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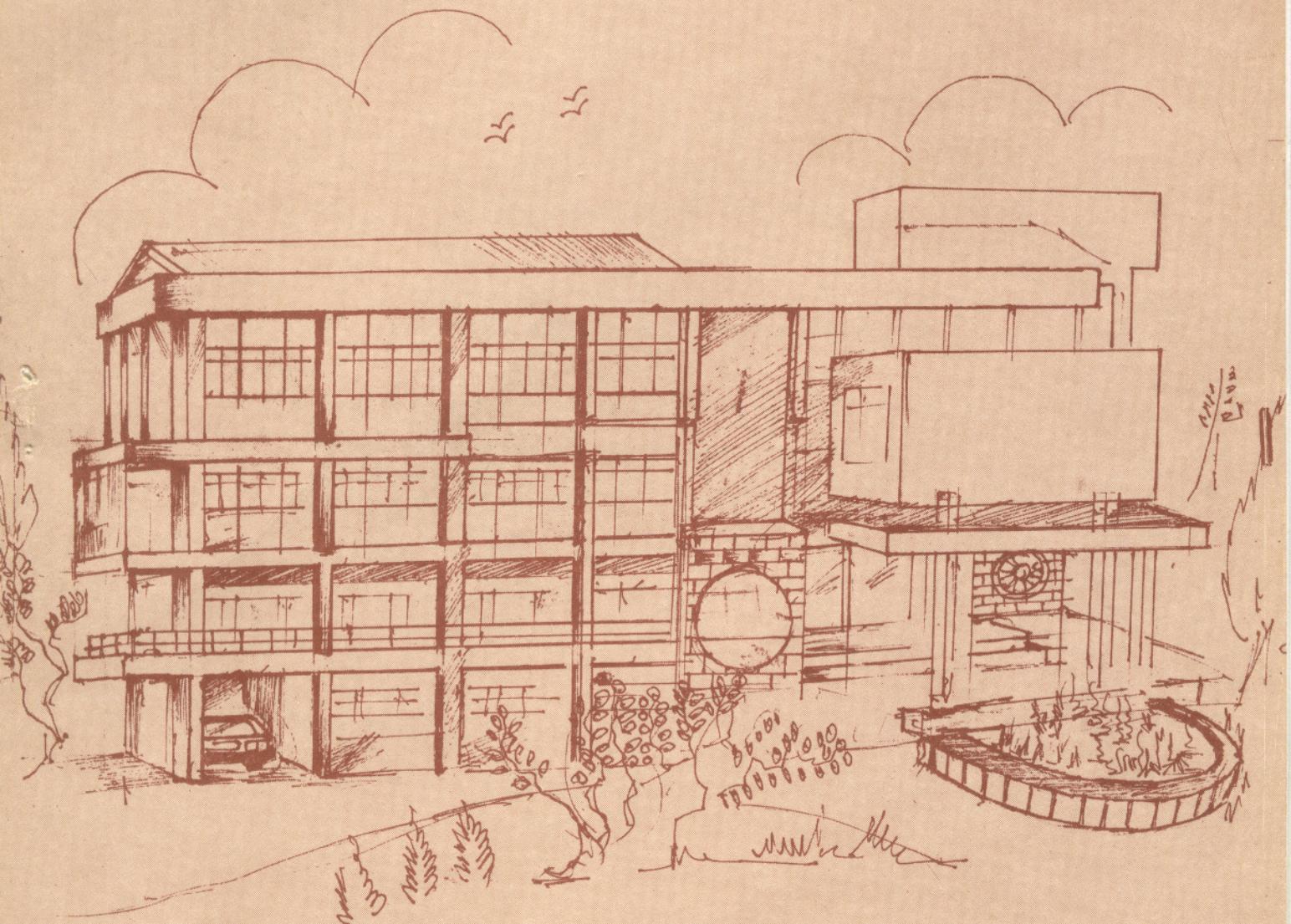
Working Paper Series

ABSTRACTS OF CASES

DEVELOPED UNDER

MANAGEMENT IN PRACTICE

PGP 1999 - 2001



**ABSTRACTS OF CASES
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MANAGEMENT IN PRACTICE
PGP 1999 - 2001**

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TAPMI WORKING PAPER SERIES NO. 2001/02

The objective of TAPMI working paper series is to help faculty members of TAPMI to test out their research ideas/findings at the pre-publication stage.

