security/67362.html, 4th June, 2022, Accessed on 15/9/22

Check Your Progress - 6

10. Which of the following is the international standard that provides the specification and requirements for implementing an Information Security Management System?
    a. ISO 9001:2015
    b. ISO 24001
    c. ISO 27001
    d. ISO 14001
    e. ISO 9003

19.10 Impact of SMACS on Business Models

Introduction of SMACS technology has forced organizations from every industry to move to digital platforms to stay competitive. While many industries are still facing this disruption, some industries such as media and entertainment have already seen the shift from physical to digital products. Impact of SMACS can be seen not only on the products but also on the business models. SMACS has changed the dynamics of running businesses and its intertwining with business models has made organizations and enterprises more connected, collaborative and productive while all in real-time.

The business models are being disrupted and leading to makeover entire business and industries. One has already seen the digitization of the vast media, music and entertainment sectors. Many of the hard-manufacturing sectors and businesses with inter-linked physical value chains are also seeing a sea change in the way they are run and managed. Most of them are now becoming technology-enabled and increasingly digitized in their operations.

The increasing digitization of the world and the linking of consumer behavior to ubiquitous smartphones and other hand-held computing devices have forced businesses to reorient their business models and operations approach. Businesses are therefore keen on large-scale digitization processes and SMACS is opening up opportunities and potentialities for customer interactions and engagements, new product development and overall success in the marketplace. Entire business

architectures are being overhauled and new digital operating models are being crafted and adopted. It is a mix of social media, analytics, cloud computing, and security technologies that is shaping the SMACS track.

SMAC has a wide impact on business trends as the people are extensively exposed to various services like emails, blogs, social media, online analytics, work collaborators, gaming, mobile apps, and so on. Every agile business has started implementing SMAC framework to their business architecture sine continuous intelligence is absorbed by the business process and services collaboration. Enterprises are moving from historical and near-time reporting to real-time analytics that empower real-time decisions with the ability to predict future trends, processing large volumes of market dynamics gaining grip with customers. Hence, SMAC adoption is turning out to be the next most feasible choice to reduce costs and improve agility. Although this would make a deep positive business impact for some organizations, not all organizations would be able to mine the true value of their SMAC investments. This is mainly because of the dependency factors such as type of business services/products, operating model, size, process functions, application stacks, tools integration, client geographies, user demographics, and so on. Hence a proper assessment and customization in investing in thse technologies will reduce the complexity and under utilization of the resources.

For example, in retail stores, SMAC level of engagement among business and consumers, with models evolving from customized service in outlets, personalized ecommerce portals, to multidimensional virtual shopping is increasing. This helps the stores to understand smart shopping trends, loyalty bonus, and effective logistics management. People are permitted to work toward desired spending behaviors based on their funds, flex pay, free offers, and product options. Now, this can be comprehended only by primarily analyzing the SMAC influencers and dimensions while formulating strategies, defining an enterprise-level architecture that incorporates these technologies, identifying an ideal roadmap and Return on Investment (ROI) plan before implementation

Social Computing Redefined: Social Computing helps organizations adopt real-time collaboration and feedback. In terms of collaboration, the move toward a Social Business is evident from the increasing use of social media tools like Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Yammer, and so on within an organization. Social Media already has already started unsettling traditional models of marketing and selling. Facebook, Foursquare, Google+, LinkedIn, Twitter, and YouTube have become the new channels of communication for businesses and individuals worldwide. Enterprises are progressively influencing social media for customer engagement and brand building. This has been appreciated with the double effects of the explosion of smartphones and gadgets joined with the rise in mobile Internet usage. Social media platforms empower association through posts, chats, tweets, like/dislike commenting, blogs, social

bookmarking, geo-location tagging, following threads, and lots. As these modes grow and differ, their end user application and priority from one individual and/or business to another also varies.

Furthermore, changing business dynamics effect the decision of enterprises to choose and drift to a social media platform. As more individuals become active on the Internet using social media, cloud-based services would become the common thread for combined communications in comprehending social computing and information analytics across platforms. This would be improved with just-in-time computing that allows crucial decision-making. Hence, the outcomes-based delivery is moving past conventional application systems with limited collaboration toward powerful and dynamic process-driven services that focus on multiple business functions, user preferences, and geographical markets.

SMAC has already formed responsiveness for itself in the corporate travel segment, though, its implementation is still at a developing stage. The convergence of all the four pillars would provide an explosion of opportunities that would empower businesses to move towards advancement. SMAC creates an ecosystem that allows a business to improve its operations and get closer to the customer with nominal overhead and maximum reach.

Corporate travel teams across the globe are working for well-organized procurement outsourcing strategies to gain maximum benefit to their organizations. The adoption of SMAC will bring in innovative ways in procurement outsourcing. It will not only drive down costs and improve decision making but will also build travel ecosystem-wide efficiencies.

SMAC has become inexpensive, accessible and pervasive that it is available to businesses of all sizes. It has unlocked lot of opportunities in the corporate travel segment and has smoothed the playing field as far as competition is concerned. It is predictable for the players in the corporate travel segment to adopt SMAC and make it an essential part of their business strategies to have a competitive edge. Those who take advantage of the power of SMAC will lead this new upsurge of growth.

Example: Whatsapp for Business to Open Up with Cloud API, Offer Vanity URLs

WhatsApp for Business has recently launched an easier to use cloud-hosted version of its API which allows small and medium businesses to create a vanity URL for their customers to reach them. The new API removes all that complexity associated with the existing WhatsApp API. With the new API, businesses can focus on developing the tools and services they want to offer to their customers on top of WhatsApp, while WhatsApp can undertake the installation, maintenance, and hosting of the API.

Contd….

The custom URL is "very similar to how business can have a URL for company's web page or a name for their mobile app." Moreover, businesses will also get multi-device compatiability. Features such as introduction of business profiles, a facility to upload product catalogues, online payment functinality and FAQs are included in this new rollout. Such advancements in Messaging Platforms will impact how Business is to be performed.

Source: Nandagopal Rajan | New Delhi | May 20, 2022, https://indianexpress.com/article/technology/social/whatsapp-for-business-to-open-up-with-cloud-api-offer-vanity-urls-7926316/ Accessed on 10/06/2022

Activity 19.2

Business Model

Identify any two prominent organizations belonging to different industries (e.g. publishing, music, retail, tourism). Compare and contrast as well as detect how their business models have changed with the evolution of SMACS technologies in the last few years. Please compare the organizational performance and operations before SMACS implementation and after SMACS usage.

Answer:

19.11 Summary

- SMACS technologies have changed the way businesses operate.
- The convergence of social, mobile, analytics, cloud, and security technologies provides a huge opportunity for organizations to deal with the hypercompetitive business environment.
- SMACS technologies help organizations in making better decisions irrespective of the complexity of data available.
- Further, the unit discusses the importance of creating a center of excellence for analytics and steps involved in it.
- SMACS applications are not limited to any one functional area but can be implemented across the organization.
- It would be impossible for businesses to ignore the new and ever-evolving nature of SMACS, and being adaptable and moving swiftly is the way to go.
- Information Security knowledge and building necessary policies help organizations reduce risk, increase productivity and discipline.

19.11 Glossary

Analytics: Analytics involves the identification and analysis of concealed patterns in the data.

Big Data: Big data represents a large set of data which may be varied in nature.

Center of Excellence: A center of excellence denotes a team, a shared facility or an entity that offers direction, best practices, research, support and/or training for a focus area.

Data-driven Decision: Data-driven decision-making represents the collection as well as analysis of data to make decisions that will increase the rate of success.

Talent Management: Talent management is about managing the workforce within an organization which includes planning, recruiting, training and development, performance appraisal, retention, etc.

19.12 Self-Assessment Test

1. Discuss how the evolution of SMACS has changed the organizations and the way they do business.
2. How is big data analytics different from other analytic tools and techniques?
3. "Analytics can help in reducing the cost of training and development of employees". Do you agree with the statement? Give justification for your answer.
4. Discuss the steps involved in developing a center of excellence for analytics.
5. Discuss how SMACS technologies have changed the consumer behavior in today's digital world.

19.13 Suggested Readings/Reference Material

1. Rodney Heisterberg and Alakh Verma (April 2022). "Creating Business Agility: How Convergence of Cloud, Social, Mobile, Video and Big Data Enables Competitive Advantage," Narrated by Stephen Graybill.
2. Jonathan S Walker (2021). Social Media Marketing For Beginners - How To Make Money Online: Guaranteed Strategies To Monetizing, Mastering, & Dominating Any Platform For Your Brand, JW Choices.
3. Barry Connolly (2020). Digital Trust: Social Media Strategies to Increase Trust and Engage Customers, Bloomsbury Business.
4. Seema Gupta (6 August 2020). Digital Marketing McGraw Hill; Second edition.
5. Tracy L. Tuten, Michael R (15 June 2020). Solomon et al, Social Media Marketing, SAGE Publications Pvt. Ltd; Third edition.

6. Paul Martin Thomas Erickson (2019). Social Media: Usage and Impact, Global Vision Publishing House, 2 edition.

7. Steve Randazzo (2019). Brand Experiences: Building Connections in a Digitally Cluttered World, Paipen publishing.

19.14 Answers to Check Your Progress Questions

1. (b) Need to pay only for applications they are using

Cloud technologies provide flexibility to organizations to pay only for the services they are using, i.e., also called as pay-per-use.

2. (e) Data pertaining to customers, products, market, and potential customers

For analyzing the industry trends, analytics should be able to analyze data regarding product, price, customer, market/industry, potential customers and competitors.

3. (e) Twitter, Facebook, Corporate Websites, and Blogs

Organizations can use their own corporate website as well as social technologies to interact with customers, which include Facebook, Twitter, blogs, etc.

4. (c) Viscosity

Big data has three characteristics include volume, velocity and variety. Big data is huge in size.

5. (e) Customer profile analysis

Talent management is all about the workforce and does not include analysis of customer's data.

6. (c) Who are suitable for managerial positions?

Analytics helps in identifying hidden patterns and trends rather than just generating reports.

7. (e) Customer's organizational HR details

Customer's organizational HR details cannot be captured by a retail firm because they are confidential to the customer's organization.

8. (d) Interactive, easy to understand and summarized

Visualization tools are used to create an interactive interface which is very easy to understand as data can be viewed in summary or detail form as required.

