Journal of Case Research

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Editorial

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December, 2022

Dear Readers,

Greetings!!

We are happy to bring out the December 2022 issue of the Journal of Case Research, Journal of XIM University with the two teaching cases.

- Training at PCBL: Pragati for Progress?

 By Tania S Rath and Prabhudatta Nayak
- Enhancing Sales Through Modern Technologies: A Case on Model Supreme Paper Mill (MSPM) [Teaching Note is available on request]
 By Waleed Siddiqui and Ahmed Bilal

We have two rich and interesting case study with us. Both are on organizations in the manufacturing sector, however both use a different perspective to look at the cases. Training at PCBL uses the HRM perspective to view the company while the case on Model Supreme paper Mill uses the marketing perspective to analyses the company.

The first case study is aimed at enabling students in design thinking with employees as the focus. This case brings ring home the need for organizations to align employeemindset with the purpose and vision of the company for imbibing a contribution mindset and feeling of pride for being part of a great organization contributing to global growth. The case can be used in managementeducation to drive discussion in courses on Learning and Development, Human Resource Management, Design Thinking etc.

This second case study combines technology with marketing and focuses on the use of SEO and advanced promotional techniques using technology. This case is based on an international company and can also be used for students in courses on International Business. The case discusses the dilemma of its founders as they go international in the region and the

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optimal use of SEO and technology that can increase their visibility. This case study can be used in courses on Marketing, Marketing communications Entrepreneurship to name a few.

Wishing you all Happy Reading!

With Warm Regards,

Prof. Mousumi Padhi

Editor

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Training at PCBL: Pragati for Progress

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Abstract

Ray, Chief manager (L&D and OD) at PCBL, was looking at the just received employee engagement survey results. While the loyalty of people as shown by the data was satisfactory, the awareness about vision, mission of the company at grass roots level had been a matter of real concern. Phillips Carbon Black Limited (PCBL) had been awarded with 'The Great Managers Award' by People Business and Times of India in the year 2016. Structured capability building programmes were being held continuously for the employees to achieve excellence within the organization. The firm had consistently increased its allocation to enhance the competency of its employees, through systematic training across the plants and regional offices, and ensured that its organizational goals were clear to every personnel in the team through various learning and development initiatives. However, employee survey results showed awareness and connect to the vision and mission of the company at a dismal 28 percent.

Key words: training, employee engagement, company vision, company values

Rav's Dilemma

Ray, Chief manager (L&D and OD) at PCBL, was looking at the just received employee engagement survey results. While the loyalty of people as shown by the data was satisfactory, the awareness about vision, mission of the company at grass roots level had been a matter of real concern. Phillips Carbon Black Limited(PCBL) had been awarded with 'The Great Managers Award' by People Business and Times of India in the year 2016. Journey of excellence within organization was continued with structured capability building programmes held continuously for the employees. The Company had steadily enhanced its investments to sharpen the capabilities of its people, through systematic interventions across the plants and regional offices, and ensured that its organizational goals were clear to every personnel in the team through various learning and

development initiatives. However, the survey results show awareness and connect to the Vision and mission of the company at a dismal 28 percent.

An Overview of Philips Carbon Black

Philips Carbon Black Ltd (PCBL), owed its origin to the Goenka Group of Industries. The Goenka Group, an established business house in India had several industries under its fold including Power, FMCG, Retail, Carbon Black: Media houses, Sports and the field of Education. In 1960, the PCBL was established as a collaborative venture with Phillips Petroleum of USA as Philips Carbon Black Limited(PCBL). They have since emerged as India's largest producer and exporter and as 7th largest producer of carbon black in the world (Exhibit II). The company had achieved this feat on the strength of their global presence,(Exhibit III), brand image, product customization and timely delivery while maintaining excellence in quality. The sales had increased 1.5 times from 2014 to 2018 (Exhibit V). Spanned across 45 countries worldwide the company resorted to healthy business practices implying ethical conduct, transparency and customer commitment adding tremendous value not only financially but also in building confidence and trust of the stakeholders.

The company produced carbon black for application in both rubber and non-rubber products. Carbon black was an elemental carbon used in rubber production in black granule form as a reinforcing agent. It was used also in a variety of products like plastics, coating, printing, inks, fibres and batteries.

