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The impact of the communication strategy in achieving the competitive advantage of economic institutions

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Abstract:

The present study aims to research the impact of the communication strategy in achieving competitive advantage of service institutions, focusing on “Mobilis” Company case. Its main objectives is to identify the concept of communication strategy, address the axis of competitive advantage and determine the importance of communication strategy to achieve the competitive advantage. Concerning the practical part of the study, it has to deal with the case of “Mobilis” Company. As far as the research method is concerned, this study is conducted following the descriptive analytical method. The obtained results presented an important outcome, that is the fact that the competitive advantage cannot be achieved without the strategic planning of the communication.

Keywords: communication, strategy, competitive advantage, Mobilis company, environment.

Introduction:

Large competitive environment is needed to achieve excellence and distinction from other competitors. This is achieved by providing services to customers that exceed their expectations, where captivation has become more important than the services provided by the institution. The importance of communication processes lies in building a bridge of trust between the customer and the institution, in order to create a long-term relationship based on a solid foundation of loyalty, which is difficult to be influenced or imitated in any competitive environment. However, this is not immune to the construction of a communication strategy, to achieve the desired goals, whose mechanisms evolve according to the means of communication produced by modern technology in the public aiming to acquire it.

Any institution should look for communication strategies that suit the competitive environment, in a way that opens communication channels between the institution and its public. Any institution resorts to use its various materials, human, institutional and financial resources, in order to make structural and strategic decisions to achieve an advantage competitive aspect and occupying a competitive position suitable in the market, qualifying it to outperform its competitors within the sector in which it operates.

Based on the above, this research paper aims at revealing the role of the communication strategy to achieve the competitive advantage. In light of this, the problematic of the study is focused on the following question:

How does the communication strategy contribute to achieve the competitive advantage of Mobilis Company?

From the main question derives the following sub-questions:

- Why planning communication at the level of service institutions is so important?

- What are the levels of planning for an institution-wide communication strategy?
- What is the role-played by the communication strategy to achieve the competitive advantage of Mobilis Company?

Research methodology:

To fulfill the research objectives, the descriptive analytical approach is used in this study. To answer the problematic, we organized the research paper according to the following axes:

- Institution-wide communication strategy planning levels
- Factors governing competitive advantage
- The impact of the communication strategy on the competitive advantage of Mobilis Company.

To achieve the abovementioned objectives, we relied on the content analysis tool that is used to analize the content of a set of documents related to the company under study. The focus was on quantitative analysis based on an inventory of the main communication goals adopted by the institution, within its long-term strategic plan to create its own competitive advantage. We also relied on qualitative analysis to explain the quantitative results based on the institution's documents and website.

Firstly :Institution-wide Communication Strategy Planning Levels

1. Definition of Communication strategy:

Communication is the process of transmitting information through messages between the sender and the receiver, and communication is the process of passing information and understanding from one person to another. In other words, it is a process of transmitting and sharing ideas, opinions, facts, values etc. from one person to another or one institution to another.

Schirato and Yell (1997) proposed a definition based on this point of view. They simply define communication as "... the practice of producing and negotiating meanings, a practice which always takes place under specific social, cultural and political conditions (T.W. Burns, D.J. O'Connor, and S.M. Stocklmayer, 2003) The following terms are actually labels for established fields. As such, their meaning is defined, not so much by the definition of their component words, but by the aims of the field that they represent.

We can say based on the above that the communication is:

- An interactive process between several parties with common denominators in understanding their communication components.
- Implicit and structured process, which may be spontaneous or expressive using insinuations and other interaction methods.
- Exchange of meanings, information and data to achieve specific objectives such as: reporting, persuasion, influence.
- Communication is a manifestation of social behavior, where it requires more than one person to have a connection, it is necessary to find someone who sends information and someone else receives it without any confusion until the information reaches properly.

It is worth noting that communication has become more complex than before, and therefore the more is the need for communication for the human being, the more is the need for the development of new means and methods of communication, depending on the strategies and various means of planning that achieve the desired objectives.

Based on the above, the concept of communication strategy can be defined as a pattern related to a private social actor, for the symbolic institution of public space. The communication strategy is an organized and programmed format based on symbolic processes (speech, image, various demonstrations....) aimed at allowing the recipient to take the decision later expressed by the recipient with actual behavior, as the message received between the people starts circulating between them (Encyclopédie de Science de l'Information et de la Communication, 1997, p. 529).

