Codification of Marketing strategies, with Emphasis on Electronic Banking Agricultural Bank

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Abstract

Organizations can improve its current situation with using strategies step-by-step, gradually and they achieve to their desired position in the further. Unless an unfavorable situation is suddenly imposed on the organization. The success or failure of an organization depends on only the type of the managers’ attitude as well as their performance. Conditions of the circumstances are certainly impressive, but it could not lead to the disclaimer of the organization’s owners and managers. Strategic management and its methods and techniques could help the organization's managers for directing in the future of an organization (Yaghobi & et al: 2012).

The meaning of the strategy is the prediction of the future and planning it. Strategy consists a series of making decisions regarding to the conditions of the events that may occur in the future. In the majority of cases, the strategy is the confrontation with the new situation or response to the new circumstances.

Keywords: Marketing strategies, Electronic Banking, Codification.
Introduction

Organizations can improve its current situation with using strategies step-by-step, gradually and they achieve to their desired position in the further. Unless an unfavorable situation is suddenly imposed on the organization. The success or failure of an organization depends on only the type of the managers’ attitude as well as their performance. Conditions of the circumstances are certainly impressive, but it could not lead to the disclaimer of the organization’s owners and managers. Strategic management and its methods and techniques could help the organization's managers for directing in the future of an organization (Yaghobi & et al: 2012).

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Strategic management includes also the set of managerial decisions and measures that could determine a long-term performance in an organization and in other words, the strategic management consists the review of the situation, codification and implementation strategy, evaluation, and control (Armstrong, 2007).

Perhaps the competition in the free market is the most important reason for the existence strategy in the economic organizations of the private sector. The Competition or the hostility between the two governments could form the basis of their strategy. The strategies between the enterprises and governmental organizations is different, because an enterprise is primarily following its benefits and adopts the strategies that is based on competition with the rival organizations. But, a governmental organization needs often the solution-oriented. According to the nature of its services. Basically, the most important part of strategic discussions, is "explanation the weaknesses and shortcomings, strengths, opportunities and threats.” The managers and planners analyze the political assumptions, for example the conditions that will be added to these conditions and situations in the future, or the conditions that will be replaced them. Strategic thought means thinking correctly for making decision and searching an appropriate solution. Strategic thinking and strategic action are more important in every aspects and have higher priority than the strategic planning and they can also be effective and helpful without the non-strategic programs (Daft, 2006).

In the following, the marketing strategy will be studied and the new technology place in the marketing strategy of banks will be evaluated. For this purpose, it is necessary that the general marketing strategies are addressed firstly and then its role and position are specified in the codification of the Keshavarzi bank.

Generic Strategies

Michael Porter's books about the analysis of the competitive conditions had the most of readers. These books include: The Competitive Strategies, The Competitive Advantage and The competitive advantage of nations that all three of them published by the Free Press company, respectively in........., According to porter, the strategies allow to firms that they can use from the three different base of competitive advantage. Porter believes that three generic strategies can be selected:
- **Cost leadership strategy**: The aim of this strategy is, achievement of superiority in the competition via production at the lowest possible cost than to rivals’ costs. Thus, the proposed method of Porter is, production in the large volumes at the lower prices, which is commonly known as economies of scale. The company takes measures to produce and supply the standard product strategy, as a result the cost of the any single of production is reduced for the customer. It is particularly true in the case of a company with a higher rate of return than the average rate of the return in the industry and it has a strong competitive advantages. However, this strategy has often a close association with a large share of market or other privileged interests, so that the main features of this strategy are the appropriate access to the raw materials and adequate money for the purchase of the property and appropriate equipment.

- **Differentiation strategy**: According to the strategy, products and services are offered that they are considered as a unique product or service in the its industry. In the fact, the company manufactures a single product and starts for marketing it. The different way to achieve differentiation strategy is the development a unique form of career fields, the use of a unique technology and providing a unique service to customers or similar cases. In this strategy, achieving to competitive advantage is performed by manufacturing a unique product that is unique and has special properties in the customers’ view than with similar products. It should be noted that these products or services should be offered to customers who do not have so much sensitivity to the price.