PCBL served their customers with a number of products both in India and abroad. They had secured quality certification from ASTM (American Society for Testing and Materials) and USFDA (United States Food and Drug Administration) for plastics applications(like plastic trays and cutleries). 'Orient black' and 'Royale Black' were the two major brands of PCBL relating to Rubber black and Specialty black respectively. The other major players in the Indian markets are Hi-Tech (Aditya Birla Nuvo) and Cabot India (a subsidiary of Cabot Corporation).(Exhibit IV)

In India the company has four manufacturing facilities(Durgapur, Palej, Mundra, Kochi) with an installed capacity of 422,000 MT and a 76 MW capacity for power generation. PCBL is setting up a green field carbon black plant in Chennai and carbo chemical plant in Odisha, which going forward will further strengthen its geographical reach.(Exhibit I)

The company worked towards its vision of providing innovative solution as a reliable international player and an exciting workplace to its people.

The HR department has been created as a strategic business unit for procurement, maintenance and development of the people.

Human Resource Department at Philips Carbon Black

The HR Department was responsible for crafting and implementing policy decisions regarding recruitment, selection, training, compensation & benefits, performance management and retirement/exit of employees in a fair and equitable manner. As on March 2021 the employee distribution was as follows.

In PCBL the HR spearheaded Diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives in policy and practice. Equal Employment Opportunity was provided to all eligible persons irrespective of caste, religion, age, gender, race, creed, colour, differently challenged persons as per the law of the land. Individuals were treated with respect and dignity. Efforts were made to maintain a work culture and environment for employees to excel without discrimination of any kind while exercising their right to work in a professional manner. All employment and promotions are solely based on capability of the employee. Reasonable accommodations were made for Persons with Disability. Any form of harassment was strictly prohibited.

PCBL believed that growth can be sustained only if the people were geared to take challenges and perform with pride. Excellence in work were aligned to rewards and incentives. Maintaining harmonious industrial relations by recognizing the unions in designated factories, and employing the tools of collective bargaining, negotiation and conciliation whenever necessary were resorted to in the interest of industrial peace. This was further reinforced by a employment relations policy as per Indian labour law requirements.

Capability building of people happened to be one of the celebrated goals of PCBL. They respected the career aspirations, motivations and preferences of its people. They have steadily enhanced their investments to sharpen the capabilities of employees. Their interventions focused on aligning people capabilities with organizational objectives.

L & D Initiatives at PCBL

To realize the developmental goals of its 1000+ employees, PCBL has provided several learning platforms and programmes. As a manufacturing company it focused, technical, functional, safety and leadership development goals of the employees.

Virtual Gurukul was an online secured cloud-based platform for learning and development. The technical trainings were driven through this platform that was aimed at inculcating a self-learning culture at PCBL.

EMBARK PCBLite was a well-integrated, digitized onboarding programme for the new joinees, promoting awareness on the Group's legacy and values, ethics and code of conduct. This had proven to be an effective orientation process for incoming employees. PCBLite Leaders was designed as a workshop that focussed on capability building through the empowerment of senior functional leaders and enhancing their coaching abilities.

Safety training and awareness were conducted across manufacturing units to create utmost safeguard against accidents by improving safety standards and inducing required behavioural change.

Live Sampark was a connectivity building programme with the help of technology designed like a 'townhall'. Electronic connectivity to employees were ensued with the help internet on a real time basis. Leaders could address employees across the countries and across regions to communicate about the future plan, challenges of implementation. Performance review were also done and necessary feedback given for improvement. Team members clarify their doubts, give suggestions for improvement and share ideas in the forum. Leena AI was a chatbot developed from ensuring communication during the pandemic times.

Training Academy

PCBL's training academy at Palej was built to provide training to the new recruits. A structured curriculum was designed and training schedule set up for imparting training systematically. Both GETs (Graduate engineer trainees) and MTs(Management trainees) were given training in this academy since 2008. The training programme has been based on the 70:20:10 learning principle and is driven under the mentorship and guidance of the Principal, Training Academy, and the Reporting Manager.

The training programme is a year-long affair and is divided into three phases. After the classroom training, employees go through a rigorous five-month on-the-job training at their respective locations followed by live projects in the last phase. Trainees were required to work on a real business challenge and solve it. Mentors and Managers provide feedbacks on their performance which was shared with the trainees and improvement suggestions given by the Principal. Trainees also work side by side in shift activities of the plant to develop the necessary skills for independent handling of the responsibilities after training.