Philip Kotler defines communication strategy as a way for the institution to create and maintain the narrow link between objectives and means on the one hand, and the potential available in the market on the other. It revolves in particular on how to identify and manage the activities chosen by the institution as an investment area (Kotler, 1999, p. 34). The communication strategy also means the art of managing the preparation group to reach the desired goal (Decaudin, 2003, pp. 39-46). A communication strategy should coincide with the general stages of aplanned change and the relevant associated information requirements (M.Klein, p. 36).

Based on that, we conclude that the aforementioned set of definitions agreed that the communication strategy is the intellectual effort that works on identifying and determining the various methods and operational procedures through which the communication system can achieve its integrated strategic role. This is by dealing with various future changes, and by harnessing the various communication and financial resources within the framework of the purposes and priorities that serve the institution and the public. Besides, it works on achieving integrated goals and objectives for an advanced and developed future, taking into account the various values, ideologies and philosophies that the society is following in order to obtain the desired results that shape the target image of the future society. Eventually, it is worth mentioning that all of the said above is influenced by the nature of the target purposes and the means by which they are achieved.

2. Communication Strategy Planning Levels:

The institution-wide communication strategy is divided into two main parts:

a. Internal communication strategy:

The internal communication strategy in the institution is the art of conducting and harmonizing and putting the various forms of communication in the institution in harmony in order to meet the objectives of public interest.

In fact, the internal communication strategy is the source of strategic management carried by the public administration, as it helps in preparing the identity of the institution and meeting its general objectives, knowing that communication within the institution has become more vital than information, and more recognized as a raw material for decision-making**.**

It is also necessary to think about the various internal communications in the company, and in the processes of its institution, especially at the level of large institutions. As the traditional methods are no longer sufficient to transmit information, and certainly cannot rely on arbitrary methods, which may lead to the failure of the institution. This of course depends on the nature of the sector to which the institution belongs, and the characteristics of its employees. This is why a scientific approach is needed in order to determine an internal communication strategy. (Westphalen, 2001, p. 65). In particular, internal communication is intended as a set of interactive processes aimed at generating the two catalytic intangible resources that makes a company work: knowledge to fuel working processes and employee active allegiance (Alessandra , p. 2). Knowledge and active allegiance are among the intangible resources at the

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basis the competitive advantage of the company (Barney.J.B, 1991, p. 99). In terms of the goals of internal corporate communication, they are as follows:

– Contributing to internal relationships characterised by the employees commitment;
– Promoting a positive sense of belonging in employees;
– Developing their awareness of environmental change; and,
– Developing their understanding of the need for the organisation to evolve its aims in response to or in anticipation of environmental change.
– Developing their understanding of the need for the organisation to evolve its aims in response to, or in anticipation of, environmental change.

b. External Communication Strategy:

The external communication strategy is an integrated program and a line in terms of methods and means of communication, aimed at introducing the target public to the institution and its product and trying to influence their opinions to make them prefer them to other competing institutions (Merlin, 2000, p. 27). The external communication strategy can be seen as a scheme that contains a set of communication interventions capable of making necessary changes in knowledge, opinions, trends, beliefs and behaviors at the target public level, in order to solve problems according to a specific period with an eye on Consideration of available resources. The Goals of internal corporate communication:

- Satisfy the needs and desires of customers by providing goods and services that respond to these needs and desires.
- Provide the public with facts about their activities, their effectiveness and access to feedback.
- Concluding agreements between the relevant parties for mutual benefits.
- Reconciling the interests of all parties related to organized activities, which are to satisfy the wishes, needs and profits of the owners of the institution, and then the well-being of the community.
- Develop programs that fit the overall objectives of the institution and introduce the services it performs.
- Correct misconceptions about the institution and fight rumors that affect.
- Creating cooperative relationships between the foundation and other institutions.

Secondly: Factors Governing Competitive Advantage

Competitive advantage is that critical strategic element that provides a fundamental opportunity for the institution to achieve continuous profitability compared to its competitors, where many institutions quickly create new advantages to avoid competing institutions imitating or simulating their current competitive advantages, for this reason it tends to create competitive advantages of high ranking, in order to maintain its competitive performance.

1. Definition of Competitive Advantage:

Competitive advantages are conditions that allow a company or country to produce a good or service of equal value at a lower price or in a more desirable fashion. These conditions allow the productive entity to generate more sales or superior margins compared to its market rivals (TWIN, 2019). A competitive advantage is what makes an entity's goods or services superior to all of the other choices of a customer. The term is commonly used for businesses. The strategies work for any institution, country, or individual in a competitive environment. Thereofre, to create a competitive advantage, we have to be aware of these three determinants.

