

UWTSD

University of Wales, Trinity Saint David

ASSESSMENT 2

Strategic Management (LCMB7003)

“Critically evaluate the emergence of “Virtual Organisations”

Student

Lecture

Manal Talharchet

Amare Desta

1917140

May 2024

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Introduction

Virtual Organisation stands as a new paradigm of business concept that came uniquely after the technological evolution. Operating virtually has come to mean business nowadays. Virtual organisation was first to use technologies which are digital in nature by becoming a catalyst for collaboration and greater efficiency (O'Dowd, 2021). Such companies grant the possibility to overcome domestic constraints with universal work crowds and remote work conditions available all over the world. This thorough analysis avoids leaving anything to the fate whines and fashion every detail, including the elbow-deep handling of issues with remote teams to the depths of strategic planning and organizational dynamic management.

Planning Issues in Virtual Organisations

The challenge of planning a strategic management in the virtual companies requires analysis and novel implementation. These problems are the result from the characteristics of virtual environment use, one of which is missing physical lines or lines of effective communication, split teams and the team relying on digital technologies (Maduka et al., 2018).

One of the major challenges that virtual team management and collaborations with spatially distanced teams impose is the virtual organisation planning. Without a direct sense of proximity, communication and sharing of information with colleagues may be very difficult to fully coordinate actions. In order to successfully decline this, virtual teams will use cutting-edge communication tools and task management systems. Peñarroja et al. (2019) highlight that GitHub, one of the trending software development platforms, encourages collaboration between remote teams through tools like issue trackers, project boards, and code repositories. GitHub contributes to the input of geographically ineffective virtual teams by centralising project-related jobs and channels.

Resource allocation and management are the main operational planning points in virtual companies. Contributing to the equitable allocation of resources across different spaces without compromising efficiency is seen as the most complex question (Asatiani et al., 2021). Thus, virtual companies may be required to apply the same approaches for resource utilisation monitoring and resource management. As an illustration, Automatic, a company that manages WordPress.com, follows a distributed team of remote workers around multiple time zones. Through the use of Scrum and Kanban in the agile project management technique, Automatic will allocate resources dynamically according to the performance of the team and the objectives of the project. Evans (2018) argues that the company's flexible

structure allows the effective deployment of resources and enables the firm to adapt easily to shifting business requirements.

Cultural and multicultural problems that may occur when teams are located on different continents should be considered when virtual organisation planning (Lagorio et al., 2023). Language barriers, cultural differences in organisation, and time zone differences are expected to affect the extent to which individuals cooperate and communicate. Virtual organisations consider cultural competence and diversity inclusion as two key factors in their planning processes, which help address the challenges of cultural diversity. For example, Buffer, a social media management brand, approaches diversity and inclusion as part of building a remote team sense of community. By means of cross-cultural training programs and inclusive communication strategies, Buffer's management tries to show that virtual teams see diversity as a resource instead of an obstacle to cooperation (Johannsen et al., 2022).

Designing Virtual Organisations

Designing virtual organisations requires creating of policies and frameworks that stimulate performance management, collaboration and communication in the organisational structure. Among the challenges associated with this aspect of strategic management in virtual settings include creating cohesive teams, upholding accountability, and handling moral and legal dilemmas (Singh, 2022).

Just as it is with running offline businesses, one of the biggest challenges virtual businesses face is corporate culture cohesiveness and effective leadership among remote workers. Even when a manager is not present physically with the team, it is their responsibility to find other ways to mentor, motivate, and support the workers (Demirel, 2020). The way to solve this dilemma is that virtual firms emphasise leadership development and invest a lot of money in the creation of a strong organizational culture. Similarly, the Zapier workflow automation platform empowers employees to be responsible for their work and empowers the leadership in a distributed format. Through actions such as virtual team building events and leadership qualities training, Zapier encourages a culture of autonomy, trust, and teamwork among its remote workforce members (Maestro-Prieto et al., 2020).