Nirantar Gyan Vardan Yojana: Learning from Experts

At PCBL they identify subject matter experts in house for different functional areas, to convert 'tacit knowledge' into 'explicit knowledge'. This transformation in knowledge was achieved with the help of subject matter content on equipment knowledge, maintenance activities, best practices and other relevant subjects. The training needs identification was done based on the organizational and task analysis through discussion with unit heads and functional heads. Monthly Training Calendar was available on the Learning Management System (LMS). The Company uses People Connect Platform as the host LMS powered by Success Factors.

Training Evaluation: Training evaluation in PCBL follows the levels of evaluation given by Kirkpatrick model. Evaluations of training at level one were done immediately after the programme by circulating a Feedback form to be filled by the trainees. Their immediate reaction were recorded and analysed for improvement. At Level two, learning gain were analysed by comparing a online pre and post training learning evaluation test. At level III, behavioural and performance changes at work was assessed by a systematic Post training behavioural impact study.

The Challenge: In the decade starting 2010, PCBL started facing competition from other Carbon Black producers due to opening up of the economy and foreign suppliers trying to do business in India. The domestic carbon black industry was impacted by a slowdown within the automobile sector as well as by the increasing dumping of carbon black into India by China and other countries. PCBL struggled to maintain its leading position due to tough competition from Chinese Companies in terms of product quality and quantity. (Exhibit IV). Traditional way of doing business seemed to be obsolete, employees seemed to be cut off from larger purpose of the Company and its business goals. In 2013 there was a change in leadership and Rishav Desai took over as the

Managing Director of the Company. He was well acquainted with the problem living through it and tried his best to revamp the Company. The transformation journey for the Company was initiated in 2013-14.

The first step was to align the employees by setting a shared vision for the Company. With this purpose a new vision statement was co-created by participation and involvement of 80 percent of the employees. This helped gain employee commitment to the vision (Exhibit VI).

Based on the vision PCBL People Philosophy aligned to the core values of the company (Exhibit VIII) was designed on the basis of five pillars of Leadership, Culture, Capability, Demography & Rewards (Exhibit VII)

Training Needs Analysis (TNA) was undertaken at organization level to find out the organization Performance Gap(OPG). The results of the TNA were the following:

- PCBL had a large set of new employee base who lacked awareness and understanding of the Vision statement
- The employee contribution and the business intention were having a gap. People were not able to clearly connect with the larger business objective (Mostly employees at the grass root level)
- Lot of interventions were planned and implemented but employee connect with the larger goal and vision of the company at grassroot level were non-existent.

The outcomes of TNA set the objective for the training programme to be designed. The programme would be designed to cover all employees in the organization. The aim was to make a planned intervention to align the employees to the vision and mission of the organization so that they can visualize the connect with the larger business goal.

The Programme

Meetings were called for by the HR department for brainstorming about the design of the programme. Decision was to be taken as regards name, duration of the programme, timeline for

execution, details of the content, launching & conduct of the programme. Line managers were hesitant for any programme longer than two days as it will affect plant operations. Keeping their concerns in mind, it was decided to design a workshop for one day to align the mind-set of the employees towards company's vision and business. The name of the programme was decided to be 'Pragati' meaning progress. The programme was to cover both the white collar and blue-collar employees across the organization. A countrywide launch was envisaged. This posed a number of challenges and Ray was at a fix as regards the design of the programme, its implementation and evaluation for effectiveness.

The comprehensive training plan encompassing all the three components: content, conduct and evaluation design needed to be prepared. The main considerations under each sub head were discussed below.

Content Design: Both content selection and content delivery had to be precise so as to effectively realize the training objectives. What topics to include, what methods to choose for maximum impact needed to be carefully crafted. In a multilevel programme holding the attention of participants consistently required use of appropriate learning theories, principles and methods. As blue-collar workers were there, connecting them to the program was important before giving information about big picture of the company, its competitors, and relevant data. It was necessary to make them change ready, so that they could adapt to the changing requirements, learn and deliver back home. Choice of content and proper sequencing were vital for success of the programme. Judicious use of learning theories, principles as they applied to the adults was the need of the hour.