Competitive advantage is a unique advantage of the company over the competitors it acquires, which provides consumers with greater prices, either by reducing prices or by providing more services that justify high prices. An institution that has a competitive advantage implements its strategies when competitors are unable to repeat it or find it too expensive if imitated. The institution can be confident that its strategy has resulted in one or more competitive advantages, only if the efforts exerted by competitors to replicate its strategies have failed to keep up with the speed of competitors to repeat the strategy determining the continuity of the competitive aspect of the company (Bordes, 2009, p. 3). Competitive advantage can be defined as the unique characteristics that distinguish the business from its current and potential competitors (Alderson, 1995, p. 193) .It also means that the new features that business institutions get, which put them in a position of continuing to maintain the relationship with their competitors (Diskon, denisi A, 1992, p. 69).

2. Continuous competitive advantage factors :

The most important factors in the continuity of competitive advantage are as follows:

a. Total Quality Management: Total quality management (TQM) is the continual process of detecting and reducing or eliminating errors in manufacturing, streamlining supply chain management, improving the customer experience, and ensuring that employees are up to speed with training. Total quality management aims to hold all parties involved in the production process accountable for the overall quality of the final product or service (Barone).

b. Technological Development: Technological development has a great importance, especially because the industrial environment and the market define permanent mobility and instability. Competing institutions in various fields do not wait for different changes to occur to react to them, but rather they participate and speak for themselves for change. For this reason, the technological development plays a master role for the continuity of any institution in a competitive environment. The institution shall prepare itself to adapt to the competitive environment through technical, commercial as well as institutional innovations. Most institutions resort to adopt a strategy that includes technological innovation in order to create a new offer aiming at continuing its competitive aspect (Darbelet, 1998, p. 33). This is because it has an impact on costs, price and the image of the institution, as it often reduces costs. Therefore, it puts the institution in a good competitive position at its prices and the quality of its products.

c. Competitive Vigilance: Competitive vigilance is the only way to collect sufficient information that exists in the competitive environment, as it relates to the careful and rigorous follow-up of the movements of competitors. Therefore, competitive aspect is the activity through which the institution recognizes its current and potential competitors. It is also interested in the environment in which it develops. The competition firm and competitive vigilance bring the institution closer to its environment and introduce it by providing the necessary information about different competitors in many aspects in terms of their products, competitive strategies, marketing and commercial as well as used technology and prices.

3. Principal Strategies of Competitive Advantage:

Competition strategies are a whole set of actions that result in a continuous and continuous advantage over competitors, and Porter Porter (1985) considered that in the long-term the extent to which the firm is able to create a defensible position in an industry is a major determinant of the success with which it will out-perform its competitors. He proposed generic strategies by which a firm can develop a competitive advantage and create a defensible position. These strategies are: overall cost leadership, differentiation, and focus (Yamin, A. Gunasekaran, T. Mavondo, 1999, p. 509).

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a. Overall Cost Leadership: The key advantage of the institution achieved by applying this strategy is to get a better position comparing to its competitors, in terms of competition about price, as well as occupying an excellent competitive position. This helps in achieving effective competitive performance that enables it to lower the price and face the attack of competitors.The purpose of this strategy is that the company offers low cost products. Cost driving strategy is carried out through experience, investment in production facilities and careful maintenance, as well as monitoring total operating costs through volume reduction and quality management (Valipour, Birjandi and Honarba, p. 15).

b. Differentiation: The differentiation strategy keeps the institution safe from competitors' attacks because customers are fulfilling its brand, and the institution achieves a better competitive advantage and for a longer time if it uses this strategy, based on technical excellence, quality, and greater assistance to the consumer and a more valuable product for the consumer. For the amount paid. Andréa Grimm and Astim Mulschniger each provide six components of the differentiation strategy (Grimm, Malschiger, 2010, pp. 5-8):

- Product Differentiation Strategy: What does your product offer for products in the same category?
- Unique Characteristics Strategy: According to this strategy consumers are persuaded to buy products as they get another product offered to them in other words the products have a unique function not available in competing products.
- Premium Price Strategy: This product strategy that has the same characteristics or features as other competing products, however, if you buy an X product you get two at the same price.
- Strategy offers premium and that means a place in the private market, which is very different in the overall market in terms of products.
- Strategy differentiation through services referes to the fact that the product is not changed but provides additional services; the latter are an incentive for consumers to buy the product.
- Product recognition strategy through direct contact: Lack of distinctive product recipes can be compensated through direct contact with consumers.

c. Focus: Focus refers to the choice of the institution for areas and limits of its activity to achieve a better competitive advantage, such as products, customers, markets; so it differs from the previous two strategies in terms of depending on the service of part of the market and not the whole of it. The basic idea of this strategy is to choose a limited competitive field within the industry in which the company operates, and then use the entry points to achieve competitive advantage in order to reach a better position in the market.