9. (e) Results computation

Suggested steps to be followed by organizations that are planning to build analytic capability are: Define analytics strategy, Build talent, Build infrastructure, Identify sources of data and develop data collection plan, Analytics implementation.

10. (c) ISO 27001

ISO 27001 is the international standard that provides the specification and requirements for implementing an Information Security Management System.

Unit 20

SMACS for Marketing

Structure

"Social media is not only more cost-effective than advertising, but it also offers great opportunities for innovative engagement with your customers."

– Richard Branson

20.1 Introduction

SMACS for Marketing integrates marketing, sales and services (post sales support), and thus helps to improve customer experience at each and every touch point.

The previous unit discussed SMACS applications for top management covering meeting business cost, time, talent management using big data analytics, creating a center of excellence for analytics, and impact of SMACS on business models.

Information technology has expanded to two new areas, namely, mobile phones and social media which are very popular among younger generations. This transformation enabled users to access information round the clock. Further, technological changes enabled the integration of social, mobile, analytics and

cloud components to be available under one single platform called 'SMACS' technology in short. By including analytic and cloud capabilities, this new avenue became a very popular platform in the areas of marketing, education, finance, retail, healthcare, and telecom sectors.

SMACS's analytics helped organizations to perform complex analysis and support decision-making operations, while cloud capability allowed to manage enterprise's data storage, backup and recovery operations in a secure manner.

Making the best use of SMACS technology, business houses are taking new initiatives to engage customers, advertise their products and build relationships with prospective customers. With real-time data being captured and used, companies are reworking their marketing strategies to derive maximum benefit from this new realm of technology. With bulk communication in vogue using emails, text messages, and social media being low priced, SMACS technology has become the best option for marketing companies to promote their new products/services.

This unit describes how marketing, sales and service aspects are integrated to give the best customer experience using different touch points in marketing. It also examines different sales methodologies and processes to be adopted. In this unit, a popular concept called agile selling is also handled. This unit concludes by providing details of two case studies to understand the industry-based marketing, cloud technology being used by companies to address real-time problems and their solutions.

20.2 Objectives

By the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- Define the integration of marketing, sales and service operations using SMACS technology
- Define different touch points and their impact on customer experience
- Relate to the latest emerging sales methodologies and processes
- Discuss how to make use of SMACS technology to improve sales

20.3 Integration of Marketing, Sales and Service Using SMACS

As the world is digitalized , there is growth in technologies that are changing the directions of the businesses. This indicates that businesses need to transform into a digital business.

SMAC is a technology which is contributing fantastic prospects to result meaningful business. Business must progress quickly to clasp the changes enabled by SMAC because competitive benefits, profitable development, market leadership are at end. Digital technologies are allowing clients, transforming how

they discover, explore, and buy. They are helping organizations to understand their current state and also support in building the case for digital business. SMACS era is becoming a trend, more innovative in the digital world to think about new ways of allowing tools for preventing interruptions in transforming digital business. This helps the businesses to increase their productivity.

When the businesses want to transform to digital business they need to thick about the four basics. They are:

Vision:

Identify strategic assets, create a renovating vision, define a clear commitment and outcome and keep evolving.

Engagement:

Stick to the client, employee drive adoption and scale.

Governance:

Avoid duplicate, put agreement into the program, priorities, enable.

Technology and Market leadership:

To enable the transforming experience leading to transforming operation and business model.

The most important benefits of Digital Transformation for small/large business are as follows:

- Lift in customer engagement
- Boost customer satisfaction
- Big digital traffic
- Increases lead, demand and sales

The four pillars to build digital business transformation are

Social:

Social platforms like Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, Tumblr, Flickr, Youtube etc has started to change interaction in the business world. Both large and small scale businesses have started interacting with customers via social platform.

Social platforms are being used to crowdsourcing for generating new product ideas and efficient service. Almost every organization is increasingly using crowdsourcing for co-innovation.

Organizations are implanting social driven, collaborative tools into daily business process. Social networkings, ecommerce app for powerful mobile devices are being used to transform a digital business.

Mobile:

More than 87% of mobile owners do access the internet on their devices. With the increasing use of smartphones and use of internet, mobile payment services are being used for convenience transaction. This is one of the great steps towards transforming digital business.

Amazon is one of the successful organization who is contributing $3 billion to $5 billion in annual sales from mobile devices.

Mobile advertising is indispensable now a days, and is gaining populariy everyday. Because of its increasing percentage of growth every year, busineses are gaining in exploring globally.

Businesses are taking leverage of nice form factor of smartphones and their features like graphics, videos for advertising. Smartphones are offering location based service which helps in finding customer locations, whatever is required with an exact position. This is how mobile technology playing important role in changing the traditional business into digital business.

Organizations are providing number of apps for users which help to increase their revenues and ecosystem.

In a survey in 2014 it was found that android has more than 1.3 millions app and apple has 1.2 millions apps available for their users. ABI research expected that in 2018 mobile app revenue will be worth $92 billion. It shows that how effectively mobile app is being used for lifting ecosystem for a business.

Analytics:

One of the greatest advantages of using social and mobile analytics is the enrichment of customer relationship and a better understanding about the consumer behavior and preferences.

With the numerous amount of data available, small businesses will know how to hold customer loyalty, improve its marketing campaigns, enhance its product development processes and provide services that fit the requirements and preferences of their customers.

The data collected are scalable using the SMAC technology which gives more room for a sound marketing decision making of small business owners.Online retailers such as Amazon have realized increased revenues implementing Big Data.

Design for analytics are necessary because only 25% of CIOs believe they have the data they need. So they need to understand the data required in a proper way, and then use newer technology to get the right data. Ex: Ford has embedded automotive sensors in the steering wheel and seat belt to gather information

about the driver. Such as, temperature sensing, ambient temperature, heart rate monitoring, and respiration .In this case the objective was to design best possible user experience and analytics. Huge business value can be extracted from enterprise data via Real-time analytics. Many enterprises will transform their business models in order to compete with disruptive organizations booming on digital platforms. Traditional business models will grasp SMACS and strive towards customer empowerment to gain competitive advantage. Banking, financial services, retail, healthcare, telecom, and media will continue to experience the rise of unstructured data and evolve technologies to draw suitable business insights from data.

Cloud:

Cloud services have intensely reduced blockades to entry in terms of infrastructure investment. That is why 74% of organizations are using some form of cloud services. It also provides users access to remote computing power and software on a pay per use basis.

With the big data explosion, more irresistible information is likely to be collected and made available to small businesses. The cloud technology offers the solution for better big data management and processing that creates a more organized IT ecosystem with improved data collection process.

Small business find a more agile solution for big data management that help to cut costs for server maintenance, breaking down geographical barriers and scalable data available on the cloud, anytime and anywhere.

These four technologies serve as a synergetic solution for a digital transformation and equip an organization to face the challenges of the future of business.

Integration of Marketing, Sales and Service Using SMACS

SMACS' practices adopted by any organization is a 'win–win' proposition for both customers and the company. As it allows 360^0 of accessibility of information to the customers, the company can make use of real-time customer inputs to analyze and improve its decision support systems. With these SMACS' benefits in place, if companies can develop strategies to integrate their marketing, sales and service operations and bring all into one platform, it would provide multi-fold synergy.

Integrated marketing in a true sense is quite a complex activity as it involves multiple entities like customer, organization, products/services, multi-channel communication, and business processes along with financial institutions and technology. To integrate marketing, sales and service operations, there are a few essential issues to be considered for better results.

The following are some key points in integration under SMACS:

1. **Integration begins with the customer**

   Integration of marketing, sales and service functions can be successful because customers' participation on multiple channels is available. Integration does not mean uniformity in messages or content being sent to the customer, but it is the collective approach adopted across all communication channels to complete a marketing task. A marketing organization which is good at integrated marketing practices always develops a customer-centric strategy and executes it.

2. **Emphasis on customer processes**

   Marketing organizations should take total responsibility to effectively handle all request-response based customer communication. If there is no proper response to customer's requests over multiple channels of communication, it leads to customer's frustration and loss of business. Customers expect hassle-free operations and quick responses to their requests. For this to be achieved, excellent coordination between the members of the marketing team is required. All this will be practically possible only when the organization adopts SMACS technologies to implement well thought and planned customer processes.

3. **Think beyond product campaigns**

   Many people have the misconception that effective campaigns will automatically translate into business. But it is not always true, because campaigns help in developing awareness of the product and to sell the marketing team should convince and generate the required desire in the customer. Response from the customer will only be possible after this activity. So, marketers should not measure the success of responses by the number of mails and text messages sent, instead measure it based on customer metrics like engagement, value, and profitability. With SMACS technology in place, customer metrics play an important role in the outcomes as it involves real-time instant communication.

4. **Requires interaction and dialogue**

   Integrated marketing is a challenging task as there are many stakeholders involved such as customer, organization, products/services, multiple communication channels, business processes and technology to collectively achieve a common goal. The goal, in brief, involves everything which is a part of the pre-sales, sales and post-sales phases for marketing a product/service. To achieve high standards and best performance, engaging the customer through dialogue and online interaction is very important and demanding activity on a SMACS enabled platform. Responses to customers

with satisfying replies which are instantaneous can make or break a relationship with the customer. In spite of changing customer behavior, the marketing team should put its best efforts to handle them professionally to give better results.

5. Fusion of sales, marketing and service

To integrate sales, marketing and service operations in a company which is SMACS-enabled, there should be a collective strategy in place. This helps to overcome the gaps that exist in the processes of sales, marketing, and service functions. Employees should have at least a minimum understanding of procedures followed by these functions and their associated problems to be a part of an integrated effort. Transparency and visibility will enhance clarity and reduce delays due to miscommunication.

Check Your Progress - 1

1. Which of the following options does not hold good for the integration of sales, marketing and service functions?
   a. Interaction and dialogue
   b. Think beyond product campaigns
   c. Door-to-door campaign
   d. Emphasis on customer processes
   e. Fusion of sales, marketing and service

20.4 Improving Customer Experience at Each Touch Point

Marketing organizations would like to build customer relationships and convert them to business transactions over a period of time by constantly engaging the prospective buyers. They make use of many methods of engagement to improve customer satisfaction. These methods are known as touch points in marketing terminology, and simply put, it means a point of contact. Some of the common touch points used for customer engagement are email, newsletter, webinars, and advertisements, etc. Some other methods used are product demos, initial calls, sales presentations and meetings. All these touch points are timed at different point of sales lifecycle which includes pre-sales, sales and post-sales phases.

