Competitive intelligence sub-system in the organization : examination of the process effectiveness starting from data gathering stage till the consolidation of the intelligence assessment / The reciprocity between the information professionals : analysts intelligence managers and intelligence consumers / Anat Klumel

Abstract

Competitive Intelligence and its outputs play a central role in the process of decision making in organizations (business, military and political). Multiple raw data sets have created a situation where a high level of professionalization is required in order to generate relevant results that provide an actionable, sustained competitive advantage to the organization.

This research examines the process of data collection effectiveness and analysis, focusing on discovering what the new requirements of the modern age to effectively generate value for the organization are. Specifically, we look at the quality of the information provided; its suitability, relevance, reliability, timeliness, and the implementation of the output in the organization.

Competitive intelligence is gathered in organizations by different units. These are usually made up of a data collection unit and an assessment unit. The study examined the impact of the interaction between the two and the Decision Makers, who received the outputs from them. The impact of the mentioned interaction was examined in comparison with research methods employed in both military and diplomatic research.

This research will aim to specifically investigate the relations between the competitive intelligence units and the actual information professionals, as well as analysts of the units themselves.

The research examines the way the information is gathered and the models utilized in the process, as well as the bias that might affect the information gathering process. The amount of the information gathered and its quality are used as parameters of the information validity assessment.

In addition, this research examines the way of choosing a methodology for developing predictions in competitive intelligence. The methodology should support

the decision making process by supplying the Decision makers with a relevant and suitable data. System Thinking and Outcome Thinking are the methodologies employed in the research. The first focuses on the reciprocity between the parts of the system and therefore assumes, that the total is more than just the sum of its parts. The second focuses on the end results achieved by the analysis and not on the entire acquisition processes. The results are judged based on the outcomes as has often been done when investigating military and diplomatic events in the past. This is based on commonly accepted forms of bibliometric methods of analysis.

In addition, the research highlights the fact that most problems result not from the lack of data available for analysis, but rather from the incorrect methodologies utilized in the overall process.

The qualitative research was conducted according to the constructivist approach and was constructed from in-depth interviews with 47 information professionals that work in the competitive analyses arena, and the consumers of the mentioned information. The analysis of this information was done by building categories based on the various stages in the process of building competitive intelligence.

This process assists to define what the role of the information professionals should be and what personal qualities predispose one to be a better researcher or analyst.

The results of this work find that there are two different independent professions; data gathering and its analysis. Information professionals should be responsible for gathering and analyzing the data, while the analysts should be responsible for deciding on the methodology for making predictions and turn the data into an informative product. The conclusion is that the best model for doing this is the CAS (Complex Adaptive System), which provides the best overall results for this type of analysis. The CAS model increases the workers' knowledge sharing and contributes to the autonomic ability to create solutions according to changing demands in turbulent environments.