4. Study and Analysis of the Competitive Environment:

The analysing process of the competitive environment is important in the management of modern institutions. The latter are existing within an environment experiencing many marketing clashes and different defense strategies of competition; so it was necessary for the institution to try to monitor the movements and actions of its competitors and compare their products, prices, distribution outlets and ways of promoting them. This is to identify strengths and weaknesses so that they can activate their competitive performance through marketing and communication strategies worthy of standing up to competitors. A competitive environment is those factors and internal and external variables (whether they can be measured or not) that fall within or outside the regulatory boundaries and affect the effectiveness and efficiency of competitive performance.

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a. Analysis of the External Environment of the Institution and the Powers Affecting it:

The analysis and evaluation of the external environment of the institution is a necessary step to be taken to shape the mission of this institution. The latter draws limits to the external environment that it will deal with, by knowing the opportunities that can be seized and the threats surrounding it; therefore, the institution must study and analyze the external environment by monitoring the positive variables that occur in them. As well as opportunities that can be exploited for the benefit of the institution, and monitoring the negative changes that pose threats to the institution, as the strategic management focuses on collecting information about changes in the internal and external environment, and not just the internal environment.

The success of the institution depends strategically on how well it adapts to the external environment, in a way that increases the degree of its use of opportunities and increases its ability to resist the threats surrounding it. It is worth noting that knowing the positive or negative changes taking place in the external environment is necessary, in addition to determining the degree of attractiveness of the institutions. Current and expected, as well as identifying the success factors that reflect the skill of the institution and the analysis of the external environment of the institution can be done based on the following models:

- **Competitive Porter's Model of the Five Powers:** It is important for the institution to determine its position for competitors, and this requires the identification of the forces that affect the competition, and the status of the institution for it. Porter recognized that the institutions are likely to keep a close watch on their rivals, but he encouraged them to look beyond the actions of their competitors and examine how other factors could affect the business environment. He identified five forces that make up the competitive environment, and which can erode your profitability. These are (mind tools):
- **Competitive Rivalry.** This looks at the number and strength of your competitors. How many rivals do you have? Who are they, and how does the quality of their products and services compare with yours?

  Where rivalry is intense, companies can attract customers with aggressive price cuts and high-impact marketing campaigns. In addition, in markets with lots of rivals, your suppliers and buyers can go elsewhere if they feel that they are not getting a good deal from you.

  On the other hand, where competitive rivalry is minimal, and no one else is doing what the others do, then they will likely have tremendous strength and healthy profits.
- **Supplier Power:** This is determined by how easy it is for your suppliers to increase their prices. How many potential suppliers do you have? How unique is the product or service that they provide, and how expensive would it be to switch from one supplier to another?

  The more you have to choose from, the easier it will be to switch to a cheaper alternative, but the fewer suppliers there are, and the more you need their help, the stronger their position and their ability to charge you more. That can influence your profit.
- **Buyer Power:** Here, you ask yourself how easy it is for buyers to drive down your prices. How many buyers are there, and how big are their orders? How much would it cost them to switch from your products and services to those of a rival? Are your buyers strong enough to dictate terms to you?

  When you deal with only a few perceptive customers, they have more power, but your power increases if you have many customers.

- **Threat of Substitution:** This refers to the likelihood of your customers finding a different way of doing what you do. For example, if you supply a unique software product that automates an important process, people may substitute it by doing the process manually or by outsourcing it. A substitution that is easy and cheap to make can weaken your position and threaten your profitability.
- **Threat of New Entry:** Your position can be affected by people's ability to enter your market. So, think about how easily this could be done. How easy is it to get a foothold in your industry or market? How much would it cost, and how tightly is your sector regulated? .If it takes little money and effort to enter your market and compete effectively, or if you have little protection for your key technologies, then rivals can quickly enter your market and weaken your position. If you have strong and durable barriers to entry, then you can preserve a favorable position and take fair advantage of it.