Every touch point execution should be planned and well-timed in such a manner that it makes a positive impact on improving the customer's experience.

The customer experience process begins when the customer becomes aware of the company's product/service and makes multiple interactions with the sales team. Touch points are used much before a customer's actual business transaction, and engaging the customer continues even after the purchase.

Every company tries to derive the best output based on customer experience during the lifecycle of sales from pre-sales to post-sales stage. Companies use the goodwill generated by the use of touch points and the associated customer experience as a tool to overcome competition from others. A large number of touch points associated with the overall customer experience makes for a complex process. So it is important to measure and determine how much each touch point has contributed individually towards the overall customer experience. This may be used to rate each touch point and prioritize its use on the requirement by marketing teams.

To manage these touch points effectively, some of the following guidelines will be helpful:

- List and organize the touch points to be used (e.g. email, phone call, newsletter, text message etc.)
- Prepare an order in which touch points are to be used
- Define timing of each individual touch point
- Identify the purpose of the touch point planned
- Fix which department owns the touch point's responsibility to respond to its customer requests
- Find the impact rating of each touch point used
- Analyze the touch point's effectiveness in product/service campaigns

All these steps help the company to successfully engage the customer all through sales lifecycle and improve customer's experience and develop goodwill of the customer to achieve better sales.

Example: How a 360-Degree Customer View will Help You Grow Your Business

MakeMyTrip, a reputed travel agency, offered one-stop-shop facility to its customers. It offered travel related services in India and also spread its services for international tours from India. Customers need not visit various agents for different travel requirements. MakeMyTrip made all types of bookings such as flight, hotel, car, bus, or a comprehensivie holiday package. MakeMyTrip trained many local and seasoned tour agennts located in various places from small towns to metro cities. Customers approached seasoned tour agents in the nearby locations for any assistance or service apart from online booking. Companies such as MakeMyTrip were able to access all the customer service-related interactions, such as requests, complaints, enquiries, etc. and offered marketing communications to achieve great customer service and improve business performance.

Source: SuperOffice, Aleya Begum 8th February, 2021, https://studiousguy.com/business-model-of-makemytrip/ Accessed on 22.06.2022

Check Your Progress - 2

2. Which of the following is not an example of a touch point?
   a. Distribution of success stories
   b. Product development
   c. Bulk advertising
   d. Conduct marketing campaigns
   e. Send newsletters

20.5 How to Use Analytics to Supercharge Your Business

Traditional business intelligence (and data mining) software does a very good job of showing you where you've been. By contrast, predictive analytics uses data patterns to make forward-looking predictions that guide you to where you should go next. This is a whole new world for small businesses seeking enterprise application opportunities, as well as social media trend challenges.

According to Eric Siegel in his newly updated book "Predictive Analytics," it's the power to predict who will click, buy, lie, or die. He calls his book a primer, but his real-life examples illustrate well how predictive analytics unleashes the power of data, and how "big data" embodies an extraordinary wealth of experience from which to learn.

Eric provides many examples of potential and real application areas that are ripe for predictive analytics, but the view is that smart entrepreneurs can extrapolate these to hundred more, just waiting to be tapped.

Here are ten examples to get the creative actions applied in business:

i) **Targeted direct marketing:** The challenge is to increase response rates and propagate a single view of the customer, by integrating customer data from multiple Web and social media interactions. Then companies can determine promotional effectiveness by narrowly defining customer segments, by location, or by delivery channel.

ii) **Predictive advertisement targeting:** Online, everyone wants to know which ad each customer is most likely to click. Then they can display the best ad, based on the likelihood of a click, as well as the bounty paid by its sponsor. Everyone wins since consumers hate being presented with ads that are irrelevant to them.

iii) **Fraud detection:** We all want to know which transactions or applications for credit, benefits, reimbursements, refunds, and so on, are fraudulent. On the other side of the table, businesses need to minimize false insurance claims, inaccurate credit applications, and false identities.

iv) **Investment risk management:** Whether you are contemplating an investment in your favorite startup or a little-known stock on a public exchange, there is "big data" out there that can't possibly be evaluated by you without predictive analytics. Companies need the same service on partner and acquisition candidates, even vendors.

v) **Customer retention with churn modeling:** Every business wants to predict which customers are about to leave, and for what reasons, so they can target their retention efforts. New one-time customers may be incentivized to return. Without predictive targeting, a retention campaign may cost more than it gains.

vi) **Movie recommendations:** Movies are selected, or recommended to customers, based on past reviews, related interests, or analysis of Twitter comments. On the movie production side, it's time to start doing predictive analysis on movie scripts, based on reaction to similar movies, to predict box office revenue and cities to hit.

vii) **Education - guided studying for targeted learning:** Every quiz show enthusiast would like some guidance on which question areas need more study, and every student needs help on how to spend his limited study hours more effectively. Schools need the same analysis to provide more effective teaching media and techniques.

viii) **Political campaigning with voter persuasion modeling:** Analytics help in knowing which voters will be positively persuaded by specific contacts, such as a phone call, door knock, flier, or TV ad. The others may not react much in general.

ix) **Clinical decision support systems:** With costs escalating in healthcare today, it's more important than ever to determine which patients are at risk of developing certain conditions, like diabetes, asthma, heart disease, and other lifetime illnesses. Additionally, predictive analytics can help make the best medical decision at the point of care.

x) **Insurance and mortgage underwriting:** Predictive analytics will allow auto insurance companies to accurately determine a reasonable premium to cover each automobile and driver, which helps their bottom line, as well as the drivers. A financial entity needs the same ability to more accurately assess a borrower's ability to pay before granting a mortgage.

Some experts group predictive analytics in the new term "business analytics" intending to define an umbrella group including data warehousing, business intelligence, enterprise information management, enterprise performance management, and analytic applications. But whatever be the name, the opportunity is still there, and it's large.

SMAC has taken a very important place for industries to engage with their clients and partners. It not only helps organizations in critical areas like forecasting, availability of resources, connectivity and allows employees to access required data on the go on a single click. SMAC is changing and largely impacting the Enterprise Solutions. Organizations which have adopted to these practices are witnessing substantial benefits like Real time responses to customer queries on Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, etc., Social Listening, complete social profile and history, analytics, collaboration and data sharing that consumes limited time and resources.

Integrating social media to the enterprise applications like Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP), Customer Relationship Management (CRM), Business Intelligence (BI) and Supply Chain Management (SCM) helps the companies to gather business insights and customer insights generated by these platforms. To know what the customer are talking and thinking of the brand is very important for any organization to formulate, reformulate their policies or services. Mobile devices have also improved their user interface to include portability, high screen resolution and finger-swipe functionality that promotes productivity. It also reduces the distance extending the reach of ERP systems to employees, partners and customers. Next-generation ERP technology will get a enhancement from new advances in analytics and business intelligence solutions that gives manufacturers the skill to rapidly discover the right data sets while providing intelligence. Cloud (Virtual server) reduces cost of enterprise solutions and allows employees to access the data at much faster speed.

Check Your Progress - 3

3. What is meant by Retention?
    a. Hiring an employee
    b. Train an employee
    c. Motivate an employee
    d. Hold on to an existing employee
    e. Demote an employee

20.6 Tips on Marketing Mobile Applications

There are over 3 billion internet users and over 2 billion of them have active social media accounts. Popular social platforms have become marketing giants, offering businesses valuable data about their customers and a (mostly) freeway to reach them.

As you try to reach mobile users for marketing activities:

i) Be Original

Originality is always a virtue. You stand a very slim chance of success unless you are truly original. It is getting difficult to come up with an entirely new idea or category as there are just too many of them in App Stores already. So it might be safer to go with the second option and present an existing concept in a different way. Study the app you want to focus on. What is it missing? How can it be improved?

Adding that unique feature will immediately push customers' attention to it. That will help push user excitement and satisfaction too to look at the market news from your organization on mobile.

ii) Have your Strategy

Nothing works without a well-defined strategy when it comes to marketing.

You, therefore, need to do one of the following:

- Be the first developer to come out with your type of app or
- Present an existing category of app in a new, unique way.

iii) It might push your reputation in any app store.

Pitch out proper planning and implementation. So go about marketing your app in a systematized way.

- Keep your focus on marketing the product in a unique way. Plan out a marketing strategy well in advance.
- Place yourself in the potential customer's shoes. Would you buy the app if you were them? Does the app appeal to you as a third person?
- Try out different ways to work on the same concept, like fusing different categories to make something new out of it.
- Is your core market too saturated? Why not try the exact opposite of what the market leader is doing? This will let you grab attention almost immediately!

iv) Create an effective sales pitch

Before you even start talking about the product, you need to create an effective marketing pitch for it. You should plan a sales pitch that sounds appealing enough for people to follow through to the next step.

v) Build your website

Building a great website goes a long way in effectively marketing your product. Think of unique ideas and present your product in a way that will attract more visitors to your website. Show the app in action and also involve a human element. Tell people how and why they will benefit from buying your app. Your website will then act like your best marketing tool.

vi) Tweet away

Be accessible on Twitter. This is one platform that gets you plenty of attention, all for free. You need to get people to talk about your product. So, create the necessary exposure by tweeting about it as often as you can and in as many different ways as you can.

Plan out your conversations in advance and find ways to convince people about the benefits of buying your app. Twitter allows only 140 characters, so decide what you should say and how you should say it.

Use a lot of humor and casual conversation while presenting your product on Twitter. This is bound to let people sit up and take notice of you.

vii) Talk easy

Being noticed via social media is all about being easy, conversational and approachable. Imagine that all people using social media are your buddies. Make conversation with them like you would with your friends.

viii) Get blogging

Set up a nice blog and update it regularly. Understand that the blogosphere and social media are like Siamese twins – they always go hand-in-hand. Tech sites and review blogs are very useful in generating traffic too, so do try and get your product featured on these blogs.

ix) Create media hype

Create a nice media pitch to market your product. It is, of course, important to develop a unique product, but it is also important to rustle up media hype about it.

Create a freely downloadable press release of your app, giving viewers some high-resolution views of the product. Also, make liberal use of promotional keys and giveaways. Run product-related contests and distribute relevant prizes to winners.

