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## **EXPERIENCES IN KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER OF GLOBAL E-COMMERCE ENTERPRISES AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR VIETNAMESE BUSINESSES**

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### **ABSTRACT**

In the context of the Fourth Industrial Revolution, knowledge transfer plays a strategic role, positioned as a core resource determining the competitive capacity of enterprises through the systematic transformation of knowledge across sources. In Vietnam, while some large corporations have implemented internal knowledge management policies, most enterprises still lack full awareness of the critical importance of this pivotal activity. The study “Experiences in Knowledge Transfer of Global E-commerce Enterprises and Recommendations for Vietnam” aims to systematize the theoretical foundations of knowledge transfer and synthesize practical insights from global enterprises. It draws lessons and proposes solutions for application by Vietnamese businesses, grounded in a scientific methodology that includes secondary data collection from reputable academic sources and the application of analytical methods such as synthesis, induction, deduction, and comparison to ensure objectivity and comprehensiveness.

**KEYWORDS:** knowledge transfer, knowledge, e-commerce, Vietnamese enterprises

### **INTRODUCTION**

The necessity of knowledge transfer in Vietnamese e-commerce enterprises has become a strategic factor amid global competition and the accelerating pace of digital transformation. Vietnamese e-commerce businesses currently face a dual challenge: adopting and applying new technologies in a timely manner while adapting to highly volatile consumer behaviors. In a digital business environment characterized by short technology cycles and interdisciplinary complexity, establishing effective knowledge management and transfer systems is critical for sustaining operations and achieving long-term development. Systematic knowledge transfer enables Vietnamese e-commerce enterprises to optimize learning time, enhance operational efficiency, foster innovation, and reduce experimentation costs in the digital business landscape. Moreover, this process facilitates the accumulation of localized knowledge capital—a distinctive competitive advantage that international platforms struggle to replicate. Given the limited availability of high-quality human resources in technology and e-commerce in Vietnam, building effective knowledge transfer mechanisms allows enterprises to

optimize existing resources while attracting and retaining talent through continuous capability development.

For the Vietnamese market, which boasts one of the highest e-commerce growth rates in the region at over 25% annually, there remains a competitive gap compared to international platforms. Establishing robust knowledge transfer systems is not only critical for individual enterprises but also a prerequisite for elevating the position of Vietnam's e-commerce sector within regional and global value chains. Furthermore, in the context of deep integration through new-generation free trade agreements such as CPTPP and EVFTA, Vietnamese e-commerce enterprises must build competitive capabilities based on knowledge and innovation rather than relying solely on low labor cost advantages, as in previous phases. Thus, studying and applying advanced knowledge transfer experiences from leading global e-commerce enterprises, while adapting them to Vietnam's unique context, is a pressing strategic task for businesses aiming to establish a strong position in this field.

## **2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **2.1. Theoretical Framework**

#### **2.1.1. Knowledge Transfer**

According to Nguyễn Văn Minh et al., knowledge transfer is defined as the process of transmitting various forms of knowledge—including expertise, experiences, lessons learned, and specialized know-how—from one source to another, while ensuring that this knowledge is effectively utilized and applied. Far from being a mere activity, it is a strategic factor critical to an organization's development and success. The primary purpose of knowledge transfer is to promote information sharing, strengthen collaboration, and build robust knowledge networks within organizations. This process enables enterprises to access valuable resources, such as tacit knowledge—a highly valuable but difficult-to-identify form of knowledge—while fostering the development of new and advanced insights.

#### **2.1.2. Role of Knowledge Transfer in Enterprises**

Knowledge transfer plays a pivotal role in sustaining competitive advantages and driving innovation in contemporary business environments. This mechanism ensures the systematic storage and dissemination of knowledge, providing a solid foundation for organizational sustainability. Amid rapid digital transformation and globalization, enterprises face increasingly complex challenges in enhancing competitiveness and adaptability. Consequently, establishing effective knowledge management systems has become a decisive factor for organizational survival and growth.

As emphasized by leading knowledge management scholars (Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995) "In an economy where the only certainty is uncertainty, the only sustainable competitive advantage is knowledge." Research has classified knowledge into two primary forms: explicit knowledge, which

can be codified, stored, and systematically transmitted, and tacit knowledge, which is tied to personal experiences and difficult to articulate through words or documentation. Effective knowledge transfer requires organizations to develop mechanisms for converting between these two types of knowledge, facilitating its flow and accumulation across the enterprise. Designing and implementing knowledge transfer systems not only optimizes intellectual capital but also enhances adaptability to market fluctuations.

