IO1 - ABSTRACT OF THE TRAINING

B I G
Businesses' International Growth

Increasing the digital international business management skills among SMEs

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IO1

TRAINING PROGRAM

"Abstract"

Introduction

IO1 is aimed to design the new training program, defining the teaching methods, the criteria to select learners, the assessment methods, evaluation of the learning outcomes achieved through a didactic path based on the following 3 dimensions:

1) COGNITIVE (learning by thinking), mixing classroom seminars and e-learning with the use of OER in order to acquire a reference organic and analytical framework
   - Strengthen the positioning in the online commercial niche at a global level
   - Facing international competitors on Digital and Retail channels
   - Use World-wide Promotion effectively to raise awareness of foreign business capacities to stakeholders, partners and customers
   - Fielding Digital, Mobile and eCommerce Strategy oriented to objectives of visibility, profitability without management/communication gaps
   - Make investments on the Web, Search, and Social Media Marketing needed to develop the company with realistic methods, timelines and forecasts

2) OPERATIVE (learning by doing)
   Beneficiaries will be involved in on-the-job training to implement Check-Ups at their companies to analyse digital internationalization processes, verifying from an as is/to be point of view:
   - commercial media, i.e. set of digital sales channels used to allow final consumers to obtain products
   - logistics channels, i.e. ways in which products sold are distributed on the target