Invite reputed blogs to distribute your promo keys for free. Try and find category-specific blogs and you will instantly be able to approach target customers, without too much extra effort.

That way, many other blogs will follow suit and feature you on their front page as well. This is far more effective and permanent than Twitter.

x) Play around with teasers

Start your product hype early in the day. Keep potential customers on tenterhooks, by playing around with teasers about your products. Create some mystery around your product and maybe even a “Coming Soon” page on your website and pass it around to get a nice big mailing list for your website.

Creating a video teaser works really well too. This will generate some extra buzz on your product, even before its actual launch.

xi) Launch big

All the hype you generated for your product should be followed up with an equally big launch. Send out newsletters to everyone and hit social media big time. Hold an online event of the launch and ask media to cover it. Make sure the spotlight is on you always.

If you manage to make it into the "What's Hot" section of App Stores, you have truly accomplished your mission. A word of caution - once you start to succeed, tone down the hype and focus on giving a good product to your customers, else all the efforts you took so far will fall slack.

To summarize, no strategy is a sure-fire step to success, but the above-mentioned tips are guaranteed to make it easier for your mobile marketing efforts.

Example: Reliance is Banking on JioMart to Drive Sales of New Phone

Reliance Retail Ltd was leveraging its online business JioMart Digital network to drive sales of JioPhone Next. JioMart Digital Network had a lot of small digitial stores spread across India. JioMart Stores had a competitive advantage over other competitors where physical proximity as well as physical support are needed. And also, Reliance Digital Mart Stores were providing an easy access to hundreds of thousands of people who are the potential buyers of mobile phones and electronic goods such as TV, LapTops etc. in the neighbourhood. Small retailers were having an opportunity to convert their stores to JioMart Stores and become a part of JioMart Digital Network to do catalogue sales for consumers with an added advantage of physical proximity.

Source: LiveMint, Kalpana Pathak 14th July, 2022, https://www.livemint.com/companies/news/ril-banks-on-jiomart-distribution-network-to-launch-jiophone-next-11635075910036.html Accessed on 18.07.2022

Check Your Progress - 4

4. Which of the following activities is NOT an option when you try to reach mobile users for marketing activities?
   a. Create effective sales pitch
   b. Build own website
   c. Use third party services
   d. Launch big
   e. Get blogging

20.7 Popular Social Media Platforms for Business

Following are the popular social media platforms:

- Twitter. Who should use it: Everyone – from individuals to the largest multinational corporations
- Instagram. Who should use it: Lifestyle, food, fashion, personalities and luxury brands
- LinkedIn
- Facebook
- Google+
- YouTube
- Pinterest
- Yelp and/or Foursquare.

Social media marketing refers to the process of gaining website traffic or attention through social media sites. Social media marketing programs usually center on efforts to create content that attracts attention and encourages readers to share it with their social networks.

Example: Most Popular Social Media Platforms for Business in 2022

Despite Instagram's advertising costs were higher than Facebook, people preference for advertising on Instagram was the highest. 36% of advertisers used Instagram to follow brands when compared to just 19% for Facebook. According to Statista, the top ranking social media platforms for advertising were: 1. Facebook, 2. Instagram, 3. LinkedIn, 4. YouTube, 5. Twitter and, 6. TikTok.

Also, Instagram had the highest preference because of its organic engagement rate between users and brands and it was ten times greater than Facebook. Instagram influenced planned shopping with shoppable ads on its platform and it folded product discovery and impulse buying. Thus Instagram became the most influential social media platform amongst others.

Source: WorldStream, Kristen McCormick, July 10, 2022
https://www.wordstream.com/blog/ws/2022/01/11/most-popular-social-media-platforms, Accessed on 18/07/2022

Check Your Progress - 5

5. What does social media marketing refer to?.
   a. The process of gaining customer attention through websites.
   b. The process of planning website traffic for attention through social media sites.

c. The process of designing website and gaining attention of customers.

d. The process of gaining website traffic or attention through social media sites.

e. The process of gaining attention through peer marketing.

20.8 Evolving Sales Methodologies and Processes

An organization's growth is much beyond sales numbers, and it all depends on how successfully one can provide unified and consistent customer experience across sales, marketing and service operations. As multiple channels of communication like email, text message, Facebook and Twitter are available to interact with customers, companies take advantage of the same to market their products. Emerging technologies are making customers connected, well informed and have better expectations. Some companies still operate on the basis of old static sales models, which restrict them from having an effective response system in place. To keep pace with changing times, let us look into new sales methodologies being adopted by organizations.

Integration of Marketing, Sales and Service

Most companies agree with the fact that minimizing independent processes in sales, marketing and service functions is the need of the hour to promote sales effectiveness. The lack of a unified approach between marketing, sales and service functions leads to an inconsistency in customer experience. Some of the measures required to enhance customer experience and improve sales include:

- Provide a customer-centric and unified experience that improves the customer base.
- Develop similar objectives across three functions and have the same metrics to measure bonuses.
- Enable marketing team to convert social media information into a sales opportunity.
- Let the customer service center be informed about negative feedbacks from customers so that they can be contacted proactively to build a relationship.

Monitor and provide better customer experience at each touch point

A touch point refers to a method through which a point of contact can be established with the customer to effectively engage him. Handling touch points is a complex and delicate task as it involves interacting with the customer directly and it is an effective tool to build loyalty. For instance, lack of referrals from loyal customers is a measure of customer satisfaction which needs to be improved through effective engagement. Some corrective measures in this regard are:

- Find out from the customer his/her preferred channel of communication.

- Develop a standard customer treatment model which includes conveying seasonal greeting, finding out his convenient times to interact with, etc.
- Provide personalized, uniform and consistent messages to customers across marketing, sales and service functions for all customer touch points being used.

Support sales methodologies and processes which are not mature

Some of the sales methodologies and processes require improvement to help boost sales performance. Processes which are not well structured and those which lack consistency will significantly affect sales performance. Organizations should balance the art of selling and structured methodologies to maximize sales and generate good revenues. Some of the issues to be considered are given below.

- Choose the right sales methodology and apply it consistently to maximize value.
- Balance between selling and sales methodology should be maintained to effectively manage the sales operations.
- Optimize sales processes and allow flexibility to accommodate changing market conditions.
- Regularly inspect processes to identify potential failure points.
- Develop procedures to measure process efficacy and make continuous improvements.

Acquire, Develop and Retain Sales Workforce

Sales team is the backbone of any organization to become a strong competitor in the marketing world in this digital era. Selling is an art; companies should have strategies to measure the sales performances of sales staff and reward them accordingly. Similarly, organizations should be able to quantify the overheads of training new sales members and effective selling to understand the value of retention of the existing sales team. To acquire, develop and retain sales personnel is a powerful strategy to streamline and improve sales operations. Some value addition points for sales effectiveness in this regard are given below:

- Build talent and competencies of the sales team by conducting regular sales workshops to understand companies' selling models and improve analytics capabilities to imbibe agility anthem.
- Identify high performing sales representatives and revise recruiting, retention and training policies to improve sales.
- Increase sales representative productivity through effective coaching and learning sessions.

Sales Technology Enablement

Many companies have made changes in their business processes to support technology enablement to have hassle-free transparent operations. For instance,

IT solutions like automated CRM and ERP were used to streamline sales operations. These changes have transformed the workflow and reduced the administrative burden on staff improving the pace of operations. Integration of handheld devices and analytics support added much-required boost to decision making in companies. With regard to sales, these technological changes gave continuous access to real-time customer inputs on the move. But the impact of such changes in companies has been marginal due to some shortcomings. A few points to improve sales effectiveness are:

- Use social, mobile, analytics, cloud and security to support sales technology enablement to follow, sense and guide customers
- Use predictive analytics to understand customers and take proactive steps to engage the customer to improve chances of sales.
- Create more relevant and personalized selling messages for every point of contact.

Example: Ola Marketing Strategy: Hashtag Campaign

Ola had a mission "Building Mobility for a Billion Indians", through its #OlaHaiNa hashtag campaign in 2020. Hashtags were unrecognized gems of social media. However, Ola was an exception as it used this gem to scope millions. Ola used hashtag campaigns in its marketing strategy by making use of different hashtags and launched an ad series that was something new for customers**.** With the same hashtag, Ola released several ad films promoting that Ola was available for any help. "Hashtags have been the language of social media, and Ola used this language very well."

Source:Marque Ex, VIPUL AGARWAL, 2022, https://marqueex.com/ola-marketing-strategy/ Accessed on 14.07.2022

Activity 20.1

Improving Sales

A healthcare service provider who markets and promotes online videos and baby products relating to baby care and child parenting wants to improve its customer experience and engagement methods. It wanted to reach its users using different touch points to improve its popularity and sales. Bring out a list of touch points to support this initiative in an effective manner.

Answer:

20.9 Using Technology for Sales Enablement

Though SMACS is a collection of individual technology platforms involving social, mobile, analytics and cloud entities, their integrated efforts are changing the paradigm of business, generating high growth. In the area of marketing and sales in particular, the company's revenues are increasing with higher margins due to use of IT-enabled technologies when compared to the conventional business model. This technology though is at an infant stage in some countries when compared to developed nations, the same can be improved by educating people about the benefits of SMACS usage. Let us look at the four components of SMACS individually to see what kind of impact they made in the marketing domain by considering a few examples.

Social Media: Having multiple channels for the customers to reach and access the information is the key to its rising popularity. For example, this can be used for consulting, engaging and analytics and BI activities to improve sales and marketing operations. Social media just keeps growing and growing. And most other social networking sites and apps are at the top of their all-time high user numbers.

Mobile: Anytime information available on the move is the key element in this competitive world. It reduces the gap between people and processes. Use of mobile devices like tablets and smartphones by sales personnel results in increased productivity and efficiency. It also helps in improving customer and employee satisfaction and minimizes paperwork.

Analytics: Marketing companies need to predict sales trends and forecast possibilities from the existing data which is a very essential aspect of their business. 'Big Data' analytic capability of SMACS technology allows deriving predictive and actionable outputs from the data for improving operations and decision making.

Cloud: Cloud services are popular because they can reduce the infrastructure cost and complexity of managing computers, hardware or software licenses. It provides resources such as data storage space, computer processing power and specialized user applications. In the case of a marketing company, which involves fieldwork and coordination among different sales teams for its sales and service operations, cloud environment would be the ideal solution to access and update real-time data in a secure manner.

