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USE OF THE BENCHMARKING STRATEGY FOR OPTIMIZING THE RESOURCE FLOWS OF THE ENTERPRISE

The article is devoted to the study of scientific approaches to the essence of the concept of "enterprise benchmarking strategy". Based on the results of the analysis of the views of domestic and foreign scientists on the essence of the concept of "benchmarking strategy of the enterprise", weighing all the positive and debatable sides of the mentioned definitions, its own interpretation is proposed. It was established that the main goal of implementing the benchmarking strategy of the enterprise is to achieve a competitive position on the market and achieve the strategic goal of the activity due to the effective use of resources.

The subject of the benchmarking strategy, its input and output elements are characterized. The process of formation and implementation of the company's benchmarking strategy is described, which includes the strategy selection stage. The algorithm for choosing the company's benchmarking strategy, which will be optimal for a certain market situation, is characterized. The factors that have a significant influence on the choice of the company's benchmarking strategy are identified.

The article reflects the theoretical provisions and methodical foundations of the company's benchmarking strategy. The foreign experience of the development of the theoretical foundation of applied aspects of benchmarking is summarized, the essence of this concept is revealed. The basic provisions of the conceptual approaches to justifying the feasibility of applying the benchmarking strategy for the growth of the economic potential of the enterprise are analyzed. A block diagram of the formation of the benchmarking strategy of the enterprise was developed.

Keywords: benchmarking strategy, economic potential of the enterprise, benchmarking principles, enterprise resources.

Formulation of the problem. The set of specific methods, approaches, techniques and forms used by the enterprise for the implementation of the innovative component, in accordance with the defined criteria and goals, form a model for the growth of the economic potential of the enterprise, which makes it possible to solve certain tasks individually determined by each enterprise, taking into account the peculiarities of its financial and economic activities, components of development strategies, as well as conditions of the business environment.

Under the conditions of globalization of the world market, enterprises must simultaneously increase the quality of their products, reduce the costs of their production and offer sufficiently differentiated products in order to best meet the existing demand. The use of benchmarking gives the company the opportunity to borrow the best experience of domestic and foreign companies. As a result, the company will be able to strengthen its competitive position, as well as achieve an increase in the degree of customer satisfaction.

Therefore, the methodology of forming and implementing a benchmarking strategy is becoming more and more popular. Borrowing proven experience reduces risk, allows entrepreneurs to avoid many mistakes, and reduce time and financial costs associated with gaining their own experience by conducting experiments. It should be especially noted that the use of benchmarking gives the company the opportunity to form its own team, gain experience in carrying out organizational changes, thus creating a basis for further improvement of the organization and management, relying on its own strength.

Analysis of recent research and publications. The development of any enterprise is impossible without the development of strategic areas of activity that are based on innovations and have an innovative nature. The company's development strategy includes the use of scientific and technical achievements in the field of management organization, engineering and technology and a comprehensive approach to innovative activity based on the study of best practices.

The following foreign scientists made a significant contribution to the formation and development of strategies for increasing the economic potential of enterprises: I. Ansoff, M. Porter, A. Strickland, A. Thompson, U. Sharp. Many foreign scientists directly studied the problem of strategic benchmarking, such as T. Bendell, I. Boulter, P. Godstalt. Among the Ukrainian scientists who studied the development of enterprise strategy, it should be noted: O.I. Amosha, V.M. Geetsya, Z.S. Vamalia, Ya.A. Zhalilo, B.E. Basil.

At the same time, thorough research on the subject of benchmarking is practically not conducted in Ukraine. The methodology of conducting and revealing the essence of benchmarking is partially explored in the works of the following domestic scientists: M.G. Greshchak, O.S. Kotsyubi, N.O. Kozak, T.V. Mereniuk, S.B. Pakhomova, V.A. Prishchep, R.V. Festival. At the same time, the scientific literature does not sufficiently cover the problem of using benchmarking approaches in the formation of enterprise strategies, which is especially relevant for the economy of our country.

Setting goals. In the modern conditions of the development of enterprises, it is necessary to develop a new model of economic growth that will reflect the capabilities of enterprises in innovative development. It is this model that can become a formed benchmarking strategy at the enterprise. The problems of forming and managing a benchmarking strategy are especially relevant for those industrial enterprises that are characterized by a significant number of factors that affect their activities and function in an unstable external environment.

Presenting main material. In recent years, the determination of the priority of innovative development has been especially emphasized at the state level. The desire to join the circle of developed countries that demonstrate innovative types of economic development contributed to the adoption of a number of legislative acts on the regulation of innovative activity, the announcement of a state policy aimed at the development of an innovative model of economic growth.