In practice, knowledge transfer is executed through various methods, such as formal training, mentoring, job rotation, communities of practice, and digital knowledge-sharing platforms. Each method has its own strengths and limitations, requiring managers to devise strategies aligned with the organization's culture and the nature of the knowledge being transferred. As Dr. Etienne Wenger noted in *Communities of Practice: Learning, Meaning, and Identity* (1998), "Knowledge is not an object that can be mechanically transferred; it requires active participation and deep socialization processes."

## **2.2. Research Methodology**

The study employs the following research methods:

- Dialectical and historical materialism: The foundational methodology guiding the entire study.
- Synthesis: Aggregating findings from various published academic works globally and domestically.
- Analysis and comparison: To address the research problem systematically.

## **3. RESEARCH FINDINGS**

### **3.1. Global Experiences in Knowledge Transfer**

During the 1980s and 1990s, Asian countries such as China, Japan, and Singapore experienced remarkable economic growth. Enterprises in these nations effectively managed knowledge, leveraging it as an infinite resource to drive economic development. Below, the authors present case studies of enterprises that successfully implemented knowledge transfer.

#### **3.1.1. Taobao (China)**

In today's rapidly evolving information technology society, knowledge has become a core driver of enterprise development. Taobao, a Chinese online shopping platform similar to eBay and Amazon, operated by Alibaba Group, exemplifies this trend. As of February 2018, Taobao had over 580 million monthly active users [15] and listed over one billion products by 2016 [15]. According to Alexa, it ranks among the top ten most-visited websites globally. In fiscal year 2017, the combined gross merchandise volume of Taobao and Tmall.com exceeded 3 trillion CNY, surpassing the total of all U.S. retail and e-commerce enterprises. The Economist dubbed Taobao "China's largest e-commerce marketplace."

Ying Zhang (2012) [7] identified factors influencing Taobao's knowledge management, including:

- Knowledge management awareness
- Knowledge strategy
- Training
- Top management support
- Knowledge management processes
- Expert networks
- Knowledge transfer and trusted personal relationships
- Information technology
- Employee engagement and motivation
- Organizational culture

As an IT company, Taobao is well-equipped with IT infrastructure, providing a strong foundation for building knowledge management systems and tools for knowledge transfer. Employees are aware of knowledge transfer's importance, and a reward system and organizational culture encouraging knowledge sharing stimulate its implementation. Expert networks within project teams further facilitate knowledge transfer. However, Taobao lacks systematic training on knowledge management, such as structured knowledge storage, leading to improper knowledge archiving and hindering transfer. Comprehensive training is essential to enhance awareness and clarify individual roles in knowledge management.

Taobao advocates knowledge-driven processes to establish structured knowledge transfer mechanisms. A clear knowledge strategy, supported by strong leadership from senior management, is critical to success. Formal knowledge transfer processes enable systematic implementation and easier troubleshooting. While employees collaborate well within project teams, inter-team communication is often ineffective. Building trusted personal relationships and enhancing inter-team communication are necessary to improve knowledge transfer. Taobao's reward system motivates employees, but it is insufficient without linking knowledge management activities to performance metrics to ensure timely knowledge documentation.

### **3.1.2. Amazon**

Amazon, beyond being a global retail giant, is a technology leader with significant contributions to knowledge transfer. Its scale and rapid growth necessitate an effective knowledge transfer system to sustain development.

#### **Core Principles**

- Speed: Amazon prioritizes speed in all operations, including knowledge transfer.
- Scale: Its large scale requires widespread and efficient knowledge sharing.

- Customer-Centricity: All decisions aim to enhance customer experiences.

#### Tools and Platforms

- Amazon Web Services (AWS): Used for storing, sharing, and analyzing data.
- Internal Wiki: A platform for sharing information and documentation.
- Amazon Learning: An internal learning platform offering courses and training materials.

#### Knowledge Transfer Strategies

- Ownership Culture: Employees are responsible for sharing knowledge and improving processes.
- Self-Service: Employees are encouraged to independently seek information and solve problems.
- Outcome-Based Performance Reviews: Evaluations focus on results, incentivizing knowledge sharing.

Amazon's knowledge transfer activities benefit not only the company but also society, establishing it as one of the world's most influential enterprises through shared knowledge, technology, and expertise.

### **3.1.3. Shopee**

Shopee, a leading e-commerce platform in Southeast Asia, significantly contributes to knowledge transfer in e-commerce and technology.