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Abstracts of Cases Developed under Management in Practice PGP 1999-2001

I am pleased to introduce the abstracts of these fifty cases developed by the students of PGP 1999-2001 of TAPMI, based on their Management in Practice (MIP) projects. It is one of the significant outputs of the collaborative efforts among TAPMI students, faculty and industry managers. It is a unique contribution of TAPMI to the pool of cases and teaching material useful for management education.

TAPMI's MIP is by now four years old. TAPMI has been continuously refining the design of its MIP on the basis of its experience and feedback from organizations. Though we were keen to publish the cases developed by each batch before its graduation, we were not able to do so till now. However, this year we have managed it!

The main strength of these cases is that they deal with current issues faced by Indian industry. Depending on the opportunity and effort put in by each team, the richness and quality of these cases differ. However, case writing is not an easy job even for a veteran in academics. Not all these cases have yet been cleared by the respective organizations for academic use in TAPMI and elsewhere. But we hope that this will happen in due course in a majority of cases. We have not included in these abstracts the other types of teaching materials developed by the students of this batch, mostly in the form of technical notes.

These cases still need a lot of follow up work: rigorous language editing, trial teaching, preparation of teaching notes and revision on the basis of trial teaching. Nevertheless, they represent a significant intellectual contribution of these students, industry and faculty guides.

I am currently preparing similar volumes of abstracts of MIP cases developed by the students of the PGP 1997-99 and 1998-2000 batches. TAPMI is planning to make these cases available to other management institutes through printed volumes and through the net. As a person who has gone through all these cases more than once during their preparation, I have learnt a lot.

On behalf of TAPMI, I express my sincere thanks to all the students, industry guides and faculty guides who have contributed to this effort. My special thanks to Mr. M. P. Sundar of PGP 1999-2001 for his help.

R. Rajagopalan
Dean (Academic Affairs)

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A Cold 'Tasty' Proposition

This case deals with the distribution aspect of an ice-cream manufacturing company. It wishes to restructure its distribution operations in a city to reduce operations cost and improve profit margins. It deals with the intricacies of scheduling its pick-up and order operations from the manufacturing locations and stock-keeping warehouses. It provides data on the distribution structure, the different stock keeping units (SKUs), and the margin structure, consumer habits, consumer awareness and segmentation done by the company.

The possible discussion points could be scheduling, routing, and remuneration.

Key words

Distribution logistics; Supply Chain Management

ABC Airlines

The case describes the problem faced by an airline company that wishes to establish a customer service call centre and is exploring its feasibility. The case describes the need for establishing a call centre; types of call center, a queuing model (Erlang C queue model), financial model and the cost of capital for the project.

Possible areas of discussion are services marketing, Call center and customer relationship management, project formulation.

Key Words

Call centre, Erlang C queue model, customer relationship management, project formulation.

Akash -Jackson Pvt Ltd

The case describes the problems faced by a manufacturing company in deciding on the contents that it wishes to put up on its website. The case describes the background of the company, the details of the products, orders and competitors.

Possible area of discussion is web-design for industrial products.

Key Words

Content structure

Applied Technologies Limited

The case deals with the formulation of a strategy for entry of an IT training company into the global markets for end-to-end solutions business. The case describes the background of the company and the IT industry, the scope for net based financial services sector and electronic trade in India.

Possible areas of discussion are choosing the areas of entry, entry strategies, and competence building in the company for entry into diverse markets.