- **Focus strategy**: This strategy focuses mainly to one or a few specific products or services (or buyers). The logic of this approach is based on the assumption that the focus on a market or a product leads to the more and accurate service in comparing to the firms with multiple markets. As a result, a competitive advantage will be obtained by this strategy than with the rivals (Kasaaiy.)

**Cost Leadership Strategies**

One of the main reasons for the implementation of the vertical strategies and horizontal integration is, achieving benefits and advantages in terms of the cost leadership. But the phenomenon of the cost leadership should apply along with the distinguishing the products and services. Many factors of the cost affect the relative attractiveness of public strategies that including:

- The economies of scale;
- The curves of learning and experience;
- The percentage of the used capacity and
- The relationship between the raw material suppliers and distributors of the made products

Other costs that should be considered when selecting strategies, consist the potential ability for cost-sharing in the costs and available skills or exciting knowledge within the organization, research and development costs related to the production and providing new products or modify existing products, wage costs, tax rates, energy and transportation costs.
In the following cases the company could produce and supply some products with a less prime cost in an industry:

- When there is not customers so much for distinguished products;
- When the market consisting of customers who are sensitive to price;
- When customers make no difference between products with different brands;
- When there are a large number of potential buyers with the potential abilities for bargaining in the market.

The aim is, offering the products in the market with a lower price than the competitors and thereby gaining much more share of the market and then trying to increase the sales until the competitors get out of the market altogether (Amirkabiri,)

Generally, if a company executes the cost leadership strategy successfully, this measure affects the entire organization, as a result, the mentioned company could achieve a very high efficiency, low overhead, tolerable waste, lateral benefits, extreme carefulness for giving the application of the budget, the broader scope of monitoring, reducing the maintenance costs and finally the massive participation of employees in efforts to control costs.

One of The implementation risks of the cost leadership strategy could be the rivals’ imitation of this strategy and thus, it leads to reduce the total benefits of a particular industry, and also the technological progresses in the particular industry lead to reduce the effectiveness of the mentioned strategy or the buyers pay attention to other features other than the price (Bezanko, et al., 2007).

Differentiation Strategies

Differentiation strategies in different strategies generate varying degrees of differentiation. Differentiate the products/services in some way does not mean that the use of the competitive benefits will be guaranteed, especially if the standard products can satisfy the customers' needs on a large scale or if the rival firms can quickly copy the distinct properties of a company. The competitor cannot quickly produce and offer the durable products. The purpose of the successful supply of differentiated products means that the company can:

- Provide more flexibility in terms of product offerings;
- Adapt itself to the changing conditions for obtaining a higher ability;
- Reduction the costs;
- Reduction the costs of the maintenance;
- Take more calm and have more properties.

Product development strategy, is a sample that the company could obtain via it the advantages from the implementation of the strategy, based on the differentiating the product. The companies can only perform the differentiation strategy, after a detailed study about the needs
and tastes of the buyers. In this regard, they need to distinguish products and offer a unique product to the market that has the needed features of the consumers. The company that can perform the differentiation strategy in some way successfully, can determine the product price higher than its competitors, because it relies on customer loyalty and the customer fascinated by the distinctive and unique features of this type of product (Bezanko & et al).

The using risk of the differentiation strategy is the possibility that when the company determines a very high price for its product, this price could not be justified by the customer. If this happens, the cost leadership strategy can defeat the differentiation strategy that it is based on to differentiate the products. Another risk that results from using differentiation strategy, is the possibility that competitors produce and offer another version of the same product with the same properties in different ways. Thus, companies should seek to achieve durable sources with the unique features, so that the competitors cannot achieve or copy them quickly and cheaply. The organizations can create harmony between marketing and R & D units, thereby differentiate strategies successfully and via providing the special facilities, they recruit the creative and talented scientists.

Focus strategies

The focus strategy focuses on a specific group of customers and it will be succeeded when a segment of the industry has the sufficient size and breadth as well as a potential growth and Finally, this success is not important for the major rivals. The strategies such as market penetration and market development are in a way that can use the advantage greatly from the focus on a particular group of customers. The large companies and those who are at an intermediate level can use the focus strategies only when they could combine this strategy with the cost leadership strategies in the costs and differentiating the product. In fact, all companies use somewhat the differentiation strategies. Since that only one company can offer excellent products at the lowest cost, compared with the products of its competitors in the same industry, the other companies should seek other ways for differentiating their products. The focus strategies for specified group will be affected greatly when the customers have very distinct tastes and the competitors are not trying to achieve the same segment of the market. (Bezanko & et al., 2007).

