EQ-WOOD

WP 5

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TRAINING TOOLKIT
SUMMARY UNIT 3
DESIGN, TREND & INNOVATION RESEARCH

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UNIT 3 - DESIGN, TREND & INNOVATION RESEARCH

INTRODUCTION

This unit aims to describe:

- The key characteristics of Technology Surveillance and Competitive Intelligence, the surveillance factors and the basic elements of these systems.
- The concepts about product branding, how to manage brands and how to maintain a good brand reputation.
- The concept of Life Cycle of a Product.
- How to incorporate the strategic perspective in an organisation.

Subject 1. Technology and Competitive surveillance. AIDIMME

This subject is divided in **three topics**: the first one is an introductory topic, the second one is dedicated to Technological Surveillance systems, and the third one focuses on Competitive Surveillance systems.

Topic 1. Introduction to the conceptual framework for technology and competitiveness surveillance.

The role of Topic 1 is to share with the learner the conceptual framework about **technology and competitiveness surveillance**, that has increased in complexity and become a key factor for innovation in organizations. Lately, the tendency is to adopt a unified approach, considering that competitive surveillance encompasses concepts such as the study of the technological evolution of products, processes,etc. but also the market, focusing on the competition of the organization.

There is not a unique way of conducting and structuring a surveillance or intelligence system. Indeed, each organisation should create and adapt the existing tools to its particular needs and objectives**. Strategic watch**, being technological or competitive, refers to the internal process of gathering information and generating valuable input for the organization. This input may result in new product development, services, efficiency improvements, and so on.

The surveillance factors are the thematic domains or areas that will be the focus of the monitoring and analysing activity. **Key Intelligence Topics** (KIT) dive into the information needs and interests of the organization, and give structure to manage with trends, regulatory issues, competitors movements, and any issue of the business environment.

Monitoring the business environment may be conducted at several **layers of information**: the macro-environment, the industry or sector and its competitors, and the organization or firm. We will see that each layer of the business environment requires particular tools for analysis, such as the PESTEL scheme for the macroenvironment, Porter's Five Forces for understanding the industry, maps of strategic competitors and SWOT analysis at firm level.

The topic also indicates the basic elements of a surveillance system, and some examples of **surveillance systems created for the furniture industry**, such as the Materializa database, and the Erasmus+ MIMWOOD Project. An additional content is a short introduction of some normative standards focused on the integration of technological and competitive monitoring systems in R+D and innovation management systems.

Topic 2. Creation of a technology watch system in the company

In this topic we focus on the main characteristics, concepts and tools for the creation and development of a **Technologic Surveillance System**. The learner will deal with observation and analysis of the scientific and technological environment, and its potential economic impact. Thus, this systematic process, properly used, may be critical for detecting new business opportunities, monitor the market evolution, avoid possible risks and/or threats, track the activity of competition, and reach new ideas.

We will see that a critical activity is **Technology Monitoring**, where Technological Scouting is a system of early warnings for relevant technological changes. There are different models of technology and innovation management, which can be classified according to the original source of the innovation, the origin of the technological need, etc. So, we mya talk about Open or Closed Innovation, as well as Technology push vs Market pull innovation. As a final consideration, Technology Surveillance should not be confused with the concepts of prospective or foresight.

The topic is completed by providing a set of concepts, tools, and experiences about the process of building and managing a Technology Surveillance system. These are alerts, search engines, specialized databases (magazines, patents, theses, etc.), and technology surveillance software. The **output of this process** for the organization will be documental alerts, innovative material and processes, and R+D and innovation roadmapping.

Topic 3. Creation of a system of competitive surveillance in the company

The aim of this topic is to provide information about the objectives and implementation issues related to a **Competitive Intelligence system.** The Intelligence Cycle and its main elements are introduced, as well as existing tools for collecting and storing the necessary data and signals (panel of informants, market/trends observatories, Business Intelligence platforms, nethunting, etc.). We will also learn what RSS readers and web scrapers are, panels of informants such as market or trends observatories,

Every Competitive Intelligence System must give answer to the **following questions**:

1. What is the purpose of our intelligence system? That is, **the domain and focus** on research.
2. What information should we look for? These are **the variables and keywords** that guide the research.
3. Where is the information? These are the **relevant sources** we need to monitor.
4. How to capture and process the information? This is related to the **digital tools** we will use for storing and processing the signals we collect.
5. Who should coordinate the system? We need a **coordinator and a research team**.

6. How to involve key colleagues in the review and analysis of the information? This is the **dynamics of interaction for drawing implications and conclusions** based on the information retrieval.
7. Who are the decision-makers for which the information will be reported to? This is, the **end-users of the system.**

Finally, we will learn about how to elaborate and **report information** in a clear and useful way for decision-makers.

Subject 2. Market observatory. AIDIMME.

Topic 1. How does a Market Observatory work?

The objective of this topic is to provide the student with information about **what a market observatory is**. This kind of observatory is used at present for referring to the **monitoring activity on a specific market** (energy, furniture, crops, processed food, etc.) **and its main performance variables in the short term**. As extension, other conceptual observatories may cover prices, social trends, labour issues, etc.