Key Words

E-business, Internet business, entry strategies.

AV Foam

The case describes the problem of stagnant sales due to price competition faced by a manufacturer of foam products. The company attributes this to lack of 'push' by the distribution channel. The case describes the product portfolio, competition scenario, distribution structure and the pricing policies of the company.

Possible areas of discussion are pricing and channel management-remuneration and promotions by channel members.

Key Words

Pricing, channel management, channel conflict

Balancing Cash a Tight Rope Walk

The case deals the problem of management of cash by a company. It provides details of the cash / bank balance for the last seven months, cash movement, frequency distribution of cash balances and different options for investments in short term instruments in terms of risk and returns.

Possible areas of discussion include cash management, evaluation of short-term investment options.

Key Words

Cash management, cash cycle.

Building Relationships in a Service Organisation

The case concerns the problem faced by a bank which intends to build a customer relationship model for its select high networth retail clientele. It describes the background of the setting up of the bank and the evolution of private banking in India. It further profiles the target customer as described by the bank. The organisation structure of the bank and the information technology support are described.

Possible areas of discussion are concepts of customer relationship management (CRM), resources planning for a CRM set-up, measures of performance for implementation of a CRM initiative.

Key Words

Customer relationship; financial services; services marketing

Cellular Connection

The case describes the need for a company operating in the cellular phone industry to migrate from a price-based promotional strategy to a brand building strategy. The case describes the details of the customer base, the different services that are offered the information requirements of the corporate customers and the details of the operations of the company.

The possible areas of discussion are migration strategy for promotions and revamp of the marketing operations of the company.

Key Words

Services, migration strategy, marketing operations.

Channel Challenge

This case deals with problems of increasing the subscription of two new television channels, which provide entertainment to children and the general audience respectively. The case provides a detailed description of the organization and distribution structures of the television network, research findings of the consumer

survey to determine viewing habits and the coverage by different network operators in a city.

The possible areas of discussion are methods of improving awareness and design of innovative distribution channels.

Key Words

Focus groups, competition analysis, services marketing

Chem Organics Pvt Ltd

The case describes the situation faced by the small-scale company, which has a matured product and is looking for growth opportunities from its expertise in the existing product line. The case provides a background of the company and the industry, SWOT analysis for the company, and financials of the company.

The possible areas of discussion are strategies for a matured market, product life cycle, and growth strategies for a small-scale unit.

Key Words

Matured product; SME Growth Strategy

Competency Profiling

The case describes the problem faced by a company in determining the career plans that it wants to chart out for it's employees. The case is set in two parts, the first dealing with the identification of the need for career planning for employees by the company and the second with the method of profiling the competencies of it's employees. The case gives the details of Richard Boyatzis's model for competence profiling.

Possible areas of discussion are elements and measurement of competence, developing competence profiles and Richard Boyatzis's model of competence profiling

Key Words

Career planning, competence profiling

Costing at Sona Jewellers Ltd

The case discusses the problem faced by a jewellery manufacturing company, which is unable to cost its products because of variations in design. The case describes the background of the industry and company, the product profile; the details of the manufacturing process and the costing process, specifically the method of allocation of the company overheads followed by the company.

Possible areas of discussion are overheads allocation and costing of designs.

Key Words

Overhead allocation, product costing

Dhawal

This case deals with the situation faced by a mature brand whose sales are declining. Starting from the description of the business the manufacturer is in, the case suggests a possible template for analysis of the situation. The data provided for analysis includes sales and market share of the brand, benefits-based segmentation in the market, competition market shares, brand equity study of the brand and consumer profile. The solution set consists of set of alternative actions that could be taken by the owners of the brand to regain sales.

Possible issues for discussion are brand lifecycle and brand extensions.

Key Words

Mature brands, segmentation, brand equity study.