Competitive Advantage and Information Technology (IT)

An organization in order to achieve competitive advantage, must develop the necessary competence and capability. According to this issue, and others provided a step by step approach to create the electronic competence in the organization. Based on this approach an organization should pass these following steps in the order to create the electronic competence for the purposes of gaining the competitive advantage in the electronic business:

- **Existence the effective people:** With increasing competitive pressure in the digital economy, this point should be considered that the employees in the organization should be familiar with the new technologies and the knowledge of the effective use of technology skills in information technology.

- **Primary presence on the web:** An organization should design a special website and via the promotional tools such: business cards, advertisement letters, advertisement propaganda, road propaganda, the mass media and so on, introduces its website for its clients. A professional
and experienced team should be used for website design. The matters such as structured information, appropriate searching possibility on the website and instant access to information should be considered at the website.

- **Creating the Information structure**: to modify the internal processes and changing them to update the models and incorporating the cycle of buying and selling that including the customers, business partners, suppliers and employees on the Internet should be done by the organization. The organization also should coordinate other major systems of its business with the process of information infrastructure and should create the internal networks that thereby the employees can access to complete and necessary information at the time required.

- **The expanded organization**: in this phase, the amount of shared information is increased and the organization creates an external network and joins to the global networks such as the Internet and the web. In this phase, partners and customers can achieve to the company information structure by using the external networks.

- **Development in the Business**: Creating the external networks and accession to the World Wide Web is associated with the concept of community. At this phase, the organization should fit its website with the interests, preferences and demographic features of the customers and visitors of the website and it should create the ability to adapt and develop the capacity of increasing the website visitors. At this stage, the reengineering process should be undertaken and it be done to support the website for ensuring to achieving internal efficiency as well as it should be met the requirements and demands of the customers and partners.

- **Strategic development**: In this phase, the Internet and the Web become an inseparable and unified part of the organization and integrated business systems. The organization should rethink about the nature of the business organization at the phase of strategic development. Electronic competency is used for redefinition over the offered products as well as this competence is utilized to improve its relations with its customers and business partners. The organization can achieve a competitive advantage, if the proper implementation of this approach has been done and also the establishment of the necessary infrastructure. Achievement to the competitive advantage leads to the excellent performance compared to the competitors and consequently the market share, the reputation, reliability and sales rate of the organization are increased. In the long term, having the sustainable competitive advantage leads to growth and the healthy survival of an organization.

Porter (2010) states that due to the Internet's impact on the profitability, the organization should obtain the competitive advantage. From the Porter's perspective, the competitive advantage is gained via two ways: decreasing the operation costs (increasing efficiency) and achieve to the high prices. The combination of these two modes is also possible and practical to access the competitive advantage.

Another way to gain competitive advantage is the strategic positioning. The strategic positioning will be more vital with the difficulty in maintaining the operational advantages. If a company fails to achieve competitive advantage in terms of operational effectiveness, the competitive advantage could be gained with accession the superiority in price. Most companies determine the base of their competitive advantage over the e-commerce and its operational effectiveness, while considering the issues like customizing, wide after-sales services and the customer relationship management via the Internet will have better results.
There are four sources to achieve competitive advantage in the e-commerce that the organization will be able to achieve competitive advantage via acceding to them. These four sources are:

1. The reduction in the cost of wholesale and retail intermediaries: With using the internet technology, the process of disintermediation has been formed and the customers can purchase their products such as wholesalers and retailers without recourse to the traditional intermediaries and with recourse on the site of the original seller to. This action reduces the costs greatly;

2. The ability of reducing the relevant costs for the purchase via reducing the time and needed effort for the supply and logistic operations;

3. Improving the collecting and processing the information that could provide the possibility for improving the supply chain management;

4. Expanding the market share and creating the new markets via reducing the costs of collecting and information process about the needs and demands of current and potential customers.

