

Information Strategy Design and Practices

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To
Our family members
Dr. Baishnab, Hrishikesh, Kanyakumari,
Bharati, Sanjana, and Shrestha
AND
N. K. Kanth Niraj, Suniti,
Priti, Astha, and Archit

Preface

The Reason for this Book

Information strategy has changed over a period of time. From being a tool for aiding business activities, it has become a business enabler and slowly has taken a strategic role in an organization. Strategy level decisions and directions are always a challenge to any management. These decisions guide functional and operational level managers. The information strategy domain has encompassed the strategic level and is increasing its presence in the boardroom as well. But the influence of technology has to be understood well so that the alignment with business remains.

The alignment of information strategy with business has several problems. However, these problems can be categorized into (1) issues related to rapid changes related to business strategy implementation, (2) need for human intervention for implementing and interpreting IS, and (3) awareness and knowledge on technology. In addition to this, there is always a need for revisiting information strategy from the perspective of business strategy and technology. The book addresses these issues through theoretical overview and implementable, practicable, and feasible approaches.

Over the years, IS has always been aiding functional and operational challenges. As a result, the true potential of IS has never been exploited. The book throws light on the role of IS at strategy level and partnering with business units to get the maximum business benefits. The approach for implementing IS, as explained in this book, is shown to be more people centric, involving all stakeholders and collaborating with business users. Key issues to implementing these strategies are discussed, and frameworks for designing the strategy as well as implementing have been presented.

The book is divided into two parts—the first part provides a detailed theoretical concepts required for understanding the role of IS at strategy level; it also provides frameworks for designing the IS for business benefits. It then discusses the need to

involve stakeholders while designing the IS and the steps that need to be followed to achieve business alignment in a systematic and scientific way. The framework discussed here has been derived based on consulting assignments that the authors have carried out and hence are implementable and practicable. The book also provides case studies where the authors discuss the way IS can be designed and implemented. These case studies are from different industries and show how the framework can be used universally with customization as required.

Audience for the Book

The students who have background on basic strategic management and understand basic information systems will benefit the most. These students should have gone through different perspectives in strategic management courses, understanding the need for vision, mission, and business goals for an organization, how strategy is formulated using techniques such as SWOT, Balanced Scorecard, and Porter's five forces theory. It will be optional for these students to have been exposed to case studies in strategic management as these are dealt in this book prominently. In addition, the students should also have basic knowledge on information systems and their applications. For example, the students should have exposure to courses such as management information system or business information system or the like so that they would have footings on IS when they attend this subject. Typically, the book will find acceptance in master in business administration (MBA), postgraduate diploma in management (PGDM) programs. The students who would be specializing in information system and general management need this book, as it explains the frameworks from strategy designers' view.

The book will also be useful for consultants engaged in IT consulting and management consulting who advise business houses on strategy formulation and integration of information system. The consultants will find it handy, as they can use the proven frameworks with tweaks, if required, for their customers. They can also use it for providing training for designing and implementing information systems.

Senior executives and functional heads could use it for learning and applying the concepts in their organizations. They can align their business strategy with IS to meet their business goals. Corporate trainers could use the book for providing training on the role of IS, the need for IS, providing business alignment with IS.

Notes for Faculty

The book has the following pedagogical features:

- Learning objectives at the start of each chapter
- Summary at the end of each chapter
- Further readings for the concepts discussed in the chapter
- Review questions for the students to practice
- PowerPoint (.ppt) files for each chapter will be provided to the faculty; please contact local representatives from Springer

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The production of any book of this magnitude involves valued contributions from many persons. We would like to thank Amboy Matthew for providing us the editorial support and making this project a reality.

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Our friends and colleagues, who have been engaging into patient discussion and sharing their knowledge with me that helped to refine my understanding and approach to strategise and implement IT at clients' place. This has helped me to take wholistic view of IT, experiment with my ideas and evolve a practical and fruitful strategy.

Last but not the least, we would like to thank our family members who have been with us, shouldering many responsibilities while absolving us from many worldly activities.

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