Effectiveness of Recruitment Strategy

The case deals with the problems of an IT company which faces a high attrition rate. The managers wish to determine the effectiveness of the process of recruitment followed by the company. The case describes the recruitment process of the company, lists the requirements of personnel in the different cadres and suggests an effectiveness measurement process.

Possible areas of discussion are recruitment process, methods of measurement of the process, and recruitment procedure re-design.

Key Words

Recruitment, attrition rate

Enigmatic Ghee

The case describes the problems of low sales faced by a ghee-manufacturing company that has introduced a new brand of ghee in a market. The company wishes to design a promotional strategy for both the channel partners and end consumers. The case describes the details of the product and its launch in the market, findings of customer preferences, the distribution channel and end-users and the manufacturing process.

Possible areas of discussion are pre-launch strategies, determination of the market characteristics before launch, test marketing and post-launch evaluation.

Key Words

Pre-launch evaluation of market, test marketing.

Exquisite, Yet to What Extent?

The case describes the problems faced by a tube manufacturing company in scheduling its operations to meet delivery schedules through an appropriate information system. The case discusses the details of the product line, customer details, illustrative production schedule and data regarding planned vs. achieved schedule.

Key Words

Production Scheduling; MIS

Forecasting Trouble

The case describes a home appliance manufacturing company, which faces the problem of high inventory and believes that this was largely due to poor sales forecasting methods adopted by the company. However, there are too many SKUs and there are apparently no reliable patterns in sales. The case gives details of the background of the company and the sales figures in the past.

Possible areas of discussion include aggregate planning demand forecasting and inventory management.

Key Words

Aggregate planning; Demand forecasting, inventory management.

Fredericson Industries India Limited

The case concerns an organisation with low motivational levels of its employees leading to loss of employees to competitors. The case describes the employee satisfaction surveys conducted by the company and provides a background on possible factors leading to the situation. Other details in the case include identification of training needs and the system of appraisal in the company.

Possible areas of discussion are the reasons for attrition, appraisal systems, and monetary and non-monetary rewards system.

Key Words

Appraisal system, employee motivation, training needs identification

Harry's Sugar

The case describes the problem of stagnant sales faced by a sugar manufacturing company. The case describes the sugar industry, the background of the company and the results of the survey of possible buyer segments, especially institutional buyers.

Possible areas of discussion are expansion of marketing opportunities and marketing strategies in a commodity market.

Key Words

Improving stagnant sales, marketing strategies in commodity markets

Harry's Sugar (B)

The case describes the problem of establishing a branded product faced by a sugar manufacturing company in an otherwise predominantly a commodity market. The case describes the sugar industry, the background of the company and the initial efforts of the company to introduce a branded product.

Possible areas of discussion are expansion of marketing opportunities and marketing strategies in a commodity market.

Key Words

Marketing strategies in commodity markets

Hossiwell Industries Limited

The case describes the problem of declining sales of a hosiery manufacturing company. The case describes the company background, the market for vests, and the survey results of the distribution channel and consumers.

Possible area of discussion is redesign of marketing strategy.

Key Words

Marketing strategy.

Implementation of a Knowledge Management System at Hi-Tech Solutions

This case deals with assessing the post implementation impact of a knowledge management system in a software company. It provides a background of the business and the product/services range of the company. It describes in detail the survey that was administered on the employees to determine their opinion on the

implementation of the knowledge management system in the company and the impediments faced by them to use the same more effectively.

Possible areas of discussion are the processes of implementation of knowledge management systems in a company, the post implementation problems and methodology of determining employee perception about knowledge management and other similar initiatives.

Key Words

Knowledge Management, employee survey

Indiana Bank Ltd

It describes the dilemma faced by a private sector bank on whether or not to provide finance to the software industry, by presenting data on a software export company. The case describes the cause for such a dilemma and also gives details of the parameters that are used by a nationalized bank in funding similar ventures.