Example: Sell Online on Flipkart | Grow Your Business with the Leader

Flipkart was India's favourite place to sell online, be it a manufacturer/ vendor or a supplier. They can simply sell their products online on Flipkart Marketplace and become a player in e-commerce by making small investment.

Contd….

Flipkart offered select seller workshops and seller support with the help of an expert team facilitating technology enabled transparency. Flipkart collaborated with third party 'Ecommerce Service Providers' to offer logistics, product photoshoot, cataloging support and packaging materials support. Flipkart Fulfilment services assisted a seller to ensure faster delivery of their items, quality check by engaged experts and a delightful packaging.

Source: Flipkart, 2022, https://seller.flipkart.com/sell-online/ Accessed on 14.07.2022

Activity 20.2

Social Media and Fashion Industry

You are the owner of a fashion boutique. Recently you did two programs wherein you could bring four celebrities from film, media, and designing field. How can you use social media involving them in promoting your manufacturing/design capabilities?

Answer:

Check Your Progress - 6

6. How does 'Big Data' analytic capability of SMACS technology help you?
   a. Allows deriving descriptive un-predictive and actionable outputs from the data for improving operations and decision making.
   b. Allows deriving predictive and actionable outputs from the data for improving operations and decision making.
   c. Allows deriving predictive and actionable outputs from the data for improving manufacturing and decision making.
   d. Allows deriving predictive and actionable outputs from the data for improving operations and profit making.
   e. Allows deriving present and actionable outputs from the data for improving operations and decision making.

20.10 Agile Selling Using SMACS

The words "agile learning" or "agile thinking", are quite common in software development environments and they imply quick planning, rapid development and flexible response to change. Changes in the work environment may come in

infinite forms. Let us consider these examples, a new product is being introduced by the company and the sales team or field representatives need to quickly learn how to sell them; or if a decision to expand its operations to new markets has been taken by the company, the sales team should understand how to penetrate in the new market and tap sales from this expansion. In such situations, the Agile selling model helps provide quick-fix solutions.

SMACS technologies are the new entities into marketing, transforming the sales strategies of many companies. When deployed in full length with total integration, these technologies give a synergy to marketing operations. Let us understand how SMACS transforms marketing methods to perform better:

Social technologies allow rapid sharing and creation of information in terms of feedbacks, responses, requests and surveys on social media. This enhances collaboration and piles up customer information which is the most valuable asset of any company. Social technologies help to capture, organize and analyze the acquired information into knowledge to understand new markets quickly to drive better business results.

Mobile technologies are fast changing with time for the better, and growth of smart devices is providing instant connectivity. Users can access information anywhere at any time with ease. Mobile serves as a low-cost tool to share updates through email and SMS of sales transactions during pre-sales, sales and post-sales stages.

Analytics improve supply chain operations and optimize existing customer relationship management processes. The strength of big data analytics allows companies to analyze new forms of structured and unstructured data in the cloud, which generates in-depth knowledge and wisdom to support decision making in real-time environments.

Cloud technology is the key element of the SMACS which gives business companies a number of benefits like agility, breaking down geographical barriers, cutting infrastructure costs and maintenance of software/hardware with unlimited scalability. The cloud in combination with social, mobile, and analytics technologies provides an agile environment to suit any marketing initiative.

Example: "Khatabook's Solutions are Built Around Unexplored Use Cases for MSMEs"

Khatabook had digital solutions built for bookkeeping, credit recovery and other operational challenges such as maintaining optimum inventory, customers retention, staff attendance, and staff salaries. Khatabook's Online Web solutions helped medium and small medium enterprises (MSMEs) to have an online identity.

Contd….

Now with Khatabooks Web Solutions, MSMEs uploaded their products catalog to generate a sharable link. And, the link was shared with their prospective customers for an Online ordering. Khatabook's Biz Analyst worked along with accounting software such as Tally. And, both the softwares being web and mobile-based, it was possible to do business intelligence. Khatabook used AI in lead generation modelling to cross-sell and to optimize marketing strengths of MSMEs and to achieve significant incremental value for their business.

Source: CIOL Bureau |June 29, 2021 https://www.ciol.com/author/ciol-bureau/page/13/ Accessed on 30.06.2022

Activity 20.3

Cloud in FMCG Industry

Being an FMCG organization, your competitors are using social technology platforms and cloud technology which are used for selling FMCG products across the globe. Why do you think that cloud technology will be the most sought-after thing for marketing in the near future? What are its drawbacks?

Answer:

Check Your Progress - 7

7. What is Quick and rapid response system to support sales operations referred to as?
   a. Spin marketing
   b. Conceptual marketing
   c. Agile selling
   d. Hybrid selling
   e. SNAP Selling
8. Which of the following the Adobe Experience Manager deals with?
   a. Brand building
   b. Personalized campaigns
   c. Message dashboards
   d. Audience profiles
   e. Real-time analytics

9. What does Agile technology mean?
    a. Imply quick design, rapid development and flexible response to change.
    b. Imply quick prototype, rapid development and flexible response to change.
    c. Imply quick planning, rapid development and flexible response to change.
    d. Imply quick planning, rapid implementation and flexible response to change.
    e. Imply quick planning, rapid development and flexible pricing to change.
10. What are all the benefits of cloud technology for business companies?
    a. Agility, breaking down geographical barriers, cutting infrastructure costs and building software/hardware with unlimited scalability.
    b. Agility, breaking down geographical barriers, cutting infrastructure costs and maintenance of software/hardware with unlimited scalability.
    c. Breaking down geographical barriers, cutting infrastructure costs and maintenance of products with unlimited scalability.
    d. Agility, building geographical barrier security, cutting infrastructure costs and maintenance of software/hardware with unlimited scalability.
    e. Agility, breaking down geographical barriers, helping rise infrastructure costs and maintenance of software/hardware with unlimited scalability.

20.11 Summary

- SMACS based business model is the latest trend in digital marketing because of its instantaneous reach and all-time availability. SMACS is the cohesive bond between organizations and consumers driving business to enhance productivity.
- SMACS enabled companies to integrating marketing, sales and service functions resulted in creating vast revenue opportunities. All touch points, which are points of contact, add value to the company to promote the market and sell their products.
- Agile means the ability to move quickly and easily. Agile methodology is not directly related to sales. Sales team must adopt this concept at all levels to compete with the changing sales environment. It means to provide a quick response to customers and proactively engage customers to improve loyalty.
- "Adobe Marketing Cloud" and HP "Autonomy Marketing Cloud" are integrated marketing solutions by Adobe systems and HP respectively. The former enables to measure and optimize marketing campaigns and digital experiences; while the later technology is a collection of optimization tools to help increase market share, optimize marketing expenditure and increase revenue across all channels.

20.12 Glossary

Adobe Marketing Cloud: Adobe Marketing Cloud (AMC) is a collection of integrated online marketing and web analytics solutions by Adobe Systems.

Agile selling: Agile selling is about being proactive to face continuous change in the selling environment. Sales team should be able to adapt quickly to new market dynamics, rapidly launching new products or services, and generate revenues.

HP Autonomy Marketing Cloud: It is a set of optimization tools used by companies to increase market share, minimize marketing overheads and increase revenue across all channels.

Sales Enablement Technologies: Sales enablement technologies include customer relationship management platforms, use of ERP (Enterprise Resource Planning) Solutions and integration of SMACS technologies which allow companies to collect, identify and research prospects to prepare for the sales related activity, and more efficiently and effectively communicate their benefits and features to the client.

Touch Point: Touch point is a contact point in marketing for any kind of interaction between customers and marketers to engage, exchange information, provide service, or to handle transactions.

20.13 Self-Assessment Test

1. Explain Agile selling concept with suitable examples.
2. Discuss the role of SMACS usage to improve sales in the marketing industry.
3. List and state the purpose of key components of HP Autonomy Marketing Cloud.
4. Explain the following terms:
   a. Touch points
   b. Customer experience
5. Suggest a few practical problems encountered by companies in total implementation and use of SMACS by sales personnel to improve revenues.

20.14 Suggested Readings/Reference Material

1. Rodney Heisterberg and Alakh Verma (April 2022). “Creating Business Agility: How Convergence of Cloud, Social, Mobile, Video and Big Data Enables Competitive Advantage,” Narrated by Stephen Graybill.
2. Jonathan S Walker (2021). Social Media Marketing For Beginners - How To Make Money Online: Guaranteed Strategies To Monetizing, Mastering, & Dominating Any Platform For Your Brand, JW Choices.
3. Barry Connolly (2020). Digital Trust: Social Media Strategies to Increase Trust and Engage Customers, Bloomsbury Business.

4. Seema Gupta (6 August 2020). Digital Marketing McGraw Hill; Second edition.
5. Tracy L. Tuten, Michael R (15 June 2020). Solomon et al, Social Media Marketing, SAGE Publications Pvt. Ltd; Third edition.
6. Paul Martin Thomas Erickson (2019). Social Media: Usage and Impact, Global Vision Publishing House, 2 edition.
7. Steve Randazzo (2019). Brand Experiences: Building Connections in a Digitally Cluttered World, Paipen publishing.

20.15 Answers to Check Your Progress Questions

1. (c) Door-to-door campaign

Door-to-door campaign is a physical campaign to promote sales and integration of sales, marketing and service functions is difficult to do with such campaigns.

2. (b) Product development

Product development is a non-sales activity which is not associated with any touch points.

3. (d) Hold on to an existing employee

Retention means continuing with an existing employee of an organization.

4. (c) Use third party services

All other options:

Create effective sales pitch, Build own website, Launch big, Get blogging are recommended practices.

5. (d) The process of gaining website traffic or attention through social media sites

Social media marketing refers to the process of gaining website traffic or attention through social media sites.

6. (b) Allows deriving predictive and actionable outputs from the data for improving operations and decision making

'Big Data' analytics capability of SMACS technology allows deriving predictive and actionable outputs from the data for improving operations and decision making.

7. (c) Agile selling

Quick and rapid response system to support sales operations is an example of Agile selling.

8. (a) Brand building

Adobe Experience Manager deals with brand building and drives the demand by delivering relevant user experience.

9. (c) Imply quick planning, rapid development and flexible response to change

Agile technology implies quick planning, rapid development and flexible response to change.