The enterprise is considered as an open system in interaction with its environment, but the main emphasis is placed on improving the activities of the enterprise itself. Its main components are the mission, key principles, vision, and enterprise strategy [8].

The category “strategy” comes from the Greek word, which consists of two parts: “stratos” — army and “ago” — lead. This is a military term that means “to lead an army.” In the field of economics, it became widespread in the 60s and 70s of the 20th century. in connection with the intensifying competition in the fields of production. It was then that the sphere of economic activity began to resemble a military field of action, and the strategy was established as a general program of the company’s activities, which is based on the definition of the main long-term goals and objectives, the development of areas of activity, resource provision for the achievement of the set goals and their implementation.

And “military actions” always require the use of intelligence, constant industrial espionage, analysis and study of potential competitors. One of the newest and most modern approaches to increasing the competitiveness of an enterprise when developing a strategy is the benchmarking method. Benchmarking has long won sympathy and favor and is successfully used in the practice of Japanese, American, Western European, and Scandinavian enterprises.

Most Ukrainian enterprises do not use the concept of benchmarking. Also, no full-fledged benchmarking projects, which would be carried out by Ukrainian consulting firms, are known. Although, of course, elements of benchmarking are found in many projects to improve work methods of Ukrainian enterprises [4, p. 153].

The homeland of the term “Benchmarking” is the USA. However, history convinces us of the earlier beginning of the use of this concept. In Japan, “Benchmarking” is related in meaning to the Japanese word “dantotsu”, which means “effort, concern, concern to be better (leader), to become even better (leader)”. In China, for example, the rule of the Chinese general Sun Tzu, who wrote: “When you know your enemy and know yourself, you are not afraid of the result of a hundred wars.” That is, the theory of researching one’s enemies and competitors was formed over many centuries.

The scientific concept of “benchmarking” first appeared in 1972 at the Cambridge Institute of Strategic Planning during the research activities of the PIMS consulting group. Then the main principle of benchmarking was formulated — “in order to find an effective solution in the field of competition, it is necessary to know the best experience of other enterprises that have achieved success in similar conditions” [5, p. 31]. According to the source [3], benchmarking is defined as competitive analysis. Benchmarking (from the English benchmark — “the beginning of the countdown”) is a mechanism for comparative analysis of the performance of one enterprise with the indicators of other, more successful enterprises.

Benchmarking is interpreted as a system of evaluating the company's activity based on comparison with any relevant analogue [6]. But, in fact, there is no unequivocal interpretation of the essence of benchmarking, since this term has recently appeared in domestic science.

Benchmarking is intended for:

- assessment and comparison of the enterprise's own capabilities with the capabilities of the most powerful competitors in the industry and enterprises from other industries;
- determination of success factors of enterprises that have achieved the best indicators;
- using this data as a basis for determining the strategy and goals of one's own enterprise, as well as methods for achieving these goals [7].

Not every enterprise can afford to develop and implement a growth strategy without using positive experience, especially in the conditions of the global financial and economic crisis that exists at the moment, because it is a very long-term and complex process determined by factors of the internal and external environment. Strategic changes mean large-scale transformation processes that take place under the influence of the business environment, taking into account the potential of the enterprise. Focus on innovative development implies positive qualitative changes in the company's activities, changing the current state of the company to a completely different, more qualitative one [1,9].

Nowadays, the use of the main principle of benchmarking "from the best to the best" brings back to life and success a large number of enterprises in the USA, Japan, and Western Europe. Benchmarking is not new to most businesses as it has been done as part of competitive analysis, although benchmarking itself is a more detailed, formalized and structured function than a competitive analysis approach. Benchmarking is a necessary tool for the success of any enterprise. Benchmarking is seen as a way of evaluating the strategies and objectives of work compared to first-class enterprises to guarantee the growth of one's own economic potential.

World practice has developed three types of innovative development strategies:

- transfer strategy (implies the use of foreign scientific and technical potential);
- borrowing strategy (consists in mastering the production of high-tech products that were already produced in other countries by using cheap labor and existing potential);
- strategy of expansion (based on the use of own scientific and technical potential, involvement of foreign scientists).

Today, the achievement of the economic development of enterprises through the large-scale introduction into economic circulation of such products of intellectual labor as knowledge, technologies, scientific and technical developments, etc., their commercialization and the achievement of a socio-economic effect is determined by the model of innovative development of the European Union economy [2].

