

Improving Information Technology as a Factor in Increasing the Competitiveness of Enterprises

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Annotation: The issue of increasing the competitiveness of firms in theory and world practice is usually considered in terms of improving the quality of goods and services produced by firms and/or improving business processes. Despite the rapid development of information technology (IT) over the past two decades, the system for its implementation, use and modernization in firms is far from perfect, especially in enterprises of traditional sectors of the economy (such as agro-industrial enterprises, retail trade and distribution, food, textile, furniture production and so on). It is on the problems of increasing the competitiveness of non-high-tech firms - there is not even a generally accepted term for them, they are called low-tech, non-research and development (R&D) intensive, traditional, operating in mature markets and others are the main focus of this work.

Keywords: development of information technology, enterprises of traditional sectors of the economy, increasing the competitiveness of enterprises, improving the quality of goods and services, assessing economic efficiency.

Relevance of the topic: The relevance of the topic of the dissertation research is due to the insufficient development of the theoretical and methodological basis for the study of the relevant range of problems, as well as the exceptional importance of applied issues of increasing the competitiveness of firms through the introduction and use of IT.

In economic science, there is no unity of views on the role of information technology in increasing the competitiveness of enterprises, and hence improving the quality of their goods and services. The focus is usually on certain aspects: the use of computers (both technical and business components of this process), the Internet, smart devices or the Internet of Things (Internet of Things, IoT). However, there is no comprehensive and systematic approach to IT in their entirety. The proposed approaches are addressed primarily to R&D-intensive firms that have their own extensive IT competencies (or are able to attract those from outside). Whereas firms far from advanced developments receive much less attention.

The rapid development of IT leaves no doubt about their importance and necessity for firms, but their equally rapid obsolescence and ease of replication calls into question the possibility of building sustainable competitive advantages on their basis.

In contrast to the term “high technology”, which is widely used in Russian literature, a well-established Russian-language concept has not been developed, the English equivalent of which is the term “low-tech”. The lack of widespread use of the concepts of “low-tech” and “traditional” sectors of the economy makes it difficult to build an approach to them that would take into account the specifics of this significant sector of the economy, including in the field of IT.

As part of the policy of modernizing the Russian economy, attention is paid almost exclusively to the development of high technologies. At the same time, attempts at innovative development of

traditional sectors of the economy are sporadic and targeted. Even more worrying is the lack of understanding that in order to achieve common success, it is necessary to carry out joint and integrated development of both sectors of the economy. The problem of assessing the economic efficiency of improving information technologies at enterprises has not been developed.

The purpose of the study is to develop theoretical provisions and develop practical recommendations for improving the competitiveness of firms by improving the mechanisms for using information technology.

In accordance with the goal of the work, the following tasks are solved that determine the structure of the work:

- explore existing and identify the most promising approaches and methods to increase the competitiveness of firms through the use of information technology in the process of interaction between high- and low-tech sectors of the economy;
- determine the function performed by IT in the innovation processes of firms in traditional sectors of the economy;
- propose a methodology that takes into account the level of technological development of the company, for the search and selection of information technologies that increase the competitiveness of the company;
- identify the main factors that determine the success of IT innovation absorption by firms;
- analyze global trends, foreign and Russian experience in using IT to increase the competitiveness of firms, especially those belonging to traditional industries. Based on this analysis, develop a classification of competitive advantages created with the help of IT innovations.

The object of the study is the competitiveness of enterprises.

The subject of the study is the level of competitiveness of the company, due to the system of use, implementation and improvement of information technologies in enterprises. The main attention is focused on the enterprises of traditional industries.

Methodology and research methods. In the process of research, within the framework of an integrated approach, such general scientific methods of cognition as induction and deduction, analysis and synthesis, as well as methods of generalizing theoretical and factual material by comparison, qualitative and quantitative analysis, and historical digressions were used. The results of fundamental and applied research published in periodicals and monographs, publications of international organizations and materials of scientific conferences are used as a theoretical basis. The relevant legislative and regulatory acts of the Republic of Uzbekistan, as well as up-to-date statistical data were also used.

