

Managing Information in Organizations

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Chapter 1 Organizational Context of Information

Link 1.2 Checklist for Developing a Business Model

The business model is a useful tool to analyse the context of an organization. Here is a list of questions to consider when preparing a business model.

Organization	{mission, internal structure, geographic structure, business processes, organizational culture, history}
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Key questions to analyse the *organization* include:

- What is the main mission of the organization?
- How many sites does the organization have and where are they located?
- What is the organizational structure?
- What is the role of each department?
- What are the main processes in each department?
- How has the organization evolved?
- What is the degree of autonomy of each area?
- What is the underlying philosophy of the organization?

Products	{portfolio, services}
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Key questions to analyse the *products* of the organization include:

- What is the range of products offered?
- What is the range of services offered?
- How frequently are new products or services added to the range?
- How frequently are old products or services removed from the range?
- Are the products or services standardized or tailored to meet the needs of individual customers?

Core Business {purpose, strategy, core competencies}

Key questions to analyse the *core business* of the organization include:

- What is the main purpose of the organization?
- What is the aim of the organization?
- On what basis does the organization compete?
- What are the future plans for the organization?
- What are the main strengths of the organization?

Resources {finance, people, technology, skills, raw materials, assets, information}
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Key questions to analyse the organization's *resources* include:

- Who are the main investors in the organization?
- How many employees are based in each department and site?
- What skills are required in each area?
- What raw materials need to be purchased?
- What are the main assets of the organization?
- What technology is needed to support the business processes?
- What is the IS/IT infrastructure?
- What information does the organization need?
- What are the main sources of information?

Competition {competitors, direct substitutes, indirect substitutes}
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Key questions to analyse the *competition* of the organization include:

- Who are the main competitors?
- What are the main substitute products or services to those offered by the organization?
- What are the main indirect substitute products or services to those offered by the organization?

Market**{customers, consumers, channels}**

Key questions to analyse the *market* of the organization include:

- In what markets does the organization compete?
- Who are the main customers of the organization?
- What are the marketing channels?
- In what industries does the organization compete?
- Who consumes the products or services delivered?
- How are the products or services delivered to the customer?
- How are the products or services delivered to the consumer?

Business Environment**{industries, suppliers, strategic alliances, parent company, trade unions, professional institutions}**

Key questions to analyse the *business environment* in which the organization trades include:

- In what industries does the organization engage?
- Who are the main suppliers of raw materials?
- Is there a parent company and what is the degree of its control?
- Are there any existing or potential strategic alliances?
- With which professional institutions is the organization associated?

Business Climate**{legislation, economy, culture}**

Key questions to analyse the *business climate* in which the organization trades include:

- What are the main areas of legislation that apply to the organization (for example, data protection and environmental pollution)?
- Are there significant seasonal trends that affect trading patterns?
- Are there national or international cultural differences to be aware of?