**Banking and quality of services**

There have been a large numbers attention to the needs of customers in terms of quality of services, in recent years. The high levels of offering the service to customers are used as a tool to achieve competitive advantage. Simultaneous with increasing awareness of the customers of the presentable services by the banks and other financial organizations, the customers have been sensitive increasingly to the quality of services that they receive. In order to maintain the long-term relationship, along with customers’ satisfaction, the banks should know how they can offer high quality services (Venus and Safaeian, 2006).

Public sector organizations have found that providing the qualitative services to the customers, is the strategic subjects for survival of the organization in the future (K. Hosseini & Azizi, 2007).

Banking service is a very important factor for attracting and keeping customers’ consent and the review and evaluation of these services will be necessary in the future. The discussion about the quality of banking is so complicated. Services intricacies of the utmost. The definition and measuring the quality of the provided services by a service organization such as the bank is very difficult. However, regardless of the ideas of the intra-organizational that the service providers or other members of a service organization may have, the main quality is measured always by the consumers, meaning the customers. Executed assessments indicate that the customers’ perception of the services is formed by their expectations. It means the consent is the difference between expectations and perceptions, therefore it has been emphasized that we should always consider the issues further the customer’s expectations, and such this attitude means that we have exceeded from the competitive limitation in providing qualitative services (Kasai, 2010: 95).

Because the customers’ satisfaction and keeping them is so important for the banks and the customers are the ultimate goal of banking services, therefore the consent or the lack of
consent’s customers is very important in the design of the system. Providing banking services take place in the two main groups of old and new customers. The cost of attracting the new customers is usually more than the cost of keeping the old customers. Therefore, keeping the old customers for the bank is more important than attracting the new customers. Keeping the old customers depends on of their satisfaction as well as the degree of their consent to the quality of the provided bank services. A satisfied customer of the bank not only use the provided services again, but he/she attracts the new customers by definition of these services and its quality to others and he/she does not notice more to the propaganda of the competitors. The satisfied customers are the source of the profit for the bank. The Banks that can satisfy the customer for the long-term, will be remain in the competition. Offering high-quality services at a high level, continually, lead to creating competitive advantages for the bank (Yazdani & Seyed Javadein).

A research conducted in … about the quality of products and services by Philip and et al , indicated that the quality of the products and services of the strategic business units is the most important factor which affects the performance of the units and therefore they announced when the products and services are offered to the market with an excellent quality, certainly the more benefits could be gained via applying the higher prices. In fact, unit promotion also obtained in this way and other models of the profitability in the quality of service that was provided by Rast & et al (…), indicated that the quality of service leads to increase the customer satisfaction and the balance in the rate of keeping customer, as a result, the company could gain more income and a greater share from the market. Bazel & Gun (…) announced the another assumption that because the effect of quality on perceived value by the customers, the quality of the pervious services is related to the organization's profitability and also it is associated to the organization’s growth.

The research that conducted by Zeithaml & et al in America indicated that the involved companies in providing services have a special sensitivity to the excellent quality. In fact the excellent quality could be a key for distinguishing, utilization and operational into the organizations (Gilanytiya and Moosavian). As a result, it can be announced several reasons that via them the organizations seek to provide higher quality services to their customers.

- The nature of the services: providing an accurate quality of services for recipients is difficult according to the features. For this reason, consumers turned their attention to the exciting surrounded evidences of the services, moreover, the attitude and treat of the employees that are two important factors for evaluating services.

- Intra-organizational factors: the organizations that are in a competitive situation, usually make promises in the market to customers for attracting them. These promises must be fulfilled at the time of the customers’ referral to the organizations, the result of this action is the increase of the customer expectations.

- Environmental factors: The organizations have been realized the environment in which that they are, composed of a series of laws and regulations, procedures, processes, constraints and the economic, social, cultural elements that they have the requirement interaction and coordination together. It is necessary that the organizations design their operations in this environment by providing high quality services to satisfy their customers. Commenting on the honoring plan is an example of the environmental factors that make to the organizations to try for satisfying their clients, which in turn, it could increase the customers' expectations. Now,
with the widespread knowledge and access to the Internet, customers can easily obtain the information about the quality of the services in the across of the world. High customer expectations: if we want to have a special look reasonably to assess the quality of service.