Possible areas of discussion are factors to be considered for funding an industry and risk-minimisation.

Key Words

Financing IT companies, security concerns template development for assessing risks.

Inventory Management at PFC

The case describes the problems of high raw material and finished goods inventory in a packaging company. The case describes the background of the company, the order fulfilment process, analysis of the inventory of company and the procurement process.

The possible areas for discussion are sales forecasting, production planning and inventory management

Key Words

Sales forecasting, Production scheduling, Inventory management

Kalamegham's Woes

The case describes the dilemma faced by a hardware shop owner who wishes to enter the goods transport (lorry) service. The case describes the manner in which the goods transport business operates in the Chennai region. The probabilities of various earning possibilities are provided for decision making.

The possible areas of discussion are decision tree analysis and current trends in the transport service sector.

Key Words

Probability, decision tree

Lilt Fruit Juice Company

The case describes the efforts of a company manufacturing fruit drinks wanting to arrest declining sales in Mumbai. It describes the competitive scenario, consumer behaviour patterns and design of promotional campaigns. It provides action plans and cost heads for designing and carrying out of such promotional events.

Possible topics for discussion are consumer behaviour surveys, data collection and analysis for event management.

Key Words

Event Management, consumer behaviour surveys

Maples Exports Pvt. Ltd

The case describes the details of the problems faced by a garment trading company and the need for an order tracking and control system to manage it's operations better. The case describes the nature of business, user requirements for the system and the internal networking that would have to be done for the purpose.

The possible areas of discussion are process flow redesign for implementation of a computer tracking system and determination of user requirements.

Key Words

Process flow redesign, order tracking, business imperatives of computerised system.

The case describes the competitive situation and the take-over threat faced by a bank which necessitates the rethinking of its strategy. The case describes the technology trends, organisation structure, training efforts and the investments by the organisation.

Possible areas of discussion include strategy design for a bank, identification of process improvement, business process reengineering.

Key Words

Banking services, technological salience in banks

Network Dilemma

The case discusses the problems faced by the operations manager of an airline in identifying costs, cost-drivers and contribution of each of the routes. The case describes the operations cost, the revenue structure, passenger data and the network map used by the network.

Possible areas of discussion are revenue and cost allocation, determination of cost drivers, usage of various methods of costing.

Key Words

Routing, cost allocation, contribution to a network

New Service at a dot.com

The case describes the problem faced by a B2B exchange which wishes to provide an advanced search option for shortlisting possible vendors for the requests put up by the prospective buyers. It suggests the requirements of the model to achieve this objective. The case provides a lead into determining a realistic model, compatible with existing technology and mindsets of users.

Key Words

Profile matching in B2B exchanges

NFPC Ltd. in a Fix

The case deals with the problem of declining sales of a cheese manufacturing company in face of increased competition. It gives details of the usage pattern, consumer survey, pricing strategy, promotional campaigns, and distribution structure and retailer survey for the company's products.

Possible discussion areas include methods of arresting sales decline and responses to price and non-price competition.

Key Words

Pricing, consumer survey, sales promotion

NSPP - The Impending Power Failure

The case describes the situation faced by a pet care product manufacturing company which wishes to improve repeat purchases after facing encouraging trial purchases. The case provides the details of the company, product, pricing, distribution, manufacturing, promotion and sales figure for the past year.

Possible areas of discussion are improvement in marketing mix and increasing repeat purchases.

Key Words

Rural marketing, Promotion, repeat and trial purchases.

Organizational Culture Change

The case describes the situation faced by an organisation which wishes to change the organisational culture in order to thrive in a competitive environment which required a more customer-focussed mindset amongst its employees. It specifically examines the problem of measuring culture change. It provides an account of the Brockbank methodology for culture change and the action plan for implementation.

The possible areas of discussion are culture change and its measurement.

Key Words

Brockbank methodology for measurement of culture change, organisational culture change.

