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ABSTRACTS

Management practices and performance of international suppliers: An examination of exporting firms in China

Li Ling-yee

Knowledge has been upheld as the key resource to create sustainable advantage in the strategic management field. In the quest for sustainable performance, theorists in the environmental management domain advocate taking the learning route. However, the extant studies examined only the direct effect of environmental management practices on a firm's competitiveness and performance and hence ignored the intervening learning processes. Framed within the Resource-Based View (RBV) of the firm, the current inquiry investigated into environmental management practices as a kind of resource inputs accounting for an international supplier firm's relational learning to address its international buyers' environmental concerns, and competitive outcomes deriving out of such a kind of relational learning. This study makes a significant contribution to the strategic management literature by demonstrating the importance of firm-specific resources and relational capabilities for enhancing organizational performance.

A study of the internet services offered by Latin American and Caribbean export promotion agencies

Nadine Altamirano and Maria Amador-Dumois

This paper discusses the effectiveness of Export Promotion Agencies (EPAs) of Latin America and the Caribbean when using the Internet in delivering their services. The method used in this study was a content analysis of the main web sites of the seventeen EPAs of Spanish-speaking countries in Latin America and the Caribbean. This study concludes that there is a wide difference between EPAs web sites in terms of reputation (measured in terms of number of external sites linked to the site) and services provided. The most common services are product market identification, followed by foreign promotion activities, commercial information and specialized support. Some EPAs use the most basic tools and features available for web site design for the delivery of their services. They have not yet realized the full potential of more personalized and interactive features. It is suggested in this study that Export Promotion Agencies that are failing to effectively reach their audience must adjust their web site design and services to their audience and modify their marketing efforts.

Identity creation in online social networks: A theoretical exploration

Rachel Barker

Identity and online social networks are phenomena of our time and the search for and research on it is as powerful as the technological change in the history of the globalised world. On the one hand online social networks offer individuals the opportunity to create multiple identities based on valid information, and on the other hand acknowledge the fact these identities might be false and based on misinformation. In spite of the increased use of online social networks, limited research, especially from a communicative perspective, has been conducted on social processes and phenomena which are used to create online identities. One reason might be the social implications from the formation and use of online identities and advancement in processes of their transference into the real world.

Based on recommendations by Acun (2011) and Attrill & Jalil (2011) that future research should focus on a theoretical exploration of identities in online social networks, this paper sets out to investigate and address these gaps and to present a theoretical overview of the social processes and phenomena in the formation of identity in online social networks through an interpretivistic paradigm to gain an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon. Drawing from social constructionism, social categorization, identity, social identity and knowledge management theoretical paradigms, as well as a consideration of the notional constructs of identity and online social networks, the main theoretical approaches to and key criteria thereof are proposed. This paper aims to review the theoretical perspectives used to explain the formation of identities in online social networks and to identify the characteristics that impede on it.

Horticultural exports and measures of export success: Lessons and polications from Ghana
Felix Agyei-Sasu, Irene S. Egyir, Yaw Osei-Asare and Kwabena A. Anaman

The fruit and vegetable sub-sector of horticultural products has attained important status in the Ghanaian economy since the liberalisation and export diversification pursued after the introduction of the Economic Recovery Programme (ERP) and the Structural adjustment (SAP) which followed in the 1980's. Ghana's trade policies since then have been tailored to pursue the promotion of horticultural export. Meanwhile, the issue of export success and how they are determined have become critical. Export success in this essence is not only critical to job creation but also to poverty alleviation in developing countries. This study thus sought to describe the horticultural export business in Ghana and to determine an appropriate measure for export success. Using a simple systematic sampling procedure, the identified most of the firms interviewed to be small scale horticultural exporting firms. The study found that, horticultural export business witnessed greatest number of firms participating in the late 90's. Sole-proprietorship and joint-venture were found to be the dominating business holdings among the firms. For horticultural commodity to reach a consumer in at least three destination countries, four main transit/supply points were identified. We adopted the composite scale as the best form of assessing export success and our analysis revealed that, the gap between firms that were successful and those that were not, was quite close. The need for exporters to adopt and incorporate each component measures in their annual review of performance/success was recommended. Stakeholders in general were recommended to adequately target their interventions at each section of the commodity supply chain in order to widen the population gap between the successful and unsuccessful exporting firms.