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Submission date: 10-Jul-2023 01:22PM (UTC+0100)

Submission ID: 210052052

File name: 33291_Vitalie_Erhan_1_504190_1540073190.docx (75.28K)

Word count: 3292

Character count: 20431



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Programme: BA (Hons) Leadership and Management Skills for the Workplace

Module code: BMSW5106

Module Name: Knowledge and Information Management Skills for the Workplace

Task 1: Individual Report

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Introduction

Effective decision-making, problem-solving, and productivity in modern work environments require knowledge and information management skills. Key skills include information literacy, critical thinking, data analysis, and information security. According to *Bouthillier and Shearer (2002)*, information literacy involves discerning and assessing diverse sources of information, while critical thinking evaluates credibility, accuracy, and pertinence. Also, data analysis involves interpreting insights, while information security ensures data protection and compliance. However, effective collaboration and communication are crucial for disseminating knowledge across organisational units. Continuous learning and industry trends are essential for managing knowledge and information, while technology tools and software proficiency are crucial for problem-solving. Ethical considerations like data privacy, confidentiality, and intellectual property rights are also crucial.

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The purpose of this report is to evaluate the knowledge management systems of two e-commerce companies, Ocado and Boohoo, and provide suggestions for how they might improve in the future. Companies have made improving their workforce's skill sets a top priority after realising that doing so may provide them with a significant competitive advantage.

Introduction to Ocado and Boohoo

Ocado is a web-based grocery store that operates out of the United Kingdom. Ocado, which began in 2000, is now one of the leading British online grocers. The firm uses cutting-edge robotic technologies to effectively complete client orders as part of a novel business strategy centred on technology and automation. (*Ocadogroup, 2022*). Among the many things Ocado sells are groceries, home goods, and even fresh fruit. Both Waitrose and Marks & Spencer, two of the largest grocery chains in the United Kingdom, are partners with the firm. Also, through the sale of technology licences and consulting services, Ocado has grown its operations internationally.

Boohoo is a UK-based fast-fashion e-commerce platform. Boohoo was founded in 2006, and it caters mostly to youthful, fashion-forward customers. The organization has various sub-brands that target different areas of the fashion industry, such as Boohoo, Pretty Little Things, and Nasty Gal. Boohoo is a very successful e-commerce site because it provides customers with access to a wide variety of fashionable items at reasonable prices. (*Boohoo.com 2020*) Therefore, the company's supply chain is designed for speed and flexibility so that it can swiftly

adapt to shifting customer preferences and the latest fashion trends. Boohoo now has a worldwide reach, with services available in many nations.

SWOT Analysis of Knowledge Management Systems in Ocado and Boohoo

Swot Analysis Ocado

Strengths:

Strengths:

- Ocado's technological prowess is shown by the company's sophisticated robotic and automation technologies, which streamline crucial business processes like inventory management and order fulfilment.
- The company places a strong emphasis on encouraging a culture of cooperation and knowledge sharing among its employees, which makes effective information transfer and innovative thinking possible. (Henry, 2021).
- Ocado has partnered with major grocery stores to benefit from their extensive experience in the retail sector.
- According to Mkansi, Qi and Green, (2011) methodology is based on the analysis of large volumes of data that Ocado gathers to enhance its business processes and the quality of its interactions with customers.

Weaknesses:

- Ocado faces potential hazards related to system breakdowns and technical disruptions because of its heavy dependence on technology and automation technologies. (V. RM, and Berry, 2019).
- Although Ocado is well-established online, it only has a limited number of physical locations (namely, warehouses and distribution centres), which might hinder its ability to expand into other areas.
- New knowledge management systems may meet opposition from staff members who are resistant to change or unfamiliar with technological resources.

Opportunities:

- Ocado may potentially grow its business and client base by exploring options to extend its worldwide collaborations and licencing arrangements.

- Technological Advancement Ocado's knowledge management systems may benefit from ongoing investment in technology and innovation, leading to higher operational efficiency and greater consumer happiness (*Henry, 2021*).
- The large amounts of data that Ocado gathers may be monetized in a variety of ways. These include data analytics services and individualised product suggestions.