Accountability and performance assessment should be dealt with appropriately as part of the virtual company's design. The absence of personal supervision could cause workers to be unable to cope with the conditions of productivity and goals (Dessouky, 2020). To remedy this, virtual companies adopt efficient performance management systems and open accountability forums. Another example is Automattic, which utilises objective KPIs and regular performance reviews for this purpose. An Automattic-empowered remote team helps

its people to put the organisation's goals first and measure their own performance following the transparent feedback system and weekly check-in meetings suggested (Grzegorzczuk et al., 2021).

However, designing virtual organisations requires one to handle sophisticated legal matters and ethical dilemmas, including those related to employment rules, data privacy, and intellectual property management (Redlbacher and Hattke, 2024). Running internationally makes the job more complicated by requiring virtual enterprises to follow legal and moral laws as well. A software firm called Basecamp simplifies task management and communication between team members. It upholds the idea of ethical business practice and safeguards customer privacy. Basecamp has enforced stringent compliance measures and transparent data processing systems to ensure that its virtual business activities are performed under ethical and legal guidelines. This requires the application of strategic management practices so as to create and maintain effective leadership, establish accountability and solve cases of moral and legal concerns (Tavoletti and Taras, 2023).

Leading Virtual Organisations

Leaders of virtual firms face specific demands of successfully communicating with co-workers who are distant, managing conflicts, and maintaining team engagement and wellness. Strategy management has to attach great importance to these obstacles in order to achieve the leadership goals in the virtual environment (Gandhi et al., 2021). Since the major point of cooperation and coordination among the virtual teams is communication, it becomes necessary to develop effective communication strategies. Lack of physical meetings among team members could disrupt the team-building process and communication. To avoid this, virtual organisations employ various tools and ways of communication that are only for remote work (O'Dowd, 2021). An example is Slack, the team messaging tool that makes communication among members easier by providing features such as file sharing, video conferencing, and instant messaging. Teams on the remote side of the world can easily connect and stay in touch via Slack, even if they are in multiple locations (Maduka et al., 2018).

The identification and resolution of undoubted disputes within virtual work conditions are faced with one-of-a-kind challenges. Sometimes, the mere absence of visual cues and lack of in-person interactions may swiftly escalate to misunderstandings. These can be very damaging to team dynamics (Penarroja et al., 2019). Virtual firms emphasise such strategies as collaboration and conflict resolution in an attempt to minimise the existing difficulties. GitLab is a web-based tool for the DevOps lifecycle that resolves problems with open

communication and asynchronous teamwork. GitLab creates a platform for all the discussions and decision-making that bring together openness and accountability. This assists teams in showing mutual understanding in conflict resolution measures and harmonious relationships (Asatiani et al., 2021).

The transformational leadership style is known to involve idealised leadership, intellectual stimulation, individualised consideration, and inspirational motivation, and it is commonly used by leaders in virtual platforms. Nonetheless, the disadvantages in terms of interacting face-to-face, lack of cultural assimilations, and occasions of misinterpretation should be considered (Evans, 2018). These issues can be mitigated by setting up specific objectives and targets, maintaining a free and supportive line of communication, and encouraging more video conferences. Furthermore, putting forth a leadership programme specific to remote environments and giving employees virtual team-building activities can promote more team cohesion and alignment (Lagorio et al., 2023).

Virtual enterprises must maintain the morale, motivation, and well-being of employees in order to maintain productivity and performance. Initiatives implemented by virtual companies improve the employees' work-life balance and the well-being of employees. Buffer, a social media management platform, puts a strong emphasis on staff welfare through the provision of wellness allowances, flexible working arrangements and mental health assistance. Through the creation of a culture of self-care and a focus on holistic wellness, Buffer enables the success of its remote workforce, resulting in high engagement and productivity for the business as a whole (Demirel, 2020).

Benefits and Challenges of Virtual Organisations

The trend of digital enterprises grows increasingly vital in the sphere of business for multiple reasons. One of their most important advantages is that they enhance flexibility and scalability (Maestro-Prieto et al., 2020). Virtual enterprises do not have physical space limitations in regard to their offices, which makes it better for them to adapt to demand and adjust to changing market conditions. A platform that helps in software development cooperation is GitHub, which functions remotely all over the world (Dessouky, 2020).