Conduct Design: Once the content was ready, proper planning for seamless execution had to be done. The paramount challenge was to convince them to come to the programme. This required advance planning to be made in the following areas;

- Top management and Union support was needed to add credibility to the programme and ensure buy in.
- Managing the event in different places simultaneously also needed arrangement for venues and logistics.
- Cost of the programme needed to be estimated.
- Training the Trainers beforehand to be arranged

• Arranging for travel and transport for trainers and participants.

Evaluation Design: A systematic content design would include the design for evaluation. The objectives of evaluation were derived from the training objectives but the designers should also plan for deciding on the parameters of evaluation, and how to evaluate at different levels of evaluation.

Ray was overwhelmed by the enormity of the task. They had to design the programme in a month and execute within a year covering all employees.

*Names changed to maintain anonymity

Exhibits

Exhibit-I: PCBL Plant Locations

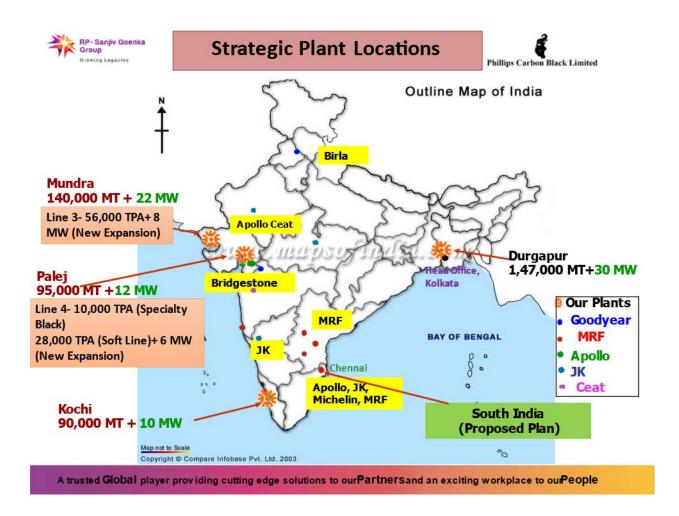


Exhibit-II: Overview of the company



Exhibit III: Chart showing International locations of PCBL

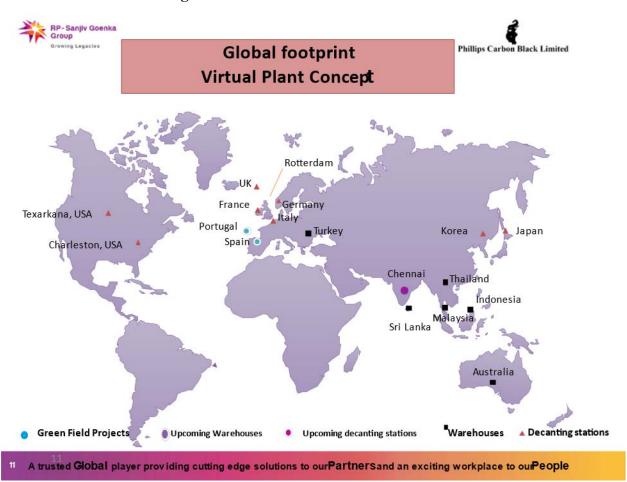


Exhibit IV: Figure showing market share

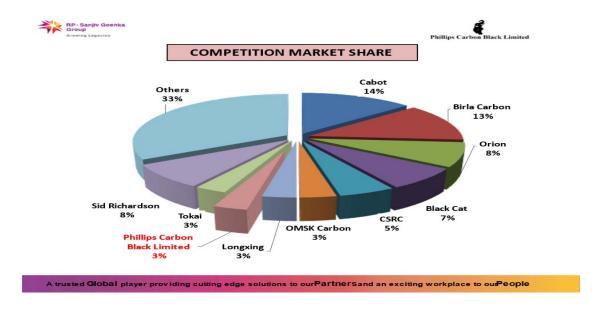


Exhibit V: Sales Trends of PCBL

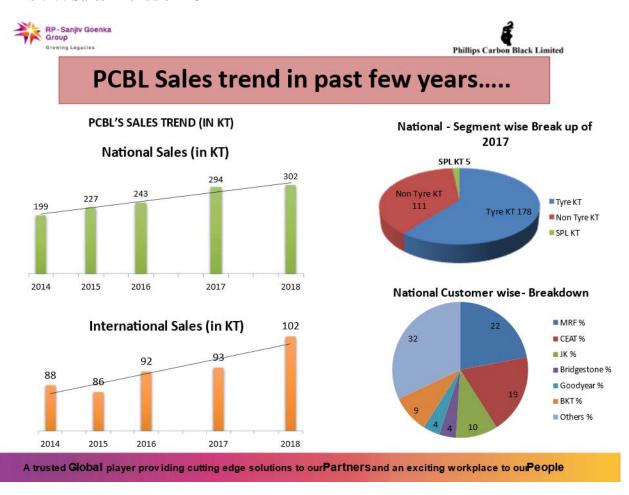


Exhibit VI: Vision of PCBL



Exhibit VII: People Philosophy of PCBL



A trusted Global player providing cutting edge solutions to ourPartnersand an exciting workplace to ourPeople