Threats:

- Competition is fierce in the online grocery space, with both established stores and upstart e-commerce sites fighting for customers' dollars.
- Ocado might lose business to rivals that provide equivalent or superior knowledge management solutions (*Mkansi, Qi and Green, 2011*).
- Changes in the laws governing data privacy and online shopping may make it more difficult for Ocado to collect, preserve, and use client data effectively.
- Problems in the Supply Chain: If there are problems in the supply chain, such as with logistics or external reasons like the conflict between Russia and Ukraine, Ocado may have trouble getting their items to their consumers on time.

Swot Analyses of Boohoo

Strengths:

- Boohoo's supply chain is agile, so the firm can swiftly adjust to shifting fashion trends and satisfy the needs of its customers.
- Boohoo's portfolio of brands allows it to be adaptable and to seize a larger portion of the market by catering to a broad variety of consumers (*Allen, 2003*).
- The organisation has a robust online presence thanks to its established and popular platform, which facilitates effective information management and data analysis for its many clients.
- Boohoo is a social media marketing powerhouse with a proven track record of success in connecting with its target demographic and gleanable actionable intelligence about their preferences and buying habits.

Weaknesses:

- Ethical Issues Boohoo's brand and consumer loyalty have been threatened by problems around labour practices and working conditions in their supplier chain.

- To keep its costs low and its turnaround time minimal, Boohoo may have to sacrifice some product quality, which might affect its ability to retain customers.
- According to *Varley, et. al., (2018)*. Boohoo has an undue amount of dependence on its suppliers, leaving it subject to supply chain interruptions and quality control difficulties due to production and delivery delays or failures.

Opportunities:

- Boohoo may expand into new areas and broaden its consumer base by looking abroad for growth opportunities.
- Improvements to Boohoo's image and the addition of ethically concerned consumers may result from sustainability initiatives.
- To better understand client behaviour and preferences, Boohoo may invest in state-of-the-art data analytics tools and systems that will allow for more efficient knowledge management (*Allen, 2003*).

Threats:

- Trends in the fashion industry are always evolving since the business itself is very fluid and quick-moving. If the company doesn't adjust to the ever-evolving world of fashion, Boohoo might quickly become irrelevant.
- The prevalence of rival quick fashion stores and e-commerce behemoths poses a threat to Boohoo's market position and efforts to attract new customers through changes to labour Laws, Environmental Requirements, or Data Privacy. (*Lea-Greenwood, 2012*).
- Laws Boohoo's operations and knowledge management practises may be affected by changes to labour laws, environmental requirements, or data privacy laws.

Critical Evaluation of Knowledge Management Systems

Ocado's Knowledge Management (KM) Value Chain

Ocado gathers expertise from a variety of sources, including consumer data, insights from suppliers, and industry partnerships, among others. The accumulation of this information offers a full grasp of the preferences of customers, trends in the market, and new technological developments. (*Strønen, 2020*).

Knowledge Analysis: To perform analysis on the accumulated information and extract useful information from it, the organisation makes use of sophisticated data analytics and machine learning techniques.

Knowledge Development. According to the findings of the study, Ocado places a primary emphasis ¹⁷ on the development of new strategies, processes, and technologies to improve its operations and maintain a competitive advantage in the e-commerce business. (Mullins, 2007). Also, this includes technological advancements in the areas of inventory management, delivery logistics, and warehouse automation.

Knowledge Storage. Ocado has a centralised knowledge repository that retains the learned information and makes it simple for staff to retrieve it. Within the context of the organisation, this knowledge repository functions as an invaluable resource for decision-making, the resolution of problems, and the pursuit of ongoing education.

Dissemination of Knowledge. The environment at this organisation encourages people to work together and share their experiences and expertise. Through various internal communication channels, various collaboration platforms, and various training programmes, it encourages the spread of information (Saghiri, et. al., 2017). Because of this, workers are given the ability to access and benefit from the organisation's collective knowledge. Ocado encourages its workers to use the information they've gained in their day-to-day work and the way they make decisions by providing them with opportunities to do so. However, this guarantees that information is turned into action, which in turn leads to gains in operational efficiency, new solutions, and improved results for customers.