The most significant advantage of a virtual office is the ultimate access to global candidates. It is possible for businesses operating with the help of technology to attract the best employees from anywhere, irrespective of their geographical locations. Differences in points of view strengthen creativity while analytical skills become more refined (Grzegorzczak et al., 2021). Automattic, a WordPress.com parent organisation, uses its distributed teams to engage a worldwide talent pool and build up products and services that

satisfy the needs and preferences of diverse consumer segments (Redlbacher & Hattke, 2023).

On the other hand, there is a set of problems and difficulties which virtual groups can face that later can serve as a motivation-decreasing factor and diminish their effectiveness. Another problem associated with home-based work is the lack of the coordination and communication systems needed for remote work (Tavoletti and Taras, 2023). With the absence of face-to-face interaction, there is a higher risk of miscommunication and in return, that may cause delays and inefficiencies. Buffer, a social media management platform, utilises project management software and video conferencing, together with clarification standards, to mitigate this difficulty and facilitate effective coordination and communication among distant teams (Gandhi et al., 2021).

Virtual businesses can have another side effect, which can be the detachment and less focused team members. In case workers don't have the friendships built in regular office settings, they may become isolated from their peers and the company culture (Tavoletti and Taras, 2023). To diminish this factor, Zapier, an automation service, puts more effort into virtual team-building gatherings and creates a strong atmosphere of team spirit through, among others, virtual coffee breaks, online gaming sessions, as well as water cooler conversations (Johannsen et al., 2022).

Nonetheless, these virtual organisations make a significant contribution to the economy and society through the workplace as well. Such businesses may be able to use the remote working capability for employees to minimise urban traffic and space consumption, which in turn could impact patterns of urbanisation (Gandhi et al., 2021). By the same token, they cultivate unconventional work patterns that are innovative, create fallacious employment models, and overturn conventional work arrangements. Local economies may be affected differently by the variation in job demographics and reallocation of economic resources among the regions operating where they are established. There is little doubt that the manufacturing and business models based on virtual organisations, which will be on the rise in the future, will influence the formation of employment and urban development (Grzegorzcyk et al., 2021).

Recommendations and Conclusion

In the first place, virtual organisations must focus on the implementation of efficient communication and collaboration tools, providing possible access to remote workers across the globe for routine communication and tasks. It will be equally important to develop an environment of transparency, inclusiveness, and trust among group members, which will help

virtual teams become resilient and cohesive (Dessouky, 2020). It is of paramount importance that executives involve remote employees with them actively, engage them with some practical tasks and direction, and create a supportive atmosphere inside the organisation. Virtual companies may reach targeted improvements in employee well-being and work-life balance by developing and implementing programs that foster mental health, isolation reduction, and a whole sense of wellness (Demirel, 2020). By putting workers' interests first, virtual organisations may become places where morale, motivation, and productivity get higher and higher and contribute to the flourishing of the company. Virtual organisations also ought to know the legal and regulatory matters in different jurisdictions in an effort to reduce legal risks and data privacy.

In conclusion, virtual businesses give unequivocal freedom, scalability, and access to a global labour force; however, they have their own unique difficulties in teamwork, communication, and employee engagement. Through the enactment of the above-mentioned steps and adopting a tactical way of managing virtual operations, organisations can exploit the benefits whilst curbing some of the problems. They will thereby be in a position to have long-term success in a world that is becoming more networked and digital each day.

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MY TWO PRESENTATION SLIDES

MANAL TALHARCHET (1917140)

What is E-commerce?



Commonly known as Electronic commerce



Buying and selling goods or services on the Internet. (Rouse, M. (2018))



Convenient and accessible shopping



MANAL TALHARCHET (1917140)

Literature overview



The précis of the selected paper (500 words):

In their 2018 review, Wagner, Schramm-Klein, and Steinmann dig into the many-sided universe of customer conduct in multichannel web-based business, featuring the meaning of electronic diverts and touchpoints in internet retailing. By consolidating study and exploratory examination, the makers expect to upgrade shopper cognizance of this unique circumstance (Santos and Gonçalves, 2021). They give an interesting perspective on internet business through a multichannel retailing system, upheld by true information. Understanding buyers' perspectives on different Web empowered gadgets for web-based shopping includes utilizing multi-layered scaling (MDS) as the procedure (Afonso, 2021). Individuals are mentioned to assess pairwise likenesses among gadgets so the makers can lay out a proportionality system.