**The increase of customers’ expectations:** If we want to study the quality of services logically with an especial look, we notice that with increasing the presentation services to the customers, as time progresses, the customers’ expectations are also raised to provide services more and more. We can consider various factors for this rise of the share, including the increase of the awareness and the knowledge of the customers over the quality of the given services by the various organizations, organizational propaganda and operations of the competitors to provide better quality of the services.

- **Operations of the competitors:** continuous activities associated with changing the competitors are one of the factors that increase the competitive advantage for gaining the market share, the competitors try to present the various changes in the provision of the services with better and newer quality to the customers, as a result these operations lead to enhance the expectations of the clients. In fact, this situation makes the competitors that all their efforts are directed towards the promotion and the quality their services.

- **The advantages from the quality of the services:** the advantages from the quality of the services are another factor which enhances the organization's ability to provision the services effectively to the customers. The organization knows that the customers have needs and demands and the organization should meet directly the demands and it should reduce offering the unnecessary services. The profitability of the organization will be enhanced with increasing effectiveness and efficiency in presentation the services as well as providing better services lead to the repetition the purchase and development of positive publicity for the organization (Shahed).

**Electronic Banking and the Quality of the Services**

Philip Kotler believes the service, activity and interest are intangible and untouchable and a party of a trade offers these services to another party, but this trade does not any property. Service production may or may not relate to the physical production.

There are different approaches for the definition to the quality. In philosophical approach, the quality is synonymous with inherent excellence. The technical approach, quality relates to the conformity degree of product with technical standards, attributed. In the customer-centric approach, the quality is a subjective issue that is determined and explained by its recipients and it depend on seriously to the customers' perceptions. It seems that this view into the subject of the quality definition in the service area has an especial attractiveness.

The reality is that quality is a vague term that, on the one hand, everyone knows (or he/she thinks to know it) what the quality is, and on the other hand, create and provide a single definition of it, is a basic matter. Osman and Own define the quality of service as the degree of difference between perception and customers’ expectations of service.

Banking and financial services are an important part of the service industry, and the quality of these services is closely related to the customer satisfaction in the industry. With considering to the possibility of receiving similar services in the banks, bank managers tend to distinguish
their bank services from other banks via the better quality of the services, (now the banking industry is divided into the internal segment of the branch and the external segment of the branch, or in other words, traditional banking and Electronic banking. To provide the financial services and effective banking services the use of IT and the use of internet is inevitable).

In fact, Electronic banking, is the optimal integration of all activities of a bank via utilizing the information technology, which could provide the possibility of providing all the services that customers require it. Services development based on the Internet lead to changing the consumer behavior and the quality of their interact with the service providers. Actually e-banking is the removing two indicators of the time and the place of banking services and with providing the e-banking services, these factors will be forgotten gradually. Now banks have come to the conclusion that, actually, the attention to the quality, is the key for survival in a competitive banking environment. A large group of researchers believes that the quality of services impact deeply and mainly on the satisfaction and influence on the customer’s loyalty via it and commitment to the organization (quality of the services is as one of the effective ways to achieve the organization's strategic interests, such as the retention to the customers rate or increasing the effectiveness and achieving operating profit.

Effectiveness and operational profit.

The literature review shows the importance of using electronic services for improving the level of providing the services to the customers (more researches follows up the reviewing the influence of the e-services on the customers 'perception of the total services) according to the literature review and also by using the expert’s ideas, the indices of the customers' perceptions evolution about e-services of the bank are following:

- **Ease of Use**: It is one of the effective factors on the customer perceptions about e-services that have direct and positive effect on the customer satisfaction.

- **Time Saving**: e-services can increase the quality of the services from the customer perspective and this action won’t happen unless the customer requirements are met by e-services served with the faster speed.

- **Suitability and excising the signs and guidelines**: according to research by Berry & et al (…) and also Kumar & et al in the Islamic banking of Malaysia, excite of required guides and signs about how to use the e-service bank, is one of the effective factors on the customer perceptions about the entire of services.

- **Moral rights**: the customers will be concerned about their moral rights, for example, the Internet security space or the possibility of some people accession to all banking operations that could impact on the customer perceptions about e-services of the bank.

- **Accuracy of the operations**: Use of the e-services lead to increase the satisfaction for the quality of the services via reducing the errors in the banking operations and increasing transactions.
-Possibility to perform different banking operations: The customers prefer the services that can receive the different services through them. In general, customers prefer using different services that are Multiservice and remain around a basic service.