People Problem at Citizen's

This case describes the problems faced in operations by the managers of investor care centres of a mutual fund company. The case provides an account of the different constraints that are faced by the managers ranging from lack of information, competence to handle certain financial products etc. All these are leading to the poor performance of the bank's investor care centres.

Possible discussion areas are manpower planning, promotion campaigns and design of information systems for a financial service agency.

Key Words

Financial services; Branch co-ordination

Positioning a Lifestyle and Leisure Portal

The case deals with problems of positioning a portal targeted at a particular segment. The case provides the background in terms of the viewership of the sites, description of the target group, difficulty experienced in selling media space and formation of marketing alliances. The case describes three different alternatives for the re-positioned site for the managers of the site to choose from.

Possible areas of discussions include the problems unique to positioning of a website to suit a particular target audience, problems of migration from a traditional media to cyber media and cannibalisation effects.

Key Words

Media space selling, positioning of portals, content analysis

Progressive Enterprises

The case describes the problems faced by a logistics company in reducing the delivery time from the existing 4-5 days to 48 hours. The case provides details of the order fulfilment process followed by the company and the additional costs that it might have to incur to achieve the target of reduced delivery time.

Possible areas of discussion are manpower planning, responsibility allocation and process flow.

Key Words

Warehousing, manpower scheduling, process flow analysis

Ralies Marita

The case describes the redesigning of the marketing strategy for a weighing machine manufacturing company. Catering to a diverse set of consumers, the company faces low sales in the retail segment and is examining methods to increase the same. It describes the results of consumer survey, distribution structure, delivery scheduling, details of the annual maintenance contract (AMC), promotion campaigns and sales force remuneration structure.

Possible areas of discussion are redesign of the marketing mix and channel management.

Key Words

Consumer surveys, channel management, industrial marketing.

Sales Team Motivation at Taurus Paints

The case deals with the problems faced by a manager of a sales depot in motivating his sales men in a competitive and technology-driven and growing market. The case provides a detailed background on the industry, organisation structure of the sales department, recruitment procedure, orientation and training schedules administered, performance and promotional policies and results of the satisfaction survey amongst the salesmen.

Possible discussion areas are methods of monetary and non-monetary incentives, sales force motivation, and training.

Key Words

Sales force motivation, technology-driven market

Solid State Systems Pvt. Ltd

The case describes the problems faced by a capacitor manufacturing company which after supplying to the Indian market, wishes to expand its export market. The case provides data on the background of the company, product, industry, marketing network, quality practices and the financials of the company. The company is faced with a squeeze on margins.

Possible areas of discussion are growth strategy for an SME.

Key Words

SME Growth strategy

Sona Limited

A jewellery manufacturer in the organized sector has spare capacity in some of the departments. The company wants to use this spare capacity to enter the rural markets for jewellery with simple designs. It faces price competition from local jewellers who allegedly pass off gold of poorer quality than what they claim. What should Sona do? The case provides industry background and a description of the manufacturing process. Possible areas of discussion are rural marketing and pricing strategy.

Key Words

Entry strategy, Rural marketing and Pricing

Spacer Airlines

International travel is becoming increasingly common among Indian businessmen and managers. Bangalore is emerging as high demand area. Spacer Airlines is planning to increase its number of international flights from India by 50%. They operate through a general sales agent (GSA) who has six offices in South India, including one at Bangalore. This case deals with preparing the Bangalore office for the additional customer service requirements for the new flights. The case provides

data on staffing, salary structure, types of customers, types of customer calls and time per call, the travel agency market in Bangalore and so on.

The case can be used for planning for marketing services.

Key Words

Services Marketing; Planning

Sugar Models

The case deals with the forecasting procedure followed by the marketing department of a sugar manufacturing company in a market where the prices were unpredictable and cyclical. The case enumerates the quantitative models used to predict the prices of sugar in such a situation. The data provided includes the monthly sugar prices over several years, and other indices such as wholesale prices of gur, per capita release of sugar and international prices of sugar.