The scientific novelty of the study lies in the substantiation of the main directions for the development of competitiveness through the use of information technology, as well as in the development of a classification of competitive advantages created by IT innovations.

Theoretical and practical significance of the research results: The practical and scientific significance of the study lies in the development of theoretical and methodological foundations for the use of IT for the formation of competitive advantages. The most significant results of this study will be used in the process of developing and improving the system of using information technology in enterprises. It is also advisable to use them by government agencies in solving the problems of modernizing and increasing the competitiveness of the domestic economy. The main provisions and conclusions of the dissertation can be used in teaching the academic disciplines

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"Microeconomics" and "Economics of the enterprise" in economic universities, as well as special courses on the competitiveness of firms.

Competitive advantage is created for everyone, more precisely for all those who were able to take advantage of the situation, saw the potential in it and managed to realize it. The emerging competitive advantages are diverse: the provision of services is cheaper and faster (as in the case of "Yandex Taxi"), a differentiated approach to the client (the formation of the cost of an insurance policy depending on the driving style), better customer satisfaction (for example, the provision of goods for rent instead of forcing its acquisition). Examples of this type are: passing customs without inspection (and even without stopping, at speed) in the presence of a radio frequency tag on the cargo or filing a tax or customs declaration in electronic form.

The allocation of such competitive advantages to a separate group is due to the fact that their creation requires both the active participation of the company itself (no one will introduce the technology of installing radio frequency tags on cargo for it), and mandatory assistance from the state. For the emergence of innovation, there is little interaction between traditional and high-tech industries: it is necessary to solve a number of complex issues at the legislative level, to give guarantees for the elimination of newly emerging problems in this area. Competitive advantages are primarily manifested in a significant acceleration of business processes by avoiding traditionally lengthy procedures for interaction with government agencies.

Taken together, all the above points of innovation activities develop the general level of IT development in the country, which in turn is a necessary condition for the development of these same innovations. While a service like Yandex Taxi offers mobile calling and mileage optimization services for just a few taxi companies, few people may be interested in this application. In turn, while a small number of people use it, the connection to the project is not interesting for taxi companies and individual taxi drivers. Vicious circle. If there are no tasks for which communicators are needed, no one buys them.

The opposite is also true - the more participants are involved in this process, the more obvious the benefits of innovation, the more people want to join it, both from taxi companies and customers. This creates a demand for smartphones and tablets, all new mobile applications for them, for expanding access zones (and reducing dead zones), and the like. People are beginning to see the benefits of innovation, trying to understand their functions, thereby spurring a new round of IT development on a very broad front.

Conclusion

It has been established that the competitive advantages determined by the methods of borrowing (absorption), development and implementation of IT are fundamentally different for firms and industries of different levels of technological development. The study proposes the concept of "absorption horizons", which describes the degree of development of competencies that allow a firm to attract and adapt external innovations to its needs.

The challenge of a different plan is addressed to high-tech firms. Where can the innovations they develop be in demand? This is a serious financial and organizational, but, above all, a general theoretical, ideological issue. Attempts to introduce without any support into a new area - a traditional industry with already existing leaders and established business processes - add competitive risks to the already huge innovation risks.

It is necessary to establish an "information bridge" with traditional firms, not just to disseminate information, but also to receive feedback using modern technologies. By making this connection systematic and continuous, high-tech firms can take the next step: give information technology a

new meaning. Namely, the value of the basis for innovation that combines high technology and traditional goods and services.

The study proves that the transfer of technology from the high-tech to the low-tech sector is a prerequisite for effective development and increasing the competitiveness of both sectors. In particular, the special nature of the innovation process in traditional industries is substantiated (import of innovations from outside the industry, subject to mandatory substantive preparation for their implementation within the industry). With regard to high-tech industries, a direct dependence of the demand for innovations (or the degree of their demand) on the intensity of technological ties with traditional industries is substantiated.

Unfortunately, the current state of affairs in the domestic economy does not inspire excessive optimism in terms of the degree of readiness of the Russian national response to the formulated challenges. But the first successful examples confirm that the possibility of solving problems really exists.

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