Observatories normally combine information from different sources: official bodies, market studies, sector associations, etc. The collection of information is conducted periodically. It is also important to plan which are the most suitable indicators for a market observatory.

In order for a Market Observatory to work properly we must obtain reliable information in a systematic way. The use of a **panel of informants based on firms or research panel** ensures good quality and frequent responses. We will briefly introduce some key concepts of this instrument for a market observatory.

We will also explain the importance of reporting market indicators. The main types are indicators about the **market structure**, the **marketing channels**, and **consumers**. An indicator is a specific, observable and measurable characteristic that can be measured to show changes in a variable. There are three types of indicators related to economic or business variables: Leading, Lagging and Coincident indicators.

- Leading indicators help to predict what the variable will do in the future.
- Lagging indicators confirm what leading indicators predict.
- Coincident indicators mirror what the data is saying.

Other aspects explained are the different visualization tools for showing in a more easy and useful way the main results. Reporting results is a key issue for decision-making in the companies. As example for the wood and furniture industry, we introduce the Spanish Furniture Market Observatory.

Subject 3. Brand and Brand Management. HUAFW

In this session you will get a brief insight of what does branding mean in practice, what are the core pillars of it and how to integrate brand-related strategy to use it on a daily basis. The role of the theme **Brand and**

Brand Management section is to understand the importance of service, values, appearance with a well-built, branded company has to give in order to stand out from its competitors.

Topic 1. Introduction to Branding

Brands are highlighting a company's or products **core idology**, creates the very essence of it, which helps the customers decide which one of them to choose. This choice is often sentimental: 'which brand can I relate the most, what message is the most likeable for me?'. When your product is on the market, branding has to express **what it is and what advantages it has.**

Topic 2. Create the basics of your brand

This section focuses on how to create your businesses core idea. First, you have to find your businesses **core values**, with the help of all the words that explain what you are doing and how you are doing it. You should think of the most important parts you want to show to your customers. Be **simple** and **short** and think what **makes you different** from your competitors.

If you developed the core idea and set up your values behind your business, you and all of your coworkers have to be very true to that idea. The fundamental idea behind branding is that in everything an organization does should project **a clear idea of what it is and what its aims are**. Brand only works if all products, environment, communication, behaviour and performance are consistent in purpose and in appearance too.

Topic 3. Making your brand ready to use

This section is a step-by-step guide to **make your brand visible, understandable and likeable**. Whatever you do to convey the outer world you have to focus on clear and well build up communication, so everyone understands your product, idea or actions.

In this section, you will get to know how to set up your brand's visual identity and communication. **Visualization is the most importart part** of your business, because people more than ever are keen on to adopt information throughout images. Combining short but well placed texts with image can grab people's attention. The very first thing people will recognize your business with is your **logo**. It should be strongly unique and recognizable, also easy to use on any platform. A key element of this process is to work with a graphic designer in order to create or innovate your logo and visual materials.

In order to integrate your communication, **introduce all branding materials** you have been worked on **to your colleagues**. Make them understand how important is that they share the same visions and values. Chek an example of branded atmosphere, which helps you think about how to **make changes in your office interior** according to your new visuals. After making the internal changes, you can carefully **introduce it to customers** and making them know in every platform it is an evolution in order to be more effective and self-conscious about what your company does.

Topic 4. Keep your brand alive

This section is a memo about the most important things you learned about branding. To keep your brand alive your brand has to **constantly reinvent itself** by developing the core idea from time to **time while keeping your values.** The most important is always **communicate these developments** to your audience. These guidelines will be helpful to make your enterprise a brand which is likeable, understandable and marketable. The goal of branding is sharing your thoughts, values, sense of design with your audience, so they can decide to choose you.

Subject 4. Life cycle of a product. BBCWFI

The aim of this subject is to learn about product management through the Product Life Cycle framework.

Topic 1. Definitions

In this topic we will clarify what a product is, and the different materials the product could be made of. We will also learn about the types of product classification: by structure, by physical and chemical properties, and others. Also, it will be presented the definition of life cycle of a product.

Topic 2. Stages of life cycle of a product.

This topic will focus on the stages related to product management and business decisions, from the idea of the product, the research of the technologies and processes, the production and manufacturing aspects, the marketing approach and re-use issues.

Subject 5. Strategic Perspective. BBCWFI and HUAFW

The aim of this subject is to learn about the **principles and basic concepts related to Strategic Perspective** in a firm or organization.

Topic 1. Description.

In this topic we will take a closer look at the definition of **the Strategic Perspective concept**. We will deal with its rationale and purpose. We will also understand the importance of business strategies and how they help to develop the company. Besides, strategy is related to the structure of an organization.

Topic 2. Developing a Strategic Perspective

Here you will find that there are **four approaches** to strategy formulation. We wiil also see why strategy perspective sometimes may fail. We will also discuss about the difference between short and long-term strategies, and the importance of the latter for strategic planning. At the end you will be able to evaluate if you are ready to make a strategic plan and how to do it.

Topic 3. Summary of strategic perspective

This section will **review** the main issues related to Strategic Perspective in the firm.

FINAL QUIZ