Special requirements for the nature and rates of development of enterprises are:

- ensuring a reproducible innovation cycle at the enterprise on a new technological basis;
- modernization of enterprises and increase of competitiveness;
- construction of a structural and innovative model of economic growth;
- search for new approaches in the strategy and tactics of growth of the economic potential of the enterprise;
- formation of a strategy for the growth of economic potential.

Benchmarking is the process of finding a standard or reference more economically efficient competitor enterprise in order to compare it with one's own enterprise and borrow its most efficient work methods. To obtain the necessary effect, it is necessary to make benchmarking an integral part of the innovative process of improving the production and economic activity of the enterprise.

The process of evolution of benchmarking is similar to the classical model of "transition from art to science". At the current stage, strategic benchmarking is distinguished, which is a systematic process aimed at evaluating alternatives, implementing strategies and improving performance characteristics based on the study of successful strategies of external partner enterprises.

There are five main principles of the benchmarking concept (Table 1).

Benchmarking is the process of finding a standard or reference more economically efficient competitor enterprise in order to compare with one's own and adopt its best work methods. Benchmarking cannot be considered as a one-time event. To obtain the effect, it is necessary to make it an integral part of the innovation process and the process of improving production and economic activity in order to increase its efficiency [4].

Table 1

Characterization of the principles of benchmarking at the enterprise

№	Principles of benchmarking	The essence of the principles
1	Concentration on quality.	It consists in the fact that quality management should be carried out continuously in all aspects and functions of the enterprise, and not only at the stage of providing a service or selling a product to the end user. The main direction is to focus on the prevention of errors and defects, and not on their recognition and correction. That is, the concept of benchmarking is based on preventive methods, not reactive methods of product quality management.
2	The importance of business processes.	This is a departure from the functional structure of the enterprise and the separation of the system of main and auxiliary business processes in it. This approach is determined by the fact that in a functional organization, the responsibility for the passage of business processes is not assigned to a specific structural division of the enterprise. Therefore, it is necessary to form personnel that would control, regulate and be responsible for its final result. The purpose of the functional units is reduced to the establishment of communication relationships between them and effective maintenance of business processes taking place at the enterprise.
3	The need to take into account the imperfection of the classic model of total quality management in the process of planning benchmarking activities. Total Quality Management (TQM).	Features of the classic TQM model include: the need for continuous improvement; importance and attention to the buyer; cultural changes; group work; the importance of each employee's contribution and responsibility; control by the top management of the enterprise. The results of the implementation of the TQM system are compared with the results of the enterprise before the implementation of TQM. In fact, the decision to implement this system emphasizes the inefficiency of the company's management in the past. There are two main contradictions: why compare the results of TQM implementation with what was ineffective; who at the company can objectively assess what needs to be improved and to what extent. The specified imperfections of the classic TQM model should be taken into account when planning benchmarking activities by establishing priorities in the strategic goals of the enterprise, taking into account the main features of the state of the competitive environment.
4	Systematic external benchmarking.	It is aimed at the constant study of the microenvironment of the enterprise. Employees of the enterprise must also realize the importance of internal business processes and their constant study. Management should combine these two analyzes into a single system, which will become the basis for the implementation of the improvement process at the enterprise.
5	Benchmarking is the basis of survival.	Western management at the level of an individual enterprise claims that without benchmarking, the organization's survival in the aggressive external environment is impossible. At the same time, the two most important prerequisites for the successful implementation of benchmarking are highlighted: the approval of the management and the conviction of almost all employees of the organization in the need for changes, often significant ones.

* systematized by the author

The benchmarking approach leads to a significant change in the decision-making procedure when forming the strategy of enterprises. Therefore, we can talk about the benchmarking strategy of modern enterprises. Benchmarking strategy is a process of identifying, researching, borrowing and adapting the best practices of enterprises of the same industry, as well as enterprises of different industries ("out-of-box") for the purpose of development. Scientists consider it as an effective marketing technology.

Benchmarking is based on comparing a competitor's product with a company's product in order to increase the company's competitiveness. In a broader interpretation, benchmarking is not only an advanced technology of competitive analysis, benchmarking is: the concept of natural development, the desire of companies for continuous improvement; the process of improvement itself, i.e. the constant search for new ideas, their adaptation and use in practice. Benchmarking makes it possible to identify benchmark results of enterprises of the same industry in order to make optimal decisions regarding the development of enterprises and to adopt the best methods of their work. In Ukraine, benchmarking is also impossible due to

the secrecy of all internal information. It is impossible to conduct a comparative analysis of the structure and dynamics of costs of competing enterprises. Other strategic problems include inefficient management, low competitiveness of enterprises and their products, inflexible pricing policy, inconsistency of the personnel management system with market conditions, etc.