- **Pestel Model :** This model is a tool for evaluating the perimeter of the institution (Vandercarmmen, 2006, p. 269), A PESTEL analysis or PESTLE analysis (formerly known as PEST analysis) is a framework or tool used to analyse and monitor the macro-environmental factors that may have a profound impact on an organisation's performance. This tool is especially useful when starting a new business or entering a foreign market. It is often used in collaboration with other analytical business tools such as the SWOT analysis and Porter's Five Forces to give a clear understanding of a situation and related internal and external factors. PESTEL is an acronym that stand for Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Environmental and Legal factors. However, throughout the years people have expanded the framework with factors such as Demographics, Intercultural, Ethical and Ecological resulting in variants such as STEEPLED, DESTEP and SLEPIT, Each factor will be elaborated on below (https://www.business-to-you.com/):
- **Political Factors:** These factors are all about how and to what degree a government intervenes in the economy or a certain industry. Basically all the influences that a government has on your business could be classified here. This can include government policy, political stability or instability, corruption, foreign trade policy, tax policy, labour law, environmental law and trade restrictions. Furthermore, the government may have a profound impact on a nation's education system, infrastructure and health regulations. These are all factors that need to be taken into account when assessing the attractiveness of a potential market.
- **Economic Factors:** Economic factors are determinants of a certain economy's performance. Factors include economic growth, exchange rates, inflation rates, interest rates, disposable income of consumers and unemployment rates. These factors may have a direct or indirect long-term impact on a company, since it affects the purchasing power of consumers and could possibly change demand/supply models in the economy. Consequently, it also affects the way the companies set the price of their products and services.
- **Social Factors:** This dimension of the general environment represents the demographic characteristics, norms, customs and values of the population within which the institution operates. This inlcudes population trends such as the population growth rate, age distribution, income distribution, career attitudes, safety emphasis, health consciousness, lifestyle attitudes and cultural barriers. These factors are especially important for marketers when targeting certain customers. In addition, it also says something about the local workforce and its willingness to work under certain conditions.

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- **Technological Factors:** These factors pertain to innovations in technology that may affect the operations of the industry and the market favorably or unfavorably. This refers to technology incentives, the level of innovation, automation, research and development (R&D) activity, technological change and the amount of technological awareness that a market possesses. These factors may influence decisions to enter or not enter certain industries, to launch or not launch certain products or to outsource production activities abroad. By knowing what is going on technology world, you may be able to prevent your company from spending a lot of money on developing a technology that would become obsolete very soon due to disruptive technological changes elsewhere.
- **Environmental Factors:** Environmental factors have come to the forefront only relatively recently. They have become important due to the increasing scarcity of raw materials, polution targets and carbon footprint targets set by governments. These factors include ecological and environmental aspects such as weather, climate, environmental offsets and climate change, which may especially affect industries such as tourism, farming, agriculture and insurance. Furthermore, growing awareness of the potential impacts of climate change is affecting the way companies operate, and the products they offer. This has led to many companies getting more and more involved in practices such as corprate social responsibility (CSR) and sustainability.
- **Legal Factors:** Although these factors may have some overlap with the political factors, they include more specific laws such as discrimination laws, antitrust laws, employment laws, consumer protection laws, copyright and patent laws, and health and safety laws. It is clear that companies need to know what is and what is not legal in order to trade successfully and ethically. If an organisation trades globally this becomes especially tricky since each country has its own set of rules and regulations. In addition, you want to be aware of any potential changes in legislation and the impact it may have on your business in the future. It is recommended to have a legal advisor or attorney to help you with these kind of things.

b. Analysis of the Internal Environment of the Institution:

Analysis of the internal environment of the institution means the analysis of internal factors, which are represented in the various functions of the institution, with the aim of assessing the physical, human and moral capabilities available to the institution and identifying weaknesses, so that they can be overcome. Internal environment analysis is one of the most important activities that businesses must undertake in order to sustain, develop and exist for a long time in a sustainable perspective. Internal environment analysis is important because it can show us the existing threats as well as demonstrate the strengths of the business or the characteristics of the business which can have potential strengths (KALAYCI, DURU, Erkan AKYÜREK, TOYGAR)**.** The internal environment contains all the elements that constitute the factors originating within the operator and which are largely influenced and fully controlled by these factors. The internal review should answer all questions about the resource, resolve all resource management issues and represent the first step in the formulation of the marketing strategy. All these components constitute a "value chain". Value-chain analysis is based on the link between company resources and competitive position and explores how these components contribute to profitability (KALAYCI, DURU, Erkan AKYÜREK, TOYGAR).