-The existence of advanced information technologies: The use of service provider of the advanced IT, either hardware and or software area, has a positive effect on the perception of the customers about the e-services of the bank.

- Convenient access to electronic services: convenient access to e-services, which includes two segments: access to the equipments and the devices for using the services, such as phone or Internet and access to hardware such as ATMs, cyber branches and the computer.

- Fulfillment of the requested operation at the first request: The fulfillment of the customers’ request at the first their action or in the first of their referral, could evaluate the reliability of e-banking services.

- Security feeling: Existence of security in the banking transactions is one of the effective factors on the customers' perception about the traditional services and electronic banking.

- Freedom of action in the bank operations: One of the most important factors in e-services are changeable or dynamic services that by the freedom of the action’s index of the customers are measured during the use of the e-services of the bank.

- Anticipating customer needs: Anticipating customers' needs and considering the solutions for them is crucial, before the customer's request in the e-services.

- Confidence / Trust: the trust of the customers to a service is one of the most basic requirements of a service that is also one of the most important factors for affecting on the customers' perception.

- Services and Support: This task has a particular importance about the e-services, because in case of accruing a problem, the customer has not direct interaction with the provider of the services.

Codification of the Organization’s Strategies with Using the Analysis

Threats, opportunities, weaknesses and strengths’ matrix are one of the main tools for strategic planning that with the evaluation of the internal and external conditions of the unit under review, could extract the suitable strategies. In the fact "the evaluation of the internal and external conditions is the basis of the strategic planning. It means that the unit under question should be studied in terms of internal review and it is determined that which its features operate as the problems and which features can be relied upon as its competitive advantages. In other words, the strengths and weaknesses of the unit become clear. It also means that the external review should be done, for understanding that imposed conditions from the outside, what problems will create for the mentioned unit and how it helps to this unit during the time. In other words, the opportunities and threats will specify for the unit in question.

Strengths: The strength of an organization is a successful application of the suitability or operation from a key factor for development of the competitiveness in a company.
What are your advantages? What is your skill?

A checklist can be used to provide a list of strengths, such as the following checklist:

- Where is the original source of the revenue and profit organization?
- What is the market share for each product?
- Does your organization have a valid trademark?
- Is the marketing and advertising effectiveness?
- The focus is on what cases?
- Does the organization have a lack of skilled human resources?
- Does the employees have a high motivation?
- Is there a reward in the organization for achieving to the excellence?
- Do you have multi-skills staff?
- Whether the property of the organization has been managed appropriately?
- Does the organization use the IT well?
- Does the organization adapt itself to the changes appropriately?
- Does the organization have the potential of innovation?
- Does the organization have the power of resistance in the international and competitive environment?

The Strengths can be categorized into one of the following categories:

- Capacity and Capabilities
- Competitive advantages
- Being Exclusive
- Resources, assets, employees
- Experience, knowledge, data
- Financial reserves and potential revenues
- The area of marketing, distribution and reputation
- Aspects of innovation
- Geographical location
- Price and quality
- Credits and qualifications
- Processes and systems
- Information and Communication Technology (ICT)
- Cultural, behavioral, attitudinal
- Managers support

The weaknesses: the weaknesses of an organization is an unsuccessful application of a competence or non-utilization of a key factor that reduces the competitiveness in a company.

What can be improved? What can be done appropriately? What can be avoided?

A checklist can be used to provide a list of weaknesses, such as the following checklist:

- Which products do have the least profit in an organization?
- Which area of the organization does not have the capability to cover its costs?
- Which trademarks of the organization are weak?
- Is marketing and advertising effectiveness?
- Does the company have the ability to attract people or talents?
- Are the employees trained and motivated?
- Is the employees motivation system for improving performance?
- What is the highest costs in the company?
- Does the organization have the ability to resist against the pressure of the competitors?
- Does the company have the ability for financing in the necessary times?
- Does the company have the ability to present new ideas and products?
- Do employees believe the top management?
- Are the governmental laws adequate and appropriate?
- Does the company fall behind than their competitors in dealing with technology?