Maintaining Informational and Technological Systems:

- Tools for Data Analysis Ocado processes and analyses massive amounts of data using a variety of cutting-edge tools and methodologies for data analysis. This permits the extraction of useful insights and promotes decision-making based on evidence. Ocado's knowledge management is intricately intertwined with the sophisticated robotic technologies that it employs for warehouse automation and order fulfilment. (Wiig, 1997). Also, these technologies gather data in real-time, improve process efficiency, and add to the organisation's total knowledge management capabilities.
- Tools for Collaboration. Ocado's staff can share information more easily and work together more effectively because of the company's use of digital collaboration tools. These platforms allow for frictionless communication, the sharing of ideas, and

cooperation on projects, which helps to build a culture of ongoing learning and the interchange of information.

- System for Customer Relationship Management (also known as CRM): Ocado makes use of a CRM system to gather and manage customer data, which enables personalised customer experiences, targeted marketing efforts, and data-driven decision-making. (*Alavi and Leidner, 2001*).

Boohoo

Boohoo's Knowledge Management (KM) Value Chain

Boohoo uses methods including market research, client feedback, and social media monitoring to amass a wealth of information. Having this information at your disposal is useful for keeping up with the latest style trends, customer tastes, and market fluctuations. The business then uses tools like data analytics and trend analysis to make sense of the gleaned insights. Using this information, Boohoo works to meet the changing needs of its customers by creating new designs, product lines, and marketing initiatives. However, this requires keeping up with the ever-changing fashion scene by spotting new trends and trying out daring new designs. Boohoo has a central database or knowledge repository full of useful data on fashion trends, customer insights, and product development (*McInerney, 2017*). Designers, merchandisers, and marketers may all use this one database as a resource, so information is easily shared around the company.

Disseminating Information: Through frequent meetings, brainstorming sessions, and internal communication channels, the company encourages information exchange and cooperation among its personnel. This promotes a climate of constant development by allowing for the sharing of insights, successes, and failures. (*Dalkir, 2013*). Boohoo encourages its staff to use the information they have learned in their daily work. However, this guarantees that information is turned into useful tactics, which in turn leads to the creation of fashionable, market-driven apparel.

Providing a Backbone for IT Infrastructures:

- Boohoo forecasts and detects upcoming fashion trends using software and data analysis technologies. These resources aid in forward-thinking decision-making, helping the business to both outpace the competition and satisfy its clientele.

- Boohoo's e-commerce site is a one-stop shop for learning about products, reading reviews from other customers, and gaining insights from data. This system aids in the management of information by revealing patterns in market demand, consumer tastes, and product selection in real-time.
- Boohoo makes use of tools for monitoring user feedback, sentiment, and discussions on social media platforms. Also, these tools help with knowledge acquisition by revealing customer preferences, identifying influencers, and responding to new developments (*Rafiq, Lu and Fulford, 2012*).
- Boohoo may use a Product Lifecycle Management (PLM) system to oversee the whole production cycle. Therefore, the efficient handling of product-related knowledge and information is guaranteed by this system, which also improves communication and simplifies processes.

However, both Ocado and Boohoo value knowledge management and make use of several tools and technologies to facilitate this practice. By aiding information gathering, analysis, storage, distribution, and application, these technologies advantage businesses improve their productivity, creativity, and ability to compete in the online market.

Conclusion and Future Development

In conclusion, the comparison of the knowledge management systems used by Ocado and Boohoo sheds light on the significance of efficiently managing one's organisation's information and knowledge to achieve success in the e-commerce industry. Both companies are aware of the value that information gathering, analysis, development, storage, distribution, and application can bring to the table in terms of accomplishing their respective business goals. In addition to this, they have put in place a variety of supporting information technology solutions to improve their skills regarding knowledge management.