The article written by Wagner et al. (2020), has evaluated the extension level of knowledge related to e-commerce platforms or e-commerce channels including its advantages and disadvantages. The study has significantly addressed the research issue depicting the gap between the customer service from the brick-and-mortar stores. The literature is invaluable for businesses seeking to enhance their strategic management approaches, offering insights into evaluating e-channels, designing touchpoints and ultimately creating goodwill multichannel e-commerce systems to thrive into fluctuating digital marketplace.

First study aims to identify which Internet-enabled devices consumers utilize for shopping, by its categorization into Traditional E-channel, Mobile E-channel, IETV E-channel and Complementary E-channel and understand consumer evaluations of these e-channels under various situational influences.

Results:

- Traditional and mobile e-channels lead in online shopping quality attributes (e.g., usefulness, ease of use).
- Preference for mobile e-channel in scenarios "on the go" or "when pinched for time," while traditional e-channels are favored for comprehensive shopping tasks predominantly within the comfort of home.

Second Study investigates the impact of different e-channel touch-points (standard website, mobile-optimized website, mobile shopping app) on the mobile e-channel's consumer evaluation.

Results:

- Mobile-optimized website and mobile app outperformed standard website accessed via mobile device in terms of usefulness, ease of use, overall satisfaction.
- Standard website via traditional e-channel (PC) set high benchmark, in perceived usefulness and shopping intention.

The authors' interpretation, which directly addresses the core of the research issue, proposes a nuanced explanation of consumer behaviour in multichannel e-commerce by underlining the complex nature of e-channel usage and touchpoints in influencing customer decisions. Even while they acknowledged the limitations—like possible biases in the data gathering process and problems with generalizability—they may not have addressed the impact of demographics

on customer behaviour. In keeping with industry trends, their suggested next step entails investigating the developing role of emerging technologies in improving the online purchasing experience. Future studies may provide priceless insights into how e-commerce tactics should constantly adjust, which is crucial for companies navigating the quickly changing digital landscape. Adopting a multidimensional strategy like this shows a dedication to fully comprehending and optimising customer interactions over e-channels, which in turn promotes increased customer happiness and loyalty in the ever-changing world of multichannel e-commerce.

**The summary of chosen paper (1000 words) to my individual
assignment submission:**

**Online Retailing Across E-Channels And E-Channel Touchpoints: Empirical Studies Of
Consumer Behavior In The Multichannel E-Commerce Environment By Gerhard
Wagner, Hanna Schramm-Klein, Sascha Steinmann (2018)**

Critical Evaluation

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Summary

In their 2018 review, Wagner, Schramm-Klein, and Steinmann dig into the many-sided universe of customer conduct in multichannel web-based business, featuring the meaning of electronic diverts and touchpoints in internet retailing. By consolidating study and exploratory examination, the makers expect to upgrade shopper cognizance of this unique circumstance (Santos and Gonçalves, 2021). They give an interesting perspective on internet business through a multichannel retailing system, upheld by true information. Understanding buyers' perspectives on different Web empowered gadgets for web-based shopping includes utilizing multi-layered scaling (MDS) as the procedure (Afonso, 2021). Individuals are mentioned to assess pairwise likenesses among gadgets so the makers can lay out a proportionality system. Following that, MDS is applied to the framework to offer a perceptual aide. This guide reveals insight into the fundamental design of customers' discernment space, giving bits of knowledge into how different gadgets are seen in contrast with one another.

Likewise, Nili AhmadAbadi and Chabok (2023) utilize progressive bunch examination to separate particular gatherings of comparable gadgets as indicated by shopper suppositions. This survey sorts of internet shopping into four web-based business sections, underlining the significance of understanding e-channels and their relating touchpoints. This depiction features the various manners by which customers interface with internet shopping stages and accentuates the meaning of fitting advertising techniques to oblige these shifted ways of behaving (Cicea et al., 2022).