Weaknesses can be categorized into one of the following categories:
- Shortage of capacity and skills
- Lack of competition potential
- Reputation, presence in the competition field
- Financial issues
- Knowledge vulnerability
- Scale and time limitations
- Cash flow and its consumption
- Durability and resistance
- The effect on major activities
- Data reliability
- Program Predictability
- Motivation, commitment and leadership
- Credits
- Processes and systems
- Lack of managers support

Opportunity: A chance of an external state which can positively affect the performance parameters of the company and improve the competitive advantage that could create the positive action at the right time. One of these opportunities for a company is, expanded markets such as the Internet and also moving to a new part of the market that has advantage more or the abandoned markets by the competitors.

Where do you face with the positive changes? What processes are interesting and attractive?

A checklist can be used to provide a list of opportunities, such as the following checklist:

- What is the competitive advantage of the firm?
- Is there a new technology that the company could use it for innovation or reducing costs?
- Is there the opportunity to expand the brand in the related areas?
- Is there the opportunity for the inexpensive learn?
- Could the company use the international market?
- Is there the possibility to use the information technology for marketing?
- Is there the possibility to improve the quality of operations, productions and management without incurring high costs?

- Could the company improve the cash flow with better communicate with customers?

- Is there an appropriate time for changing?

- Are there production lines that could be reduced for increasing the advantages?

The opportunities could be grouped into one of the following categories:

- Market Development.
- Competitors vulnerability.
- Industry processes or lifestyles
- Technology Development
- The World credit
- New markets
- Export and Import
- New monopoly
- Large contracts
- Business and product development
- Information and research
- Partnerships and agencies
- The effects of seasonality, weather, etc.
- Economic conditions

Threat: An opportunity is an external state that could negatively affect the company's performance parameters and reduce the competitive advantage that could create the positive measures at the right time. These threats, including the appearance of the new competitors, new product introductions by competitors, the taxes on the offered goods and etc.

A checklist can be used to provide a list of threats, such as the following checklist:

- Does the organization have enough reserves to resist sudden changes in the environment?

- What is the status of the relevant laws and regulations?

- Are the organization’s products have a valid brand to resist against the competitors' prices?
- Are there international competitors?

- Does the company have a quantity extent?

- Whether the activities of accounting are the non-conservatively?

- Whether the company's financial conditions are on the margin of the lack of liquidity?

- Whether the organization could be adapted with the technology changing?

- Whether the margin of the organization profit is under the pressure?

- Does the volume of transactions and contracts have been reduced?

- Does the company have the ability to resist against the internet competitors?

Threats can be grouped into the following categories:

  - Political effects
  - Legal effects
  - Environmental Impacts
  - Development of information technology (IT)
  - Goals and Objectives of competitors
  - Market demand
  - Technology
  - New products, services and ideas
  - Vital contracts
  - Business Partnerships
  - Facing with existence obstacles and threats
  - Internal and external economy
  - The effect of seasonality, weather and fashion

**Stages of analysis:**

1- Convene an analysis meeting

2- A brief description of the meeting purpose and the work procedures
3- Conducting a brainstorming to identify the internal factors (strengths and weaknesses) and external factors (opportunities and threats)

4- Prioritization of internal and external factors

5- Forming the matrix and entering selected factors, according to priority

6- Comparison of internal and external factors together and determining the strategies

7- Determining the actions needed to carry out the determined strategies

8- Conducting the measures and assessing results

9- Updating the matrix at the appropriate intervals

**Evolution the internal factors:**

Internal factors relate to the internal issue of the company and these factors are largely under control of the management, contrary to the external factors.

Strengths and weaknesses are internal factors. The strengths and weaknesses are determined by comparing the past and present performance or comparing to the average of the industry and comparing with competitors.

**Priority Matrix of the Internal Factor**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Impact on operation or capability of the company’s competitiveness</th>
<th>Low</th>
<th>Middle</th>
<th>High</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Middle Priority</td>
<td>High priority (Strategic Factors)</td>
<td>High priority (Strategic Factors)</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Priority</td>
<td>Middle Priority</td>
<td>High priority (Strategic Factors)</td>
<td>Middle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Priority</td>
<td>Low Priority</td>
<td>Middle Priority</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Evaluation of external factors:**

External factors are composed of competitors, financial intermediaries, governmental agencies, labor unions, shareholders, suppliers, customers, trade unions and so on.

