

STRATEGY THAT DRIVES BUSINESS GROWTH

Introduction

Many businesses that we come in contact with consider strategy as a one off event and that event is typically when the business started. Plans were drawn up and once the funding from a bank or investor was in place, they were left in the draw and forgotten.

Our work with many companies has identified that a focussed strategy that is dynamic and embedded within the organisation not only helps to execute the strategy on a day to day basis but drives growth and profitability.

This short paper introduces the reader to the 5W strategic model that has underpinned the growth of many of our customers.

5W strategic model

The 5W strategic model has been created to take organisations through a step by step process in not only creating, executing but reviewing strategic plans in real time. The process follows the 'Plan/ Do/ Check/ Act philosophy that many management organisations have used to create process improvements for companies.

The strategic model can be represented graphically by the 5W wheel and we will take each area in turn.



Reviewing ‘Why do you exist?’ What is the customer pain?

This part of the strategy process is important to get right. This answers the very question of why you are in business. Why do customers buy from you? What is it that causes customers to buy from you rather than your competitors?

Getting to the root of this question helps to establish whether:

- Your product and services are relevant to the market today.
- Your sales literature reflects the needs of your customers
- Your customer service practices are in line with your original values

How do you collate this information? Well find out from your customers and suppliers by talking to them directly. Let them be candid with you and tell you warts and all about the products and services that you provide. You will be horrified about some things but I guarantee you that you will be delighted about many things.

Kodak had to redefine their business using this approach so that they could capitalise on the digital market for cameras rather than photographic film. M&S had to go back to their core values in order to arrest the declining sales in food, women clothing and underwear.

Refining the value proposition

Distilling these key attributes of what makes the business unique is the domain of the marketing people in your business. Needless to say a strap line that defines the heart of the business can be a compelling message to the market place of not only your intent but as a means of describing the ‘soul’ or ‘heart’ of the business.

Ensuring services and products reflect the value proposition

When you understand the culture and values that make your business successful then communicate that to the market place, your suppliers and of course throughout the business. However it is essential that your company embraces this BEFORE you communicate to the market place. Ensure that every process and procedure captures the essence of the business. If it is about a quality product explain to your customer audience about the processes that you use to define and excel in quality. If it is design, then define how your design is unique and different. Never knock the competition but always augment your product services and people.

One area that we thoroughly recommend is ensuring that employees have their work objectives linked to the overall strategy of the business. Use the appraisal process to do this. In companies that we have worked with this is a key central plank that has driven business growth and success when employees understand their impact on the overall strategic direction of the business.



Deploying best practice selling/ marketing (online/offline) techniques

Once your internal processes embrace your value proposition then you are ready to communicate to the world. Every medium, direct mail, email, your customer service team, web, social media sites ALL communicate the proposition exactly and succinctly.

Reviewing performance across the business daily and implementing changes continuously

The final puzzle of strategy implementation is to measure the key value and attributes of the business on a regular basis to ensure that the value proposition is creating maximum value for the business (profits) and customers (customer satisfaction and delight). Use this phase to gain customers and suppliers review of your business and what delights them. Measure those elements to ensure that you maintain the core values that will help to answer the question 'Why do you exist?'.

Our clients have achieved double digit growth in profitability and revenue through a thorough implementation of the 5W strategy steps. Contact us for a free consultation to discuss how you too can achieve business growth - even in a recessionary environment.