
Editorial

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Biographical notes: G.D. Sardana is Professor of Operations and Chairperson, Bimtech Centre for Management Case Development at Birla Institute of Management Technology, Greater Noida (India). He is a Mechanical Engineer and has obtained his PhD from IIT Delhi in areas of Business Performance and Productivity Management. He carries experience of over 40 years having worked in organisations as ABB and Singer at senior positions. He has authored over 100 papers and 2 books (Narosa-London/NewDelhi): Productivity Management (1998) which bagged Best Book awards from Delhi Management Association, and Indian Society for Training and Development, and Productivity Measurement for Business Excellence (2009). Three of his papers have won Best Paper awards from Indian Institution of Industrial Engineering. He has also co-edited six books on management cases.

Tojo Thatchenkery (PhD Weatherhead School of Management, Case Western Reserve University) is Professor and Director of the Organization Development and Knowledge Management programme at George Mason University, Arlington, Virginia. His recent books include *Making the Invisible Visible: Understanding the Leadership Contributions of Asian Minorities in the Workplace* (August 2011), *Positive Design and Appreciative Construction: From Sustainable Development to Sustainable Value* (2010), *Appreciative Inquiry and Knowledge Management* (2007), *Appreciative Intelligence: Seeing the Mighty Oak in the Acorn* (*Harvard Business Review*, 2006, Reading List), and *Appreciative Sharing of Knowledge: Leveraging Knowledge Management for Strategic Change* (2005). He has also researched contemporary themes such as technological culture and globalisation which resulted in another book, *Information Communication Technology and Economic Development: Learning from the Indian Experience* (2006).

Small businesses have always been confronted with handicaps and disadvantages at several fronts. Often struggling for funds, lack of access to latest technology, economies of size and absence of brand images – smallness has often been a road block to growth. The market is generally ruled by brands which attract the prosperous customers. Normally, a small business is only a vendor, a supplier to a large organisation. It hardly has any power of strength when it comes to negotiations. However, there are also success stories when small organisations have achieved success at global levels against all odds. Such successes may have a base in innovative practices, ‘out of box’ thinking approaches, exploiting strengths and leading on to new paths. The small business has also strengths in creating high motivation among their employees, participation of employees in decision-making, generating high customer satisfaction through quality of service and quick response.

This Special Issue of the *Int. J. Globalisation and Small Business* provides a balanced mix of papers on various aspects of small business and small organisation performance in the global context. It features thoroughly revised, upgraded and enlarged versions of selected cases presented at the *International Conference on Business Cases* held at IME Campus, Sahibabad, Ghaziabad, India on 2–3 December 2010. The dominant theme across all cases is on sustainable development of small business in highly turbulent global economic environment or in the face of challenges of multinational corporations (MNCs). The business cases included depict a record of business issues and a clinical study of situations. Out of six cases included, five depict business situation and the sixth deals with issues of organisational development.

In the first paper of this Special Issue, Linder examines the travails of a small German firm which adopted the strategy of outsourcing to cut down its costs of operations. For many German businesses, information technology (IT) outsourcing represents a promising strategy to be competitive. The positive outcomes are most expected in reduced cost but higher expertise is also often named as one of the reasons for outsourcing parts of support or development to specialised IT service providers. The case describes a process wherein Systema AG tried to outsource parts of its product-development to India and failed because of lack of commitment from its own computer scientists. At the centre were the fears and worries of Systema AG staff about losing their jobs in the face of lower costs yielding the same quality levels in India.

In the second paper, Basu reveals that Micromax is a gate crasher Indian brand in the highly competitive mobile handset market, which is otherwise dominated by the MNCs. Micromax is the third largest handset vendor behind Nokia and Samsung for volumes sales achieved in India. Micromax is clearly emerging as a winner with enviable brand popularity – within a span of just two years, this mobile brand has unseated some of the top brands such as LG and Samsung and has set the stage for more. This case looks into the growth strategies adopted by Micromax in successfully challenging the established market players. It is the success story of a small business which discovered a few ‘out of the box’ strategies to reach the rural masses as against the strategies of MNCs focusing the prosperous, English speaking, highly westernised Indian urbanites.

The next paper from Lawler and Murgolo-Poore looks at how market pressures can be best addressed through processes and tools that are derived from emerging theories such as theory of constraints, theory of supply chain integration and complexity theory. It also addresses how strategic supply chain decisions can make outsourcing and offshoring less attractive. It reviews how one organisation is preserving current manufacturing capacity and capability while decreasing production costs and meeting the

requirements of a new market simultaneously. The latter half of the first decade of this millennium has witnessed a perfect storm for creating efficiencies and competitiveness. The case examines how International Game Technology has found itself in the middle of this storm and through creative and inspired management sought alternatives to move manufacturing to a low-wage offshore location to reduce costs.

Mahajan, Garg and Sharma discuss in the next case the issues involved in a green supply chain in India. Urban consumers in India have been increasing their consumption of frozen processed food. With more super markets and hypermarkets opening-up in the country, especially in cities, women are increasingly shopping in these outlets as they are more convenient and comfortable. Large modern retail outlets in the bigger cities have the space to keep large refrigerators to store frozen processed food. The paper presents a case on Frozen Products Indian Ltd. which evolves around frozen peas, individual quick freezing technique and its storage. It requires proper cold chain management right from sourcing, manufacturing, processing and dispatching for retailing and at end consumers place. A special care is required to transport fresh fruits and vegetables from point of produce to the point of processing and then to point of consumption.

Kundu and Kar in the next paper discuss about Khadim, a small business, which having carved out a niche as the country's third largest footwear retailer has taken the plunge into lifestyle retail. The city-based Khadim's India Ltd., a pioneer player in the Indian footwear industry, decided its entry to cultivate its growth into lifestyle retail. The success in the footwear industry has taken the thrust into lifestyle retail. Following the success of their footwear business and the hyper retailing concept, they announced the launch of their first ever retail chain departmental stores named 'Egaro'. Strong brand recall and excellence in performance in the footwear industry gave them the necessary confidence to take the brand further. Khadim's promoted their unique selling point as a one-stop shopping destination selling products such as apparels, footwear, cosmetics, jewellery, homecare products and grocery.

Jordan and Thatchenkery in the last paper discuss appreciative inquiry (AI) in the context of a high school, a small organisation. AI is an innovative, organisational development change method that focuses on the positive aspects in an organisation. This is known as a post-positivist approach in which the method looks at the reality of the organisation as a pre-existing condition. The authors assert that there are four worldviews for researchers. The four worldviews are post-positivism, constructivism, advocacy/participatory and pragmatism. The authors discuss how a Colorado public charter high school using AI formulated a strategic, integrative, character-based educational plan with the collaboration of its administration and teachers to discover the most effective means of change to its academic curriculum for the school year 2009–2010.

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