Opportunities and threats are factors that impact on the organization in the external environment.

**Priority Matrix of the External Factor**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The possible Effect on the Company</th>
<th>Low</th>
<th>Middle</th>
<th>High</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Middle Priority</td>
<td>High priority (Strategic Factors)</td>
<td>High priority (Strategic Factors)</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Priority</td>
<td>The Possibility of Occurrence</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Matrix of SWOT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SWOT</th>
<th>Strengths S</th>
<th>Weakness W</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Opportunities O</td>
<td>Strategies of SO</td>
<td>Strategies of WO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>List the opportunities</td>
<td>With Using the strengths, use the opportunities</td>
<td>With Using the opportunities, remove the weaknesses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Threats</td>
<td>Strategies of ST</td>
<td>Strategies of WT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>List the threats</td>
<td>To avoid the threats, use the strengths</td>
<td>Reduce the weaknesses and avoid the threats</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Strategies of …

In the framework of the strategies, the organization tries to maximize the opportunities with using internal strengths and use the external the opportunities. Usually the organizations for achieving to such situations use the … strategies. For example, Benz company uses the technological capabilities for increasing its share in the luxury car market.

Strategies of…

The aim of the strategies is the improvement the internal weaknesses with the use of the available opportunities from the internal environment. In this case, the organization cannot exploit these new opportunities due to internal weakness. Therefore, it is necessary the use of the strategies such as the new technologies and so on, for eliminating weaknesses and using the opportunities.

Strategies of …

Companies try to use their strengths with the implementation of these strategies for reducing the effects of the existing threats or eliminating them.

Strategies of …

The organizations that use this strategy are defensive and the aim of this strategy is, minimizing internal weaknesses and avoiding threats from the external environment. In fact, such an organization for surviving tries to reduce its activities, (the reduction or cession strategies) merging with other companies, declaration of the bankrupting or finally disbanding the firm.

Conclusion

Now, the organization has faced various challenges because the rapid changes in the various technologies in the world. But meantime the organizations will be successful that could use the management tools, new technologies and the existing opportunities for their benefits.
(Hassanzadeh & Porfard). Giving the repetitive and the non-creative task to the machine and also increasing the efficiency and releasing of human skills, become to the core of the development for communities and organizations in recent decades. On the one hand, IT led to remove the distances and gathering the users together and the other hand the mechanization of communication systems and the increase of the data transmission capacity by increasing the speed led to the decentralization and the creation of information superhighways and also enhancing the speed and quality of decision-making and efficient management (Rezaei).

In this regard, the question that arises, is: whether it could be said that having and using the technology, is a competitive advantage? In response, it can be said that the use of the technology in the communities is not a competitive advantage for organizations and financial institution, especially in the economy and the banking industry area, but this technology is known as a competitive requirement (Kohzadi).

Competitive advantage is one of the components will ensure the organizational durability. Obtaining the competitive advantage cannot be reached randomly and without plan, unless the organizations move in this direction with thought and planning the scientific frameworks. Customer-orientation, creating the new markets and market-orientation require to use the excellence models of leadership, strategy and human resources. The Permanent identification of the improved areas for improving the current situation and creating projects for achieving the desired improvements and competition-oriented via the standard and experienced patterns leads to saving time. In Iran, most banks and financial institutions have been affected by the use of this technology and they could impact and change the attitudes and preparing in the two areas of the intra-organizational (structure and staff) and the extra-organizational (customer) in recent years.

Now, banks and enterprises have an intense competition with each other for the creation and implementation of new services rapidly and they try to implement the customer-orientation in the true sense of the word. However, it cannot be claimed that ATM, Internet Banking, Mobile Banking and so on are the competitive advantages, because the majority of the banks and institutions have these devices. Therefore, for achieving to the competitive advantage, the organizations require speed in providing the service, low cost of providing services, rendering the services to the customer timely, and quality of the offered services. In the area of intra-organizational, any organization that could utilize the maximum usage of the created technology will be able to surpass other competitors. Therefore, the method of using and the manner of the utilization of these tools could be known as an infrastructure for the competitive advantage of the organization. (HassanZadh & Sadeghi, 2004: 12).
References