10. (b) Agility, breaking down geographical barriers, cutting infrastructure costs and maintenance of software/hardware with unlimited scalability

Cloud technology gives business companies a number of benefits like agility, breaking down geographical barriers, cutting infrastructure costs and maintenance of software/hardware with unlimited scalability.

Unit 21

SMACS for Operations

Structure

"Social media is not only more cost-effective than advertising, but it also offers great opportunities for innovative engagement with your customers."

– Richard Branson

21.1 Introduction

SMACS-enabled architectures are preferred models since they facilitate uniform content across different platforms –anytime, anywhere, and any-device type of convenience. Further, SMACS enables operational agility across departments and serves as a means of communication both internally and externally for an organization.

The previous unit 'SMACS for Marketing' discussed the integration of marketing, sales and services using SMACS and improving the customer experience at each touch point. The evolving sales methodologies and processes, using technology for sales enablement and agile selling using SMACS is operational. The next generation of business applications needs to adopt SMACS technologies to enhance the user experience, business productivity and maximize convenience. SMACS-enabled architectures are preferred models to ease operational agility across departments and serve as a means of communication both internally and externally for an organization.

Customers, employees and stakeholders are expecting a new approach to business, content generation and collaboration among themselves to share information, which is SMACS-enabled. Users are expecting uniformity of content across different platforms –anytime, anywhere, and any-device type of convenience.

SMACS technology enablement at organization level will provide hassle-free information sharing among the stakeholders in a secure manner. This platform helps the organization to create, organize, monitor, analyze and decide actions to be taken to enhance the power of business operations. This unit deals with technological convergence required to implement SMACS technology for improving operations in any organization. The unit also discusses in detail the benefits of cloud migration and analytics impact on business in an organization.

21.2 Objectives

By the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- Define the convergence of technologies required for use of SMACS technology in operations
- Explain the adaptation and impact of cloud on operations, product design and marketing
- Explain the importance of operational decisions based on cloud-enabled Big Data
- Discuss the impact of social media and digital strategies on operations in an organization

21.3 Converging Technologies-Disrupting Operating Models

The convergence of SMACS (Social, Mobile, Analytics, Cloud and Security) technologies for the purpose of business operations has transformed the reach and scope of digital business. Digital business is the new paradigm of business designs which minimizes the gap between the digital and physical worlds. Although these technologies are innovative and disruptive on their own, convergence of these technologies has revolutionized the business and society, disrupting the earlier traditional business methods and creating new opportunities.

Regarding SMACS in business operations, one should understand that the cloud is the core, mobile its edge, social connections between stakeholders and data analytics refers to mining the accumulated data to achieve business excellence.

SMACS places the disruptive technologies that are transforming businesses and describes the technical and services infrastructure needed to provide the ideal end-user experience where:

- Everyone including the customers, partners, employees and the organization are digitally connected (social)
- The service follows them wherever they go on the move (Mobile)

- Analytics is used to have better insight using this real-time data for achieving high-end goals and helps better decision-making(Analytics)
- Users can have access to data whenever required from anywhere (Cloud)
- Lastly, the convergence of all these technologies is providing new ways for innovative businesses to share and explore new avenues in a secure manner (Security)

For example, in medicine, many hospitals are making use of secure social networks run in the cloud to share and collaborate on complex cases. Doctors can make use of pictures or videos of physical symptoms taken on their mobile devices, and share them with other expert doctors on social networks to collaborate on complex cases. The quality of interaction and discussion experienced using these social networks cannot be experienced using conventional technologies like email, text and voice. Even patients can make use of these social mobile networks to interact with physicians.

Another key area in the convergence of social, mobile and cloud is the increasing use of contextual information which provides a richer view of the user's environment and is collected by smart mobile devices. For example, specific ads can be shown to users based on their current location, weather and time.

Key benefits of this convergence to a business organization are:

- New channels for reaching customers
- Increased customer insight & customer care
- Innovative applications using sensors and context
- Improved collaboration

Thus, the convergence presents an opportunity to enhance business processes across the entire range of activities through increased collaboration, offering better customer insights and support. An organization can make use of this convergence of technologies by adapting to all these technologies through proper digital strategies.

Disrupting operating models in usage in various operations are cited here.

- Social media, mobile devices, analytics, cloud computing and security technologies (SMACS) can be an innovation in disruptive technology in the field of digital industry. Foremost is this ecosystem removes geographical barriers, cuts costs, and enhances the operations of any given business.
- Mobile revolution, Telemedicine and wearable devices redefine healthcare systems
- Analytics and AI will dislocate many marketing paradigms
- Cloud revolutionizes the storage mechanisms, and the need for resources
- Social media is already revolutionizing by supporting crowd-sourcing.

Example: Understanding Convergence: The Next Wave of Digital Transformation

AirTel – a digitally matured firm launched Airtel Thanks mobile app to focus on data and convergence of technologies with the goal of innovation, to be competitive. The mobile app offers technological convergence by offering mobile recharges, broadband, fund transfers and other services on single platform.

Source: https://www.airtel.in/bank/products/myairtel-app, 2022, Accessed on 23/06/2022

Check Your Progress - 1

1. Which of the following tools/applications is capable of performing analytics for business insights?
   a. Facebook
   b. Firewall
   c. Scanner
   d. Biometric
   e. Business Intelligence

21.4 Adaptation of Cloud in Operations

Business operations refer to achieving the highest level of efficiency of business practices within an organization. Operations management includes plans or actions required for converting materials and labor into services/product in an optimal manner to maximize the profit of an organization.

Efficient operations will help companies to reduce costs, and they might improve customer satisfaction. Usage of technology, focusing on the automation of businesses and process operations, helps in improving business efficiency and productivity.

Many business organizations are efficiently using the power of information technology for their operations. With traditional software development process, business organizations are maintaining software (specific application software and components) and hardware (servers, private networks, etc). With traditional computing, organizations have to recruit some IT professionals also for software maintenance and initial cost will be high as they need to establish the IT infrastructure.

Cloud computing uses: Cloud computing is a new computing paradigm where computing resources are available as and when needed and the owner of the resources pay for their use in the same way as paying for household utilities like electricity or water. Cloud computing resources are available whenever needed and charges are based on the usage of the resources.

Cloud computing provides a new paradigm for accessing business resources. It empowers organizations to create, organize, manage and use IT-enabled business services on-demand. These resources are made available from optimal sources leading to maximum utilization and cost-effectiveness. Initial costs and overhead of IT operations like security to sensitive data and scalability problems with increased users can be reduced.

Cloud computing characteristics: Cloud computing has five essential characteristics. They are:

- On-demand self-service
- Broad network access
- Resource pooling
- Rapid elasticity
- Measured service

These are the features that distinguish it from other computing models.

As cloud computing reduces the need for hardware in the office, it leaves an amount available to increase production of goods. With an ever-present flow of goods, sale naturally increases.

In a business environment, business processes ensure the business operations and get the work done. They are supported by applications that manage the content of information and perform transactions. These applications are supported by a platform and infrastructure that provide storage, processing and communications.

Operations management is an underlying activity aiding the better decision-making in all the departments of business operations. It is established that SMACS assistance in compiling, sharing of information, presenting, and secured analysis helps in boardroom meetings.

For example, software companies like Microsoft, IBM, Amazon, and Google are providing the required cloud-enabled infrastructure and software services to meet the needs of a business organization. The faster an organization adapts to cloud computing, the quicker it gets to pick up the pace in the competitive business world.

Amazon, Oracle, Google, and Microsoft are some cloud computing platforms.

Example: The most Important Benefits of OneDrive

MWW Group LLC is a New York based leading independent, integrated public relations agency. It uses Microsoft's OneDrive to store files in the cloud. Using one drive, the company easily accesses files from anywhere that are shared by authorised people and working with them online through any device.

Contd….

Thus, OneDrive stands out as it is integrated with Office 365 Suite of applications. Further, it becomes easier to manage licenses, file or document persmission and access privileges and allows business mobility.

Source: Outscope, 2021, https://outscope.com/the-most-important-benefits-of-onedrive/ Accessed on 14/07/2022

Check Your Progress - 2

2. Which of the below given IT service providers does not offer any form of cloud platform?
    a. Oracle
    b. Sybase
    c. Google
    d. Microsoft
    e. Teradata
3. Which of the following is not a property of the cloud environment?
    a. On-demand self-service
    b. Broad network access
    c. Resource pooling
    d. Rapid elasticity
    e. Open-sourced service

21.5 Impact of Cloud Computing on Product Design, Manufacturing, Sales and Servicing

Manufacturers are under constant pressure to increase the accuracy of services and products and providing faster processing as key result areas. These key elements are bound to make organizations competitive. Organizations try to capitalize maximum for effective delivery of services based on their internal intelligence and knowledge.

They need to have efficient market research for new product designs and to increase their sales. Cloud-based strategies give these companies the opportunity to bring their own intelligence and knowledge to handle every sales situation. While the same may be possible with traditional systems internally, yet the cloud-based systems were quicker and easier to customize. They have the potential for faster adoption across the organization. Cloud computing changes the business as real-time data is available with proper analytical tools

The changes are especially:

1. **Better Forecasting**

   Accurate forecasts can be performed with real-time supply chain information at hand. Solutions that can present real-time information quickly are better. For example, some cloud-based offerings can be used at the warehouse level to control and monitor real-time inventory, and the same information is shared with supply chain partners. In this way, if the accuracy of forecasting is increased, it can help develop new designs for the product to help meet the dynamically changing demands of a growing business.

2. **Improved Inventory Management**

   Inventory shortages can make or break business activities and bring manufacturing operations to a halt. Cloud software can help in sharing data with suppliers, to help work in an integrated manner to keep track of inventory levels in real-time to avoid over-stocking and loss of sales. The operational staff can access information using tablets and mobile devices to check inventory levels or to send a client report without any restrictions. Cloud-based data is highly protected, but granting access to authorized users must be more readily available, and not involve IT administration.

3. **Automated Backups and Updates**

   There's no need to waste valuable resources to back up the manufacturing system or to launch any software updates. Cloud-based providers can do it all without needing to involve the business organization's IT team or other employees. Cloud backups keep the business running with a few or no glitches involved. Even if every computer in a warehouse is down, the user can still power up through tablet and log into the cloud-based inventory and other systems to get the information needed. And, most importantly, a cloud-based backup means the data is being stored offsite. So, in case of any kind of disaster, one need not worry about data being lost.