Employee Strength, PCBL

Total Managerial employees- 785,

Non managerial employees-240,

PWD -6, Women -50.

Total 1025 as of March 2021

Exhibit VIII



PCBL CORE VALUES





CUSTOMER HAPPINESS

Bring a smile on the face of your customer



CREDIBILITY

Instill trust and confidence with your actions



HUMANENESS

Be Caring and Respectful to all



EXECUTION EXCELLENCE

Put your heart and soul into your actions



SPEED

Move ahead of time



RISK TAKING

Dare to go beyond

A trusted Global player providing cutting edge solutions to our Partners and an exciting workplace to our People

Model Supreme Paper Mill (MSPM): Enhancing Sales Through Modern **Technology**

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Abstract

Model Supreme Paper Mill planned to increase company's sales by introducing its paper products in

Asian countries within a year. Before SEO the sales of Fluting paper was 22.M, Kraft paper was

46.4M and Liner sales was 26.7M . These were the major products of this company. Mr Ishaque was

not contended with these figures so he decided to use SEO to increase sales and exports. By going in

for international search engine optimization, the company improved visibility of its website.

Consequently it also increased its sales. The case discusses how this was achieved.

Key words: social media, sales, SEO, Pakistan

Introduction

On a hot and dry afternoon in May 2015, Muhammad Ishaque, Chief Executive Officer

(CEO), and Wasif Rasheed, Director, sat in their office brooding over how to increase their sales in

Asian countries. Ishaque knew that there was potential in their products to meet international

demand and gain profit. He therefore decided to export their company's products. His efforts were

to increase the turnover of his company. He was like a man with a mission. The mission to help his

company flourish, so Mr. Ishaque did all he could to enhance sales and motivate his team for sales in

Asian countries by using modern technology.

Enhancing Sales Through Modern Technologies

14

Background:

Model Supreme Paper Mills Private Limited (MSPM) was a well-established manufacturing unit, equipped with the latest machines and tools required for production of its product range. It was started in 2010 at Lahore by Ishaque Zaheer Ahmed and Wasif Rasheed. They built this company by way of establishing a long-term relationship with their customers by catering to all their demand pertaining to Paper and Board. Their relationship orientation led to a positive growth and created a strong market share. This was in addition to the fact that their per unit cost was low. The foundation of success for paper and pulp industries are resource efficiency and bioeconomics. Further improvements in technology could further reduce environmental impacts and optimise the use of resources. Firms in the industry were taking advantage of the opportunities offered by bioeconomy. With major expansion projects and investments right across a diversified portfolio, Model Supreme Paper Mills Private Limited had laid strong foundations for future growth.

Model Supreme Paper Mill was a subsidiary of Model Paper Mill Private Limited and was controlled by highly experienced staff. (MSPM) was committed to establishing a long-term relationship with its customers by virtue of customising its range as well as the timely execution of the orders of its clients. Fluting Paper, Kraft Paper, and Liner were the major products of Model Supreme Company. Their product portfolio included different grades of corrugated case material ranging from 20 BF to 4 BF, manufactured in various colours between the weight ranges of 100 GSM to 150 GSM.

The company's production plant was equipped with cutting-edge machinery, resulting in high daily production and low per-unit costs. The company had an excellent reputation because of its dedication, commitment, customer orientation, effective and efficient services, and quality

consciousness. By offering high-class products and best services, they had a long list of loyal customers throughout Pakistan.

Strategy to become Tycoon of Asian Market:

Model Supreme Paper planned to increase sales by introducing paper products in Asian countries within a year. The marketing strategy to increase sales was designed through strong brand positioning in international market by establishing networking in public sector, establishing a website and SEO. This strategy necessitated a proper content strategy where the company had to plan the content for its website. India, Bangladesh and China also sold their exports in the Asian market. There were many competitors in Asia such as Asian paper mill, Sun tao paper mill etc. Although MSPM was performing reasonably well in Asian market. A content strategy was needed to improve marketing results and ROI.