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Table 1: Factors used in the internal cycle analysis

Subsystems	Description
Management	It is discussed whether the existing management system is successful, what qualities are possessed by managers, and whether the current management needs improvement in the analyzed health institution.
Human Resources	The analysis focuses on the number and quality of personnel working in the health care institution analyzed, whether there is a problem in finding new staff, what level of productivity is available? How the level of staff attendance is?
Finance	The analysis focuses on whether the economic resources of the health care institution are adequate, how financial performance is based on financial performance criteria, and whether there are budget deviations.
Marketing	The subjects such as insurance status and demographic characteristics of the patients in the health institution, and the place where they come from, are analyzed.
Institutional structure	Emphasis on whether there are problems in different departments and interdisciplinary relations in the analyzed health institution.
Corporate culture	Emphasis on whether the value systems and the behavioral characteristics of the staff are compatible in the analyzed health institution.
Physical opportunities	In the analyzed health institution, it is emphasized how the physical possibilities are and whether the existing building can be enlarged.
Information systems	Emphasis on whether the staff has knowledge about the clinical, managerial and financial information systems in the analyzed health institution.
Leadership	Emphasis on whether the leadership styles of upper, middle and lower level managers are appropriate in the analyzed health institution

Source: Erdinç KALAYCI, Serdarhan DURU et al. https://www.researchgate.net, 09/12/2019.

The internal environment includes factors that affect an institution's resources. The resources as sources of competences, some of which have led to the development of the company's core competencies or the development of competitive advantage. The internal and external environment must meet each other in the form of a competitive advantage of the business and a strategy that can generate profits above the average. The external environment can create opportunities and threats for an enterprise, but it can turn these opportunities and threats into competitive advantage by using internal environmental conditions, the capabilities of the business, unique resources and core competencies (KALAYCI, DURU, Erkan AKYÜREK, TOYGAR).

In addition to the basic elements included in the previous table in the analysis process of the internal environment, it is worth noting that the analysis of strengths and weaknesses is also important, based on the SWOT analysis of the company. It is one of the most famous analytical tools used in the analysis of the conditions of institutions. Indeed, it helps in the collection of information about the institution from various audits to help it take the right decisions. (http:// ar.shwoang.com/business-mangement/Marketing)

Based on the above, we can say that the analysis of both internal and external environment of the institution is the main pillar through which it can plan its basic strategies. Those that aim to stand up to competition achieve continuous profitability and gain a significant market share.

This situation is related to the ability of the institution to link internal analysis by identifying strengths and weaknesses, and external analysis by identifying areas of opportunity and risk.

Thirdly: The Impact of Communication Strategy on the Competitive Advantage of the Institution

A communications strategy is one of the most effective means of developing a distinct competitive advantage for an institution, but many managers are unsure of how to go about it. Such strategies are often viewed in terms of their individual parts: marketing, branding, employee engagement, etc. While these are all important activities, they do not fully represent a complete communications strategy **(**http://clearlogic.ca).

1. **Effective Communication Elements on the Competitive Advantage :**

A comprehensive strategy takes into account all the ways in which an institution communicates, both internally and externally. In general, a corporate communications plan (http://clearlogic.ca):

- Is implemented at the management level
- Includes activities that build and maintain mutually beneficial relationships between an institution and its stakeholders
- Helps an institution understand how to balance financial performance with social expectations
- Facilitates achievement of the corporate vision and mission

An institution that wants to build an effective communications strategy should consider these important trends (http://clearlogic.ca):

- The increasing need for transparency in corporate communications to scrutiny by the media and the public.
- The rising popularity of social media and its business implications.
- Changing workplace demographics and its affect on employee engagement.
- Changing demographics outside the workplace and the way it could affect external communication (e.g. recruitment, advertising, etc.).

Based on the key variables mentioned above that control the construction of a communication strategy that is effective for achieving competitive advantage, the planning of the communication process revolves around several important elements (Nwabueze,Mileski, 2018, pp. 54-56):

2. **Increasing efficiency:**

Three primary means to improve efficiency-utilizing communication include superior interpersonal communication, effective use of information and the effective use of communication technologies. The efficiency of an institution is increased by utilizing a minimal quantity of resources to produce quality products for customers. This would include the right mix of “soft” and “hard” information gathering, a resource that contributes towards improving an institution’s efficiency and effectiveness in satisfying customer needs that should be identified as a source of competitive advantage. The Good institutional communication, particularly interpersonal communication, is, in turn, vital to efficiently utilizing human and raw material resources. Further, ICT makes the availability of information pervasive, thereby decreasing uncertainty in a business environment and improving efficiency. ICT also allows companies to understand the needs of the customer and gain insights about their competitors. This information, in turn, allows companies to build their strategy, communicate these strategies with people within the institution and implement action roadmaps, and track success and performance.