4. **Refine Customer Service**

   If the customer support is streamlined with the cloud, there are services available to handle questions, inquiries and other functions without disturbing their important day-to-day operations. Upgrading to cloud-based customer service can be simple and easy by allowing customers to access and see their order status and track them. Cloud storage can also refine customer service efforts. Client files and information can be stored in the cloud so that they can be accessed from anywhere.

5. **Streamline the Marketing Collaboration**

   New marketing strategy can be executed with ease. Once the marketing campaign is decided, cloud software like "Marketo" can be used to manage

the process, exchange notes, get status updates, get real-time statistics and feedback. Some cloud software packages help schedule social media posts and inform when to follow up with a lead and when to deploy the next email marketing campaign.

Impact of cloud computing includes:

- Accelerating new product development strategies to attain time-to-market objectives.
- Using cloud-based marketing automation applications to plan, execute and track results of every campaign.
- Automating customer service, support and order status inquiries online, integrating order management and pricing.
- Using ERP strategies to gain greater efficiencies in material planning, supplier management and reduce logistics costs.
- Using cloud-based Human Resource Management (HRM) systems to unify all manufacturing locations which are geographically apart.
- Industrial automation is becoming intelligent and manufacturers pick machine-to-machine (M2M) technology. Cloud computing is the obvious solution to store and manage the ever-growing expanse of production data. In addition to increased storage space, the cloud helps manufacturers to increase agility, optimize performance and drive profitability.

Example : Xerox Selects Oracle Cloud to Launch 'Disruptive' Businesses

Xerox uses Oracle Cloud to perform various functions like online shopping, Order Creation, Invoice Processing and monitor sales performance, create financial plans and transmit data without any day-to-day support from their Information Technology Teams.: Oracle Cloud Infrastructure (OCI) enabled successful integration of various business applications via Oracle Integration Services. Now, Xerox can easily retrieve data using data management services offered as a part of Oracle Autonomous Database technology, and can easily perform automatic patch upgrades and also application performance tuning.

Source: Chris Ehrlich, January 31, 2022, https://www.datamation.com/cloud/xerox-selects-oracle-cloud-disruptive-businesses/ Accessed on 22/06/2022

Activity 21.1

Cloud for Business Operations

Castle Town, an E-Real estate portal, has operations across India and wants to manage and monitor its field staff activities like identifying different properties, buyers and manage its property sales from its place of work. The current IT infrastructure available was not sufficient to handle its large

workforce spread across the country. The company plans to migrate and integrate its current applications on a mobile-enabled cloud platform with mobile app support to have hassle-free operations for doing business. For the above scenario, list a few advantages and problems in implementing cloud environment. **Answer:**

Check Your Progress - 3

4. Which of the following is not a possible change with cloud computing?
   a. Better forecast
   b. Improved inventory
   c. Streamline market collaboration
   d. Refine customer service
   e. Better service charges

21.6 Operational Decisions Using Big Data

The idea of data creating business value leads to better strategies which are becoming the basis of business competition.

Operational managers try to derive insights from information in order to make smarter, real-time, fact-based decisions. The demand for depth of knowledge has fueled the growth of big data tools and platforms. There are many decision-support systems which are helpful in decision-making but big data analytics is a new technical aid that makes it possible to make real-time decisions to meet high-end business goals.

Big data refers to the large, dynamic and disparate volumes of data being created by people that has the potential to be mined for information and the software tools required to perform this.

Big data is at the heart of many cloud services deployments. It requires new technology which is innovative to collect, host and analyze large amounts of operational data pooled in order to derive real-time business insights about the consumers, to enhance profit, performance and productivity, and to reduce the risk involved. Big data includes information generated from social media, data from devices like smartphones and tablets, machine, videos consisting of both structured and unstructured data. It is typically characterized by the four V's, namely, Volume, Variety, Velocity and Veracity, referring to size, nature, speed

and from multiple sources respectively. Big data analytics is the process of examining big data to identify hidden patterns, find unknown correlations and other information that can be used to make better decisions.

Operational Intelligence (OI) correlates the real-time analysis of big data with historical data, delivering complete business insights. Robust cloud-based big-data analytics can be a key component of a business strategy, powering an approach called 'next-best-action'. This refers to the big data analytics-powered automation infrastructure that optimizes agile engagements. Agile engagement refers to real-time human conversations, which can take place across multiple channels, including social networks, call centers, retail outlets.

Big Data powers social business in either of the following patterns as a part of agile engagement:

- *Outbound engagement*: This refers to the practice of monitoring social network traffic for stakeholder intelligence (preferences, awareness, and sentiment) and using that knowledge to trigger next-best-action models that send finely targeted outbound response messages to the targeted customers.
- *Inbound engagement*: This involves managing social media communication using automated processing of scripts and applications that depict how employees interact among themselves and with external stakeholders. In social channels, automated effective social interactions to achieve various business objectives, such as reducing customer and employee back and forth unwanted communication, boosting sales and profits, and achieving greater efficiency can be achieved.

In the fast-changing world, it is important for organizations to stay ahead. Big Data can deliver benefits in operations to organizations.

Finance:

Big Data has a definite role to play in finance. An enormous amount of financial data requires proper storage, accessing, analytics and resubmission that further need the involvement of technology for its proper maintenance.

- Compare and gauze different business scenarios.
- Smarter procurement management.
- Identify bad credit risks and fraudulent transactions

Marketing and Public Relations:

Marketing is known for huge data generation due to its enormous transactions. Big Data management is required to manage it and to bring it in a proper analysis to get the following:

- New opportunities to react to opinion-formers
- Determine marketing campaign effectiveness
- Enable finer-grained customer segmentation

Sales:

Inference regarding digging finer results in sales needs a proper analytics to be applied. We can, then, expect the following results:

- Identify customers with higher potential values
- Identify new sales channels
- Determine optimal sales offers

Procurement and Logistics:

Logistics has become an important segment in the business. It generates data to be used to solve the cost versus movement matrix to minimize movement cost enabling the cost-effective logistics to be achieved.

- Determine locations of inventory shrinkage.

Example: Using Data to Make Decisions

Tesla, an American multinational automotive and clean energy company uses big data to make operational decisions. Tesla's vehicles are fixed with sensors to collect data for sending it to the central servers for making analysis. This process helped Tesla in improving their cars` performance as the analysis helps the company to inform vehicle owners about the reparis or services on priority basis.

Source: https://www.simplilearn.com/how-big-data-can-influence-decision-making-article, April 28, 2021, Accessed on 20/7/22

Check Your Progress - 4

5. What is Operational Intelligence (OI)?
    a. Real-time analysis of big data along with historical data to delivering business insights.
    b. Analysis of historical legacy data to delivering business insights.
    c. Real-time business process management issues and problems.
    d. Access to business transaction process management data.
    e. Business analytics of available data using data mining
6. Application of SMACS in financial data includes:
    a. Compare and gauze different business scenarios, cost-benefit analysis, smarter procurement management and identify bad credits risks.
    b. Compare and gauze different finance options, smarter procurement management and identify bad credits risks.
    c. Compare and gauze different finance scenarios, smarter procurement management, bill payments and identify bad credits risks.

d. Compare and gauze different business scenarios, smarter procurement management and identify bad credits risks and debt computation.

e. Compare and gauze different business scenarios, smarter procurement management and identify bad credits risks.

7. What is the practice of monitoring social network traffic for stakeholder intelligence and using that knowledge to trigger next-best-action models that send finely targeted outbound response messages to the targeted customers known as?

   a. Outbound engagement

   b. Outbound management

   c. Outbound triggers

   d. Outbound decisions

   e. Outbound targets

21.7 Impact of Social Media on Organizational Operations

Companies use social media to accomplish various business objectives, such as increasing market share and annual sales growth, etc. Small businesses recognize the benefit of social media as a platform for communication that facilitates better communication between a company and its stakeholders. This supports company processes and objectives, including customer relationship management, customer retention, customer base, market research, product marketing, cost control initiatives, public relations, and sales and recruiting.

Customer Relationship Management

Reaching online community with Twitter, Facebook, and LinkedIn, etc., provides an opportunity to build a strong relationship between a company and its customers. Through real-time online communication channels both with the existing and potential customers and the organization can be used for promoting the brand. The greater the frequency of broadcast-based branding, the higher is the degree of engagement, and the stronger the relationship becomes. All these initiatives will have an impact on customer relationships and improve sales, customer satisfaction and company reputation.

Customer Retention

Social media users who become followers of a brand are more likely to buy the brand's products. As a part of company's strategy in making use of social media to convey brand values, it enforces the engagement between the company and its customers, which will lead to higher customer retention and enhance customer loyalty.

Expansion of Customer Base

Companies reach new customers using corporate message mechanism on a social media. The conveyance of positive customer feedback regarding the corporate

message and its products to millions of social media users using Twitter, Facebook platforms will expand the customer base significantly. This leads to a better conversion rate from product browsers to product purchasers.

Market Research

Social media can be used as a means to explore the culture, views and lifestyles that can influence consumer behavior. The social media is a means to profile target and also engage the audience to develop marketing and advertising strategies. Social media conversations also provide insights to companies regarding issues about any negativity about the products and its impact affecting current market opportunities.

Product Marketing

A product can be directly promoted to the prospective customers using social media. Such marketing strategies dominate the promotions that are conveyed by other means such as website advertisements and press releases.

Achievement of Competitive Advantage

As a part of social media, the ability to listen to a competitor's message enables a company to develop business strategies and tactics that can directly counter the competitor's initiatives. This helps a company to gain a competitive advantage. For example, data transmitted by company X regarding future franchise locations is a key criterion used by company Y in the selection of its franchise locations. This gives company Y a cost advantage in terms of saving market research expenses.

Cost Control Initiatives

Use of relatively low-cost social media channels to market products supports a company's efforts to control costs of essential functions, including sales, marketing and customer service. For example, a company can maximize its return on marketing by depending on social media to reach customers as an alternative to costlier television advertisements.

Public Relations

Corporate news updated can be shared with the audience in real-time using multiple social media channels such as Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn. In some situations, business firms can rely on multiple social media channels to improve audience engagement, which is the key to control the harmful bad news that can damage or quickly spread among a large community of social media participants once the news emerges.