The advantage of content marketing, as opposed to traditional marketing, is that it allow one to better target ideal audience. MSPM trained their staff in this new way to enter a new market. Content strategy helped better understand the audience and create content that was relevant to their needs and pain points. It was also necessary to distribute the content in the right channels and a comprehensive strategy could help to achieve this.

MSPM had to do e-marketing by finding the email ids of relevant companies and sending them an introductory email to convince them to take them as a supplier. Email was an effective source of marketing because 80% of professionals used email as a way of communication. The link of the website could be sent to people via emails. The receivers of mails could just open and check it on their mobiles. If the website of the company could be made mobile friendly and attractive then the customers would be easily aware about the products. The frequency of email campaigns will also have to be increases as done only once, it would not create a lasting impact in the minds of people.

The next avenue was the B2C social media which is the backbone of promotional campaigns. There are many social media platforms that one can choose from, the most common being Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn and Twitter. As MSPM was a B2B organization, its advertisements needed to reach business professionals, purchasing managers, and consultants. Consequently, the company's marketing team had to be active on LinkedIn and Twitter. However, to optimize the use of social media, on Instagram and Facebook stories and other incidents could be shared with customers that that are interesting. Probable customers could know about the company and when they were looking for paper supplies.

In B2B marketing, the company felt the best way to sell the product was to first to educate the target market about the product. In this case, the company had to tell people about their product details and the product's contribution solve problems. Worldwide and regional targeting tools allowed companies to choose where in the world they liked to show their ads. Rather than creating multiple campaigns, Model S sets up a single campaign and delivers ads globally or to different regions.

The company planned to increase company's sales by introducing its paper products in Asian countries in the next year. A marketing plan was developed to increase the sales through strong brand positioning in the international market. What was also needed was to establish networking in public sector, establish website and SEO³. There should be a proper content strategy in which company have to plan the content for website. A content strategy was to improve marketing results and ROI⁴ by allowing to understand exactly why using any type of content the people who were more likely to purchase what MSPM sells. The great thing about content marketing, as opposed to traditional marketing, is that it allows you to better target ideal audience, but only if does it well. MSPM trained their staff in this new way to enter another market. Content strategy was to help MSPM better understand the audience and create content that was relevant to their needs and pain

points. It was also to help company distribute that content on the right channels. and a comprehensive strategy can help to achieve this. MSPM had to do e-marketing by searching emails of relevant companies and sending them an introductory email to convince them to take model supreme as a supplier. Email is an effective source of marketing because 80% of professionals use email as a way of communication the website link is sent to people via emails, they just open and check it on their mobiles which is becoming more and more the primary way to checking gmails. website of the company was attractive and function correctly on phones then the customers will easily aware about the products More over model supreme paper industry needs to do email campaign frequently because mail will not affect the mind of people in first time, which results in making decision to purchase company product it totally disappointment, because if this campaign is not working on B2C social media is back bone of marketing these days. Social media have many platforms in which most common are Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn and Twitter.

MSPM is a B2B organization, so its advertisements must reach business professionals, purchasing managers, and consultants; as a result, the company's marketing team should be active on LinkedIn and Twitter. So, on Instagram and Facebook, companies can share stories and other incidents that are interesting to people, so people can know about the company and when they are looking for paper supplies, they can think about Model Supreme Paper Limited first. In B2B⁵ marketing, the company finds the best way to sell the product is to first to educate the target market about the product, in which case the company has to tell people about their product details and the product's contribution to people's lives to solve their problems. The worldwide and regional ¹ targeting tools allow companies to choose where in the world they'd like to show their ads. Rather than creating multiple campaigns, Model S sets up a single campaign and delivers ads globally or to different regions. Facebook is delivering more ads to markets that perform better.

⁵ Business to business; Business deal with another business.