3. Enabling Innovation:

Communication or its lack can either drive or stall innovative and creative solutions within an institution. Research conducted by Gilley, Dixon, and Gilley (2008) examine the skills and behavior of leadership and management with respect to change and innovation. In particular, they investigate whether the leaders were able to implement effectively change within their institutions by asking employees to evaluate how frequently leaders coached, rewarded, communicated, motivated, and encouraged teamwork and collaboration among employees. The results of the study confirm that the inability to communicate and motivate were the primary causes of institutional failure. The research also shows that the ability to communicate interpersonally appropriately and motivate others influences a leader’s ability to effectively implement change and drive innovation. In order to be viable in a highly competitive environment, institutions should be able to anticipate, adapt, and execute change successfully.

4. Improving customer response:

Increased competition results in an increase in the number of choices available to customers. Even when products are satisfactory customers may shop around either to find a better bargain or sometimes merely for change. Raman, Wittmann, and Rauseo (2006) identify customer relationship management as a valuable tool to increase sales effectiveness, and therefore, consider it an advantage-producing resource. Customer relationship management through direct superior interpersonal communication in call center and web site communication, in gathering good “soft” and “hard” data on customers, and in the appropriate use of ICT through wireless communication enable institutions to develop meaningful relationships with their clients **(**Dumitrescu, 2009, pp. 255-206**)**. As well as a prerequisite for attracting and retaining satisfied customers, a measure of global competitive advantage, is communication.

5. Enhancing Public Relations:

An institution's reputation, profitability, and even its continued existence can depend on the degree to which the public supports its goals and policies. A good reputation, in turn, can enhance competitive advantage. Public relations specialists, also referred to as communications specialists, serve as advocates for an institution seeking to build and maintain positive relationships with the public. Public relations specialists handle institutional functions such as media, community, consumer relations, political campaigns, and conflict mediation. Public relations specialists must understand the attitudes and concerns of the community, consumer, employee, and public interest groups to establish and maintain cooperative relationships. Therefore, it would be prudent for the public relations specialist to engage in superior interpersonal communication and provide the stakeholders with the right mix of “soft” and “hard” information through the appropriate use of ICT.

In building a competitive advantage, companies need to recognize that information is power; therefore, broadening access to information and increasing transparency will influence the productivity, viability, and long-term success of a company (Tucker et al, 1973). We have focused on increasing efficiency, enabling innovation and enhancing public relations (corporate image). Figure 3 summarizes these and some additional key facets to achieving a competitive advantage such as customer satisfaction, supply chain synergy, and social responsibility shown in the innermost circle. Key stakeholders such as employees, customers, suppliers, partners, and the general public are shown in the outermost circle. The communication strategies that stakeholders can employ to achieve greater competitive advantage are shown in the middle circle.

2. Communication Strategy Objectives in a Competitive Environment:

The communication strategy plays a critical role in achieving the competitive advantage of the economic institution and working on its sustainability, as it can achieve a set of objectives at the following levels:

a. At the Internal Level of the Institution :

For the institution to achieve a competitive advantage in its field of activity and give a positive image to it, it must be launched from its internal environment and the need to focus on the good performance of internal functions, based on an internal communication strategy. This is due to its importance in influencing the modification of the mental characteristics of individuals directly, and their importance is shown in various administrative functions, especially when it comes to supervision, guidance and decision-making. Actually, they must be provided with information on a continuous basis, both inside and outside the institution, so that the administration involves continuous communication processes in order to achieve the overall objectives of the institution. A strong communications strategy will ensure that your message is received and understood by your intended public. Furthermore, According to Lee Froschheiser, the president and CEO of Map Consulting (MAP), the six basic functions of management are leading, planning, organizing, staffing, controlling and communicating. Froschheiser states that having a clear communication strategy ties these functions together and is the most important quality in great leadership. A written communication strategy is a document that states your objectives, your goals, identifies your public, offers tools and a timetable, and plans evaluations. A communication strategy encompasses all forms of communication (Mireles, 2017)**.**

b. At the External Level of the Institution :

The external communication strategy is one of the modern trends in marketing thought, because it is one of the main activities in the field of marketing of goods and services and stand up to competition. It also highlights the fundamental importance of the communication strategy and it lines integrated programs and methods of communication that identifies the target public, the institution and its products and try to influence their opinions to make the public prefer their institution rather than the other competing institutions.

c. Creating a Positive Institutional Image:

The image of the institution is one of the most important elements on which the institution depends in its communication strategies with the public, by delivering the appropriate message in order to achieve a competitive advantage. The image of the institution can achieve the legitimacy of the institution before the authority, government and civil society, through from mere business transactions, to becoming a social and political actor and not just an economic one. Institutional image refers to people's global impressions of an institution; it is defined as people's loose structures of knowledge and beliefs about an institution. Institutional image represents the net cognitive reactions and associations of customers, investors, employees, and applicants to an institution's name. Accordingly, it serves as a template to categorize, store, and recall institution-related information (https://psychology.iresearchnet.com/). The image contributes to create a distinct identity through which the customer is guided in his choices and opinions. If the competing products or services have similar characteristics, the customer will go with the image he perceives about the product, mark or institution.

