**Strategic Management Process of Etisalat**

**Introduction**

Found in the Middle East, Etisalat is telecommunications business and the largest corporations in the 6 Arab countries under the Gulf Cooperation Council. When it started off in 1976, it was a landline telephone service provider and over time, it expanded to cover Internet, cable TV, mobile telecommunications, networks and others (Al Ansari, 2009, p. 5). It is estimated that the company is worth Dh 81 billion (equivalent of 22 billion US$) with annual revenues that are above 9 billion US$. Etisalat operates in fifteen countries in the Middle East, Asia and Africa and it estimated to have 42,000 personnel (Etisalat, n.d., p.1).

The company started an acquisition program in 2004 after it won its second mobile license, forming the first third-generation 3G mobile license issued in Saudi Arabia. Ever since the acquisition, it has experience great expansion, positioning its operation as the fastest growing corporation in the world with a percentage rise of 3,475 in subscribers from 4 million in 2004 to 141 million in 2013 (Etisalat, n.d., p.1).

In sustenance of UAE’s position, Etisalat has played a crucial role as the main business hub in the region for a duration of close to 40 years. Also, it is among the first pacesetters of global telecommunication trade, powering the UAE into top rank innovations, always being among the very first to come up with latest technology. For example, in 2010, it enabled UAE to feature among first 5 countries in the globe to own a 3D television service (Etisalat, n.d., p.2).

Etisalat has pioneered the next generation of networks for both fixed and wireless services, deployed sufficient fiber optic cables in UAE that can reach the moon from the Earth 8 times. The company is also in the process of initiating 4G LTE (Fourth generation long-term evolution) network in Saudi Arabia and UAE. Etisalat, currently owns the fastest fixed-line broadband network in Middle East that has speeds high as 30Mbps (mega-bits per second). It has also trialed the fastest mobile broadband services across the globe, attaining splendid speeds of up to 300Mbps (Etisalat, n.d., p.2).

The company’s technological expertise has helped it to capture a major share of the market, extending across the region. In Saudi Arabia and Egypt, it has captured more markets where the market dynamics have been changed by introduction of affordable Internet access and broadband services which is inclusive of video calls and mobile television. Etisalat has received recognition as the most competent wholesale provider 4 times in the last 3 consecutive years as well as the best overall operator in idle East 10 times since 2006. Because of its performance, the company has also won several accolades for provision of the best customer services, best CSR program and best brand among others. The management team of the company is well celebrated with Eissa Al Suwaidi (the company’s chairman) for being amongst the couple of businesses that has great influential impact in the UAE (Etisalat, n.d., p.2).

**Formulation Of Strategy And Implementation**

The company faces several issues and challenges, requiring proper implementation and formulation of strategies. Some of these challenges include contrasting processes of response to changes. It has formulated 2 major strategies to deal with the process of change adaptation. The specialization of the company in the industry of communications’ favors rise in communication between the employees and management. The company’s diversification makes use of strategies alliances with global suppliers aiding them expand to international markets.

The management changed its organizational structure from hierarchical authority to utilization of workplace teams (Mohammed, 2010, p. 5). The company has been adopting new technologies as well as implementing them in the workplace for purposes of increasing its level of efficiency and competency. The managers of the company look forward to altering strategic direction with the purpose of including changes in management approaches that can permit them to expand to new countries through profiling target markets with preferences and demands. The company as well has developed comprehensive HRM management strategy which permits them to increase their efficiency, communication, team building and productivity.

The company, as well has included strategies involving adaptation of online e-marketing strategies that appeal to global markets. Additionally, it has improved the coordination of employee teamwork, communication and management by development streamlined strategies (Ali, 2010, p.2).

It has also partnered with several non-governmental and governmental organizations for purposes of increasing accessibility level to health and education through use of technology since it is committed to corporate social responsibility principles. The company as well has been supporting individuals with special needs, helping in building its reputation. For instance, in 2010, Etisalat got shortlisted as the finalist to Global Mobile Awards for its services of visual center which uses 3G technology and sign language to help those impaired with hearing. Also, the company was awarded for the prestigious competition in 2012 for having developed a commercial application that enabled financial transactions.

As a regional leader in provision of information that is environment friendly and communication solutions, the company has pioneered several advanced “green” technologies. Some of these technologies include smart building technologies with the latest being alternative power deployment within their networks regions and use of Machine-to Machine solutions. The strategies of the company ensure that it adheres to the highest international standards with its nationwide network of fiber optic expected to lower the consumption of energy by an approximate 70% and carbon emission by an approximate 80% (Etisalat, n.d., p.2).

Majorly, Etisalat has based its implementation and formulation strategies on 4 core elements. These elements are change management, functional leadership, organizational culture and personnel management. The company as well has adapted to changes in their business procedures, strategies, attitude and duties by adopting to change management, which facilitates transformation of the organization.

The successful growth of the company is attributable to its values, vision and mission. Its mission is extending people’s reach through development of advanced networks that facilitate growth and learning in the nation as a whole and within community. The mission is in-line with the company’s vision which is seeing the world reach people regardless of whether they are limited by distance. Clearly, the company has states its values which include: energy, enablement and openness. Also, it looks forward to seeing a world where the reach of the people is enhances by technology.

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