Optimizing SEO for flourishing sales

SEO is the process of ranking a company website on top of the sites in the Search engine. To increase the ranking of MSPM, they also wrote articles on Google scholar where people read these articles and then went to the website for more details. The motto of MSPM was to satisfy the demand of the customers at a global level to earn a profit. In 2013-14, the sale was not as much as Mr. Ishaque wanted. Before SEO, the fluting paper sales were 22.M, Kraft paper sales were 46.4M, which was the major selling product of this company, and liner sales were 26.7M. These sales figures did not satisfy Mr. Ishaque, so he decided to use SEO to increase sales and export of this Statistics show that companies that export goods to other countries earn a substantial profit through export operations as the domestic market is less profitable. This is because when companies export goods, they earn in foreign currencies, which are way more valuable than our own. A company expands the market to compensate for the domestic loss. By earning the profit through export, a company was improving the quality of the products by purchasing new machinery and technology. The increase in the e-commerce industry has resulted in a high demand for packaging solutions that help to earn profit. The consolidation and expansion of businesses in other geographies through acquisition routes was another positive effect due to the scale of International Paper. It had the backing of the government for expansion because the government wanted to expand their exports. The opportunity that Mr. Ishaque perceived was related to a lack of social media usage due to which sales were not increasing (Exhibit-1).

The Brand Model Supreme Paper Mill (BMSPM)

By going in for international search engine optimization, the company had improved the visibility of its website. This meant the website was seen by people in some other countries apart from the host country. Mr. Ishaque and his team's efforts made his dream come true. They increased their sales in 2015-16. Their sales in Fluting paper, Kraft paper, and Liner were 34.5M, 89M, and 75M

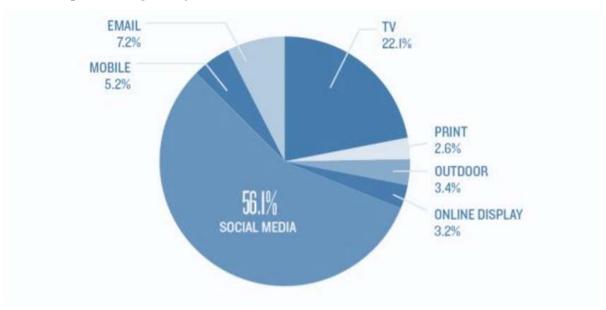
respectively (Exhibit 4). The international market showed a very positive response to these product lines. The sales of the company increased from 26.7M to 75M. Increased visibility meant increased visibility of company products and services. Done well, international SEO connected MSPM with its target audience globally. With an effective international SEO strategy, the company was discovering what parts of its content were working and what weren't. The company knew precisely what stopped potential customers from proceeding to the sales cart, or if they reached that stage, what stopped company customers from making the purchase. Sites that loaded quickly was more likely to be ranked higher by search engines. The company was also optimising its site for various browsers like Chrome, IE, Firefox, Safari, etc. This meant the company was reaching out to all kinds of users using different browsers. International SEO also helped companies determine how successful they were in acquiring organic visitors. Email marketing was one of the most effective online marketing tools due to its low cost and high response rate. The company was able to reach potential customers at a fraction of the cost of advertising or direct mail thanks to the new electronic communications.

What next?

The firm increased its revenues from PKR 26.7 million to PKR 76 million, yet the market remained unexplored. What should Muhammad Ishaque do to maximize his possibilities via the use of modern technologies? What social media platform would be better ideal to maximize efficiency while minimizing costs? Muhammad Ishaque was perplexed by these issues.

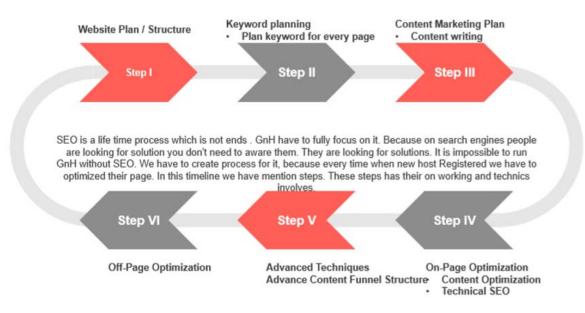
Exhibits

Exhibit 1: Graph showing use of social media



Source: Authors own

Exhibit 2: SEO plan



Source: Authors own

Products	Fluting Paper	Kraft Paper	Liner
Tax year	2013-2014	2013-2014	2013-2014
Sales	22.3M	46.4M	26.7M

Exhibit 4: Company sales after SEO

Products	Fluting Paper	Kraft Paper	Liner
Tax year	2015-2016	2015-2016	2015-2016
Sales	34.5M	89M	75M

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