Wagner, Schramm-Klein, and Steinmann (2018) used a blend of overview and trial techniques to zero in on shopper conduct in multichannel web-based business. A gathering of 502 people was entrusted with positioning the pairwise closeness of a subset of Web empowered gadgets in a web based shopping setting. This specific gathering included devices that people were at that point acquainted with and could assess in light of their own encounters (Lai et al., 2023). Every individual assessed up to six gadgets, considering a sum of fifteen pairwise connections for every member. The structure coming about because of these assessments went through complex scaling (MDS) examination to create a perceptual guide of the purchaser's insight space. Then, gatherings of comparative gadgets were distinguished utilizing various leveled group examination in light of the directions got from MDS (Groß and Sohn, 2021). Members were mentioned to assess different elements of the gadgets in view of WebQual aspects and to determine outer variables that affected their web-based shopping propensities.

Albeit the audit's strategy offers significant bits of knowledge into customer conduct in multichannel online business, it is critical to think about a few snags (Lin and Li, 2022). The little example size of 502 individuals might restrict the capacity to apply the discoveries even more comprehensively, which is essential. Having a more extensive and more shifted test size could prompt a more profound knowledge into shopper conduct among various segment gatherings. Moreover, the use of MDS and hierarchical cluster examination is inherently subjective and vulnerable to researcher predisposition, even however it is helpful in picturing consumers' perception space (Heikkinen, 2018). Moreover, the use of self-reported information to evaluate situational variables and device features could lead to response predisposition, and the complexity of consumer decision-production processes in the context of online shopping may not be adequately recorded.

Notwithstanding technological features, the creators consider contextual variables that influence consumers' reception of e-channels (Ettis et al., 2023). Utilizing the Uses and Gratifications (U&G) theory and Belk's situational factors framework, they examine the consequences of technology-related quality and context-related situational advantages for consumers' online shopping experiences (Afonso, 2021). The creators integrate variables like as usefulness, ease of use, enjoyment, and complementary connection to assess the efficacy of e-channel touchpoints and their appropriateness for different situational conditions.

Critical data is provided by the review's discoveries for retailers and marketers. The creators, Nili AhmadAbadi and Chabok (2023), stress the importance of giving a range of e-channel touchpoints to meet the needs of different situational scenarios and consumer preferences. By offering specific computerized shopping designs, retailers could enhance consumers' online shopping experiences and lift engagement across the online customer journey. The concentrate furthermore features how consumer behavior is evolving in the computerized age and how e-commerce strategies need to be adaptable and creative continually.

Wagner et al. (2020) challenge the idea of a single "online channel" for shopping. Consumers use a range of e-channels, or different types of devices, and e-channel touchpoints, they find. The review uses questionnaires and tests to show two critical variables influencing e-channel choice.

Consumers are more inclined to select touchpoints that are easy to use and work well on the foundation fitting their personal preference, as per Cicea et al. (2022). An instance of this may be a mobile application designed considering perusing. Nonetheless, consumers choose their channels based on several elements. For example, a mobile application may be ideal for fast evaluating examination when making the rounds, whereas a website could be preferred for in-depth item research at home. These discoveries give retailers helpful guidance. Understanding how e-channel touchpoints handle these variables could help retailers tailor their methodology (Groß and Sohn, 2021). For instance, they could make it a need to include comprehensive item data on their website or to make mobile applications as user-friendly as could be expected.

Despite its benefits, the review does have a few restrictions that ought to be considered. The interpretation of results may be biased due to the subjective nature of perceptual planning and cluster assessment, and the limited sample size could restrict the generalizability of the discoveries (Lin and Li, 2022). Moreover, the review does not engage in a comprehensive conversation of the viable implications for marketing strategies, nor does it provide retailers any recommendations based on the discoveries.

The review offers useful information on consumer behavior in multichannel e-commerce to advance our understanding of online retailing across electronic channels and e-channel behavior (Heikkinen, 2018). The creators integrate technological and contextual perspectives to offer a comprehensive worldview for dissecting consumer behavior in the computerized economy. Future research could expand on the impediments already discovered and explore more reasonable uses for the discoveries, thereby propelling the rapidly developing field of e-commerce forward.

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