Fothly- The Results of the Field Study

Mobilis Company is working to improve its external image. It was not satisfied with the quality of its network, its coverage of the entire national territory, and its competitive prices. It also directed its attention towards improving its image and identity, by paying attention to the institution's colors by using the green color instead of the blue that used to be the mail and transportation, as it aims to the use of green color to embody the four values of the customer: transparency, loyalty, vitality and creativity.

It pledges to be always close to its subscribers and to provide higher quality services, as well as a social commitment to ensure sustainable development.

The Company works to ensure the delivery of its message to all its employees and customers alike, with the aim of spreading an image of a national institution in the service of the country and the citizen, by focusing on a symbolic-style communication strategy.

Table 02: Objectives of Mobilis Company through Communication Planning

Objective	Repetition	Percentage (%)
Motivating the customer to buy	15	31.91
Raising the services level	12	25.53
Finding new customers in new markets	6	12.76
Create a positive image and a good reputation	14	29.78

Source: Prepared by the researcher based on the company’s documents

We notice from Table 02 that the main objectives that the institution seeks to achieve through communication planning is to motivate the customer to buy with a percentage of 31,91%. Then, followed by creating a positive image and a good reputation 29.78 %. Then, raise the level of services by 25,53%. Finally, finding new customers in new markets by 12.76%. This indicates that the institution attaches great importance to winning customers through stimulating purchases and acquiring a significant market share, especially as it is active in a competitive environment through communication planning.

Table 03: The Importance of Promotional Communication in Raising the Competitive Aspect of the Institution

Promotional communication	Repetition	Percentage (%)
Advertisement	25	31,64
Public relations	20	25,31
Sponsor	18	22,78
Free gifts and services	16	20,25

Source: Prepared by the researcher based on the company’s documents

The results of Table No (03) show: that the institution relies on a mixture of promotional communications, where publicity came in the forefront with a percentage of 31.64% then public relations came with a percentage of 25,31%, then sponsorship with an estimated percentage 22 ,78%, and in the last we find gifts and services with an estimated percentage 20 ,25%.

By reviewing the company's documents, we could see that Mobilis Company relies on its own communication strategy, which includes both the internal and external aspects, as the competitive environment made it imperative for mobile phone subsidiaries to adopt tight communication strategies aiming at attracting the customer and achieving the basic goals they set. Hence, we can see a difference and distinction in the nature of the communication strategies used by the competing institutions, as Mobilis Company has its own. It embodied the image of the historical national dealer, especially when it used national flag colors and the price of its own symbol. It is working hard to improve its relationship with customers, and on designing programs to reward customers for their loyalty.

Conclusion:

To conclude, communication strategy plays a master role in achieving the competitive advantage of the institution, especially the one that exists within an environment characterized by a demanding public and fierce competition. Actually, the most attractive institution is no longer the one who offers the best product in terms of quality or even the lowest price, rather, the one who can reach the public faster and cheaper. Consequently, building a communication strategy is a necessity to confront competing institutions, satisfy and attract the customers.

Communication is an integral part of the strategic success of the service institution. It cannot only achieve competitive advantage but also its sustainability and continuity. The communication strategy is the distinctive factor through which it is achieved the customer satisfaction, employee engagement and motivation. Innovation and efficiency are also achieved, adding to the presentation of social responsibility during crises, as well as protecting the institution from unfair rules and regulations.

The communication strategy, that aims to achieve competitive advantage, must be based on the studied foundations and scientific methods. It helps the institution to present itself to its internal and external public, alike and gain their trust. It also works on creating an interactive and transparent institutional culture aiming at overcoming communication problems. The good image of the institution is established as the latter works on creating a distinct identity, as it is very important to determine the future of the competitive activity of the institution.

Concerning Mobilis Company, the study resulted in the fact that Mobilis studies its internal and external public to determine its strengths and weaknesses, and to search for various means to strengthen its information sources, and its ability to defend and attack to own the largest share of the market, by planning communication strategies that enable it to do so.

The main role of the communication strategy adopted by Mobilis Company is to raise its competitive performance. This is demonstrated by the strong impact of all elements of the communication on the competitive aspect of the institution, raising the market share and increasing the profits of the institution. The latter uses communication with its customers to improve constantly its external image, confirmimg its presence in various events. As a result, studying and analyzing its image is a prerequisite for the institution to create a positive image in a competitive environment.

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