Table 2

Stages of implementation of the benchmarking strategy at the enterprise

№	Stages of implementation	A brief description of the stages
1	Stages of implementation	The needs of the enterprise for changes and improvement are established; the efficiency of the enterprise is evaluated; the main operations that affect the result of the activity, as well as the method of quantitative measurement of characteristics, are highlighted and studied; it is established how deep the benchmarking should be. The object can be both a real company of the industry and some hypothetical company that embodies the best achievements of the industry.
2	Selection of a comparative enterprise	It is necessary to establish what the benchmarking will be — external or internal; a search for reference enterprises is carried out; establish contacts with these enterprises, form categories for evaluation and analysis.
3	Definition of information search methods	It is necessary to collect information about your own organization and the organization of benchmarking partners. For this, both primary and secondary data are used. The received information should be thoroughly checked.
4	Analysis of received information	The received information is classified and systematized. The analysis method is selected. The degree of achievement of the goal and the factors that determine the result are evaluated.
5	Implementation of innovative and competitive advantages	Develop an implementation plan, control procedures, evaluation and analysis of the implementation process. Ensure that the changing processes achieve the highest efficiency.
6	Rating	Continuous verification of the desired changes and business results with the created reference model of your own business organization. On the basis of the received — the creation and maintenance of a system of continuous improvement of business performance. The comparison takes place at the cooperative, process and activity levels.

* systematized by the author

It is worth emphasizing that a strategic problem can be aimed both at overcoming weaknesses and at developing the company's capabilities.

One of the main problems of many domestic enterprises is the contradiction between the external market environment and internal production orientation. Solving this problem is connected with a wider application of the benchmarking strategy in enterprise management.

The sequence of implementation of the benchmarking strategy:

1. Definition of functional areas of analysis.
2. Selection of factors and variables to be analyzed.
3. Identification of leaders in the industry and beyond by the factors and variables defined above.
4. Evaluation of the values of all factors and performance indicators of leaders.
5. Comparison of the indicators of the leaders with their own indicators to determine the lag.
6. Development of an action program to eliminate the backlog.
7. Implementation and monitoring of program implementation.

There are mainly three types of benchmarking:

1. Internal benchmarking, which is reduced to the analysis and comparison of performance indicators of various structural divisions of the same enterprise.

2. Benchmarking, focused on competitors — focused on a comparative analysis of goods (works, services), productivity of production processes and other parameters of the investigated enterprise with similar characteristics of competing enterprises. It is believed that the best analogue for comparison is the "market leader". Identification of the factors that determine the lagging of the studied enterprise from the leader provides an opportunity to reduce the lagging.

3. Functional benchmarking, in which individual processes, functions, methods and technologies are analyzed against other non-competing businesses. Firms that use similar methods, techniques or technologies and are not competitors willingly go to the mutual exchange of primary information and are interested in implementing joint projects aimed at improving certain operations that are being compared.

Ensuring the high competitiveness of the enterprise and the growth of its economic potential is possible only with the application of a benchmarking strategy. Ukrainian enterprises need to study the experience of foreign business leaders in order to develop a strategic direction of development. Therefore, the connection of benchmarking with strategic planning at the enterprise is obvious. Benchmarking should be a tool of strategic planning to ensure purposeful and profitable development of the enterprise.

A feature of the application of the benchmarking concept is the understanding and support of this policy by all employees of the enterprise and the distribution of responsibility for the successful implementation of the concept among personnel performing work that affects the level of quality of the products produced. In relation to an individual enterprise, benchmarking covers all spheres and directions of its activity. Strategic planning is the most important area for which benchmarking plays a significant role.

Conclusions. In our opinion, the benchmarking strategy of an economic entity is a model of enterprise development that includes strategic goals, technologies, resources and a management system, developed on the basis of a study of the best practices of competitors and leading enterprises in other industries.

Having analyzed the works of domestic and foreign scientists, it can be stated that the main attention is paid to the essence, features, opportunities and conditions of accelerated economic development based on the study of the enterprises of the leaders. Benchmarking can be used in all spheres of the company's activity: production and sales of products, marketing, logistics, personnel management, etc. The formation of a benchmarking strategy at the current stage is a process of identifying, researching, borrowing and adapting the best practices of enterprises of one industry, as well as enterprises of other industries, with the aim of increasing economic potential.

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