- Leadership Development: Shopee has trained over 450 leaders across Southeast Asia, fostering a learning culture through programs for new and existing managers, senior leader sharing sessions, and mentoring.
- Internal Knowledge Sharing: Discussion sessions, short-term classes, and team meetings encourage knowledge exchange, fostering continuous learning and improved performance.
- Shopee Uni: A comprehensive knowledge repository for sellers, offering courses, articles, and webinars on marketing, product optimization, and order management.
- Seller Community: A platform for sellers to share experiences and solve challenges.
- Live Training and Workshops: Regular sessions to enhance sellers' skills and knowledge.
- Shopee Live: A livestream feature enabling sellers to share product knowledge and engage with customers.

These strategies ensure innovation and efficiency by facilitating effective knowledge transfer across the organization, benefiting sellers and the broader e-commerce ecosystem.

### **3.1.4. Alibaba Group**

Alibaba, a global technology conglomerate, invests heavily in knowledge transfer to build a sustainable business ecosystem.

#### Alibaba Cloud Ecosystem

- Leading Cloud Platform: Provides services for enterprises, particularly startups, to develop applications efficiently.

- Extensive Learning Resources: Offers free online courses, guides, and documentation.
- Developer Community: A vibrant platform for developers to share expertise and seek support.

#### Training and Talent Development

- Alibaba Business School: Offers programs to enhance management and business skills for employees and partners.
- Internship Programs: Opportunities for students to learn from industry experts.

#### Research and Development

- Research Labs: Focus on AI, big data, cloud computing, and emerging technologies.
- Academic Collaborations: Partnerships with leading universities and research institutes.

#### Knowledge Sharing

- Alibaba Entrepreneurs Fund: Supports startups with funding and resources.
- Conferences and Events: Platforms for sharing knowledge with the business community.

Alibaba's knowledge transfer initiatives contribute to both its success and global societal development, cementing its influence worldwide.

### **3.2. Analysis of Achievements, Challenges, and Causes in Knowledge Transfer**

The case studies highlight the critical importance of knowledge transfer and management in global enterprises. This activity directly impacts business performance across sectors, from manufacturing (e.g., Toyota) to e-commerce (e.g., Taobao) and mobile commerce (e.g., Grab).

These multinational organizations, with tens of thousands of employees, rely on knowledge transfer between units, departments, and individuals for success. In today's rapidly advancing technological landscape, newer enterprises with robust knowledge creation and transfer systems, like Grab, can achieve rapid success.

However, human factors significantly influence knowledge transfer. Employees often hesitate to share proprietary knowledge, particularly in larger organizations. Enterprises must implement systems, tools, and policies to address this challenge.

## **4. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR VIETNAMESE ENTERPRISES**

Throughout history, knowledge has been a valuable resource. In modern society, it plays an increasingly critical role in economic and social development. Research on knowledge transfer and management is a priority for scholars, experts, and enterprises globally. Knowledge transfer, a key component of knowledge management, significantly impacts business performance but remains underemphasized by many enterprises. The case studies demonstrate how transformative effective knowledge transfer can be.



Global enterprises across sectors face challenges in knowledge management and transfer, which are also significant for Vietnamese businesses. Most Vietnamese enterprises, particularly the 98% classified as small and medium-sized [10], have yet to prioritize knowledge as a development focus. Limited capital and management capabilities pose additional barriers to knowledge management investment. However, drawing on global experiences, Vietnamese enterprises can succeed by adopting the following recommendations:

- Develop knowledge-based business strategies and foster a knowledge management-oriented culture to encourage employee creativity and knowledge sharing.
- Establish specific knowledge transfer systems and processes, including unified databases to systematize knowledge.
- Provide training on knowledge transfer skills for managers and employees.
- Enhance internal training programs, with experienced staff mentoring newcomers.
- Incentivize creativity and knowledge sharing through timely and appropriate rewards for significant contributions.
- Leverage information technology to streamline knowledge creation, sharing, storage, and utilization.
- Shift enterprise mindsets, ensuring managers and employees recognize knowledge as a valuable asset worthy of protection and investment.

Amid the Fourth Industrial Revolution, knowledge is a decisive factor for success. As a developing economy, Vietnam must leverage existing knowledge to compete. Vietnamese enterprises should prioritize knowledge management and transfer to maximize this resource, creating competitive advantages in the ongoing industrial revolution and achieving future success.

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