Sales

Sales can be improved by tagging social media channels on corporate websites. For example, product ratings "fan" and "tell a friend" features will help the company to engage website users. This initiative leads to a better user and company engagement that contributes to increased product sales.

Activity 21.2

Social Media for Product Marketing at Samsung

Samsung India is an electronics manufacturing company building a variety of household/office electronic goods. Chief of marketing at Samsung decided to use social media because of the increasing penetration of the Internet and mobile technologies in India. Samsung decided to use social media for promotion of their upcoming office AC equipment. How to go about product marketing via social media? What challenges may be there for Samsung?

Answer:

Check Your Progress - 5

8. Which of the following is NOT a possible outcome from social media adopting by companies?
   a. Improved brand image
   b. Company processes and objectives
   c. Market research, product marketing, cost control initiatives
   d. Public relations
   e. Sales and recruiting

21.8 Operational Excellence Using Digital Strategies

Digital strategy is the process of identifying, articulating and executing digital opportunities that will increase an organization's competitive advantage. Digital tools allow an organization to respond immediately to sudden market shifts and deliver new products and services across multiple channels on time.

Digital strategies continuously exploit digital technologies to create new sources of value for the customers and increase the operational agility to serve the customers. Digital strategies provide operational excellence through:

Process Automation:

An automated process, whether it is a product design or a market campaign, brings more accuracy, lowered operational cost, faster execution time and provides ease of use.

Remote/Mobile Operations:

Operations like inventory check, the status of an order delivery and interaction with the stakeholder can be performed on the go.

Secure Operations:

More protected operations can be performed with digitization. Effective authentication and monitoring mechanisms can help achieve a high level of security for access to digital channels. A true digital business needs to integrate two sides of a digital strategy: digital customer experience and digital operational excellence. Digital strategies can be used to deliver a better customer experience – providing more precise, customized and quality actionable insights that meet its affluent clients' needs.

Digital businesses need to adopt a partnership-driven mindset rather than demanding that they build everything themselves. Many travel agencies launched a location-based app to help people book a cab ride from the nearest location to them. The app's success relies on taxi drivers who have it downloaded on their smartphones, a geo-location service, and an integrated back-end payment system.

Digitization has the following advantages:

i) **Digital Tools Bridge Connectivity Gaps:** Integrated digital tools are used for information synchronization, inventory management, order fulfillment, delivery planning and coordination. These tools reduce complexity during the planning process. For example, consider the coordinated use of an Advanced Learning System (ALS), Point of Sale (PoS) data and analytics tools ensure the reliability of sales projections and the stability of the supply chain.

ii) **Integrated Business Planning Drives Transparency:** Organizations can increase the overall level of transparency in their operations by using advanced planning tools.

iii) **Digital Technologies Enable Effective Management of Information Flow:** Digital technologies can be used to streamline the information flow among the processes in an organization.

iv) **Digital Tools Help Overcome Information Paucity:** Availability of information at right time is crucial in decision-making. With digitization, information will be readily available which may not be possible with traditional systems. Also, information asymmetries are reduced.

v) **Digital Tools Enable Effective Scheduling of Field Force:** Digital tools eliminate the guesswork that is inherent in manual operations. Work assignments can be performed more efficiently as the real-time data is available with digitization.

Example: Digital Operational Excellence for Process Automation

PharmaEasy - A leading healthcare supplier, developed a Cloud Based Digital Systems replacing their existing legacy e-commerce and order management systems. It has helped to have a centrally synchronized database to provide realtime inventory sights. Online/Mobile Access has helped the supplier to increase digital channel utilisation by 35% and about 35-40% jump in customer orders.

Source: Compunnel Digital, 2022, https://www.compunneldigital.com/transformations/digital-operational-excellence Digital Operational Excellence – Compunnel Digital, Accessed on 9th September, 2022

21.9 Benefits of Social Media for Business Operations

Social media is one of the core elements of SMACS. The social media such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, etc., bring many benefits not only to individuals but also to organizations and huge establishments in their various operations. Organizations such as McKinsey, Boston Consulting Group, and Bain & Co have the social media presence and they post their business research insights on the social media sites. Organizations such as Sony, Colgate, Dabur, ICICI and Ultratech Cements have the Facebook presence.

Example: The Importance of Social Media in Business

Belkin is an accessories market leader delivering smart solutions for a broad range of consumer electronics and enterprise environments. Belkin did a campaign on popular social media platform Instagram in which they asked their customers to personalize their mobile phone cases in their own unique way and share the pictures on Instagram. Many customers were excited enough to share their personalized mobile phone cases with the right hashtags.Using this campaign Belkin could reachout to targeted segment of customers and a good number of conversions at zero costs. Thus, social media marketing can prove to be really cost-effective in the long run, if done right.

Source: Lyfe Marketing, Keran Smith - June 13, 2022. https://www.lyfemarketing.com/blog/importance-social-media-business/ Accessed on 24/06/2022

Check Your Progress - 6

9. Which of the following is not true regarding organizations adopting digital strategies to streamline business operations?
    a. Maximize transparency
    b. Offer better coordination
    c. Involve higher installation and maintenance cost
    d. Offer information flow
    e. Provide business intelligence

10. What is a Digital strategy?
    a. Is the process of identifying, digitizing and executing on digital opportunities
    b. Is the process of identifying, articulating and digitizing on digital opportunities
    c. Is the process of identifying, articulating and executing digital opportunities
    d. Is the process of digitizing, articulating and executing digital opportunities
    e. Is the process of identifying, digitizing, articulating and executing on digital opportunities

21.10 Summary

- Use of social, mobile, analytics and cloud technologies for business operations has transformed the reach and scope of digital businesses globally. Convergence of these technologies has revolutionized the business and society, and it creates new opportunities to explore.
- Cloud computing provides a new paradigm for accessing business resources. It helps organizations to create, organize, manage and use IT-enabled business services on-demand. These resources are made available from optimal sources leading to maximum utilization and cost-effectiveness.
- Operations in an organization would be more meaningful when they are cloud-enabled as they provide better forecasting and inventory management, along with automated backups and help streamline the marketing activities.
- This unit deals with technological convergence needed and SMACS technology adoption for improving operations in an organization. It also discusses the benefits of analytics for business in an organization.

21.11 Glossary

Big Data Analytics: Big data analytics is the process of examining large datasets which constitutes a variety of heterogeneous data types to identify hidden patterns, market trends, customer preferences and useful information.

Customer Relationship Management: Customer Relationship Management (CRM) is a process that refers to practices, strategies and technologies used by the organization to manage and analyze customer interactions during the customer lifecycle.

Digital Strategies: It is a plan for maximizing the business outcomes in terms of business operations with the help of technology-focused initiatives. A successful digital strategy requires leadership, vision, motivation and availability of information technology (IT) solutions for use.

Market Research: Market research is the systematic gathering and interpretation of information about individuals or organizations using the statistical and analytical methods and techniques of the applied sciences to gain insight or support decision making.

Operational Intelligence: Operational Intelligence (OI) is a form of real-time dynamic, business analytics that delivers insights into business operations and can be viewed using a dashboard. OI makes use of live feeds and event data to deliver real-time visibility and insights into the business. This information can be used for sending alerts, triggering business processes and enabling executive decision-making in an organization.

21.12 Self-Assessment Test

1. Briefly discuss the role of social media in business operations with suitable examples.
2. Define the term Operational Intelligence (OI). Discuss its purpose in finance, sales and marketing sectors.
3. Describe the impact of cloud computing on product design, manufacturing and sales.
4. Explain the following terms:
   a. Digital strategy
   b. Automated backup and updates
5. 'Cloud' enablement helps to ease business operations. If yes, support your answer with relevant examples.

21.13 Suggested Readings / Reference Material

1. Rodney Heisterberg and Alakh Verma (April 2022). "Creating Business Agility: How Convergence of Cloud, Social, Mobile, Video and Big Data Enables Competitive Advantage," Narrated by Stephen Graybill.
2. Jonathan S Walker (2021). Social Media Marketing For Beginners - How To Make Money Online: Guaranteed Strategies To Monetizing, Mastering, & Dominating Any Platform For Your Brand, JW Choices.
3. Barry Connolly (2020). Digital Trust: Social Media Strategies to Increase Trust and Engage Customers, Bloomsbury Business.
4. Seema Gupta (6 August 2020). Digital Marketing McGraw Hill; Second edition.
5. Tracy L. Tuten, Michael R (15 June 2020). Solomon et al, Social Media Marketing, SAGE Publications Pvt. Ltd; Third edition.
6. Paul Martin Thomas Erickson (2019). Social Media: Usage and Impact, Global Vision Publishing House, 2 edition.
7. Steve Randazzo (2019). Brand Experiences: Building Connections in a Digitally Cluttered World, Paipen publishing.

21.14 Answers to Check Your Progress Questions

1. (e) Business Intelligence

Business intelligence refers to examine and analyze large datasets to draw business insights for better decision-making.

2. (b) Sybase

Sybase Corporation is a database service provider and it does not offer any cloud-based services.

3. (e) Open-sourced service

All cloud implementations are not open-sourced, most of them follow the subscription model.

4. (e) Better service charges

Better forecast, Improved inventory, Streamline market collaboration, Refine customer service are possible changes.

5. (a) Real-time analysis of big data along with historical data to delivering business insights

Operational intelligence (OI) refers to the real-time analysis of big data along with historical data to delivering business insights.

6. (e) Compare and gauze different business scenarios, smarter procurement management and identify bad credits risks

Application of SMACS in finance area can compare and gauze different business scenarios, provide smarter procurement management, and identify bad credit risks.

7. (a) Outbound engagement

It refers to the practice of monitoring social network traffic for stakeholder intelligence (preferences, awareness, and sentiment) and using that knowledge to trigger next-best-action models that send finely targeted outbound response messages to the targeted customers.

8. (a) Improved brand image

Social media as a platform facilitates company processes and objectives, including customer relationship management, customer retention, customer base, market research, product marketing, cost control initiatives, public relations, and sales and recruiting.

9. (c) Involves higher installation and maintenance cost

Organizations adopting digital strategies do not incur much installation and maintenance cost.

10. (c) Is the process of identifying, articulating and executing on digital opportunities

Digital strategy is the process of identifying, articulating and executing on digital opportunities.

SMACS (Social, Mobile, Analytics, Cloud, and Security) Technologies for Business

Course Structure

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