Possible areas of discussion include forecasting techniques and variables that effect the price of commodity products.

Key Words

Forecasting techniques, cyclical trend, time-series and regression analysis.

Supply chain at ABC Industries limited

The case describes the situation faced by a jewellery manufacturing company wherein it wishes to improve its delivery performance by reducing its lead time for order processing. The case provides a detailed background of the company, industry, and consumer behaviour, manpower planning, manufacturing process, outsourcing and the order flow.

The possible areas of discussion are lead-time reduction and order flow analysis.

Key Words

Lead-time reduction, process flow analysis.

Texfoods Fruit Juice

Case study about Texfoods fruit juice company.

The case deals with the problems faced by a foreign food drink manufacturing company in expanding its market, post introduction. It details the behaviour of its customers, specifically their eating habits. It discusses the promotional campaigns that it plans to launch to increase the sales.

Possible areas of discussions are brand building methods, promotional campaigns, and event management.

Key Words

Promotional campaigns, consumer behaviour

The Capital Curse

The case describes the problem faced by a manufacturing company which needs to determine the cost benefit of different options of machinery that it could procure to improve the quality and productivity of the plant. The case describes the alternatives for the machinery along with the benefits that could be expected from each of the machinery both in qualitative and quantitative terms.

Possible areas of discussion are capital investment decisions, evaluation of alternatives in capital investments.

Key Words

Capital investments, criteria of evaluation and comparison of machinery

The Dotcom Dilemma

The case describes the problems of developing a revenue model for a dotcom venture which specialises in giving information about tenders and providing information about the real estate markets in a situation where these are offered free by the competitors. The case describes the problems of improving the number of hit-rates, the competitive scenario and the ratings of the website based on certain parameters.

Possible areas of discussion are revenue model generation, features of a website and effect of net ratings on revenue generation.

Key Words

Revenue models, Websites, hit rates, Net ratings

The Emperor Hotel

The case describes the problem of poor funds management wherein funding of partially completed projects was made with working capital loans and delayed collection from customers lead to poor payments to suppliers. The case gives data on the modes of settlement, the ageing schedule and the sources of revenue.

The possible areas of discussion are cash cycle, collection improvement and fund management.

Key Words

Funding working capital, Cash cycle.

The Holy Alliance

This case deals with the problem of low sales turnover of a consortium of small travel agents who provide travel services across a number of locations where they are individually well established but are unable to provide the services at all the locations independently. The case describes the revenue generation and distribution across different locations. Possible areas of discussion include product bundling, synergy effects of a consortium, and distribution practices in the travel agencies.

Key Words

Network marketing; Services marketing

The Retail Audit

The case deals with the problems faced by an agency which provides retail auditing services: designing innovative ways of promoting products and providing value-added service of gathering competition information from visits to retail outlets. It

describes the process currently being followed by the company and the problems faced by it. It examines the feasibility of implementation of two alternatives available. The possible areas of discussion are the methodology of retail auditing, design of databases and problems faced in the change process.

Key Words

Retailing Audit, database base revamp

To Deo or Not to Deo!

The case deals with devising a strategy for the product launch of a new deodorant in a market that is dominated by a single large player. It provides a background of the company, the details of the market, consumer behaviour, positioning platforms of the different competitive offerings and a detailed consumer survey and its findings. Possible areas of discussion are gap analysis, developing a market construct and positioning strategy.

Key Words

Segmentation, competition analysis, consumer perception.

Vendor Woes

The case describes the problems of vendor dissatisfaction faced by a department, which manages different civil projects of the company. The problem mainly concerns that of delayed payments to the vendors. The case gives the background of the company, the funding pattern and details of the current payment procedures for the projects.

Possible areas of discussion are Vendor satisfaction and development and project management.

Key Words

Project management, vendor management