Ocado distinguishes itself in the industry because of its technical skills, culture of collaboration, strategic alliances, and data-driven strategy. However, to gather, analyse, create, store, distribute, and use information, the organisation makes use of cutting-edge robotics, analytics tools, collaborative platforms, and customer relationship management (CRM) systems. (*Kulkarni and Freeze, 2005*). Nonetheless, some problems need to be addressed, such as being dependent on technology and having a limited physical presence. Ocado can further develop its knowledge management system by resolving these limitations and capitalising on possibilities such as worldwide growth and the monetization of data.

Boohoo is exceptional in several areas, including social media engagement, internet visibility, brand portfolio, and flexible supply chain management. To efficiently manage its information, the company makes use of technologies for trend forecasting, e-commerce platforms, social media monitoring tools, and product lifecycle management (PLM) systems. Nevertheless, there should be some attention paid to ethical problems and areas where quality control is lacking. Boohoo can improve its knowledge management system by emphasizing measures to reduce environmental impact, enhancing quality control, and being at the forefront of emerging fashion trends. Several critical areas for improvement have been singled out to future-proof the talent that is held within the organisations and to support the growth of knowledge within their respective microenvironments.

Improving One's Capacity to Acquire Information. It is essential for Ocado and Boohoo that they work on improving their capacity to acquire information. Increasing the amount of engagement with external partners, such as customers, suppliers, industry experts, and research institutes, is one way to accomplish this goal (*Firestone and McElroy, 2003*). Organisations have the potential to get priceless insights into prevailing industry trends, client preferences, and developing technology if they actively seek information from a wide variety of sources.

Improving the Capability of Knowledge Analysis. Ocado and Boohoo need to make ongoing investments in their data analytics skills. Deeper insights may be derived from the information that has been accumulated by organisations if they make use of sophisticated analytics tools, algorithms for machine learning, and artificial intelligence. Therefore, these insights have the potential to guide decision-making, improve operational efficiency, and enrich the experiences of customers.

Fostering a Culture of Knowledge Sharing and Cooperation Employees at both companies should be encouraged to participate in a culture that encourages the sharing of information and cooperation. This may be accomplished by putting in place collaborative platforms, setting up regular sessions for employees to share their expertise, and praising and compensating workers for their contributions to the knowledge management system. Furthermore, organisations can access the collective intelligence of their workforce if they provide an atmosphere that is conducive to the sharing of information and is well supported (*Chua and Banerjee, 2013*).

Ocado and Boohoo should continue investing in and updating their information technology systems to provide effective support for knowledge management. This may be accomplished through the implementation of advanced information technology systems. Moreover, this

comprises highly developed tools for data analytics, automation systems, technology for artificial intelligence, and digital platforms for collaborative working. Organisations may improve their knowledge management skills if they keep up with the latest technological breakthroughs and make use of the tools that are most suited for the job.

Considering Ethical and Sustainability Considerations. Boohoo in particular has to make resolving ethical concerns over working conditions and labour practises in its supply chain a top priority to maintain its reputation. Furthermore, the organisation can foster trust with its stakeholders, attract clients who are socially concerned, and guard its brand if it implements practices that are transparent and environmentally responsible. The incorporation of ethical issues into the system of knowledge management will contribute to the organisation's performance over the long run.

Promoting a Culture of Continuous Learning. Both of these companies need to encourage a culture of continuous learning and professional growth among their employees. This involves empowering workers to gain new information and skills by offering training programmes, seminars, and resources to further their education (*Earl, 2001*). Companies can improve their overall knowledge management skills if they encourage the personal development of their workers and provide them with various educational opportunities.

In conclusion, Ocado and Boohoo may position themselves for sustained success in the ever-evolving e-commerce market by addressing the identified areas for improvement within their knowledge management systems. These areas were found based on the results of an analysis conducted on the systems. It will be possible for organisations to make efficient use of their skills and knowledge if they emphasize the collection, analysis, sharing, and application of information while also welcoming advances in technology and taking ethical issues into account. However, they can adjust to shifting market circumstances, be a driving force behind innovation, and provide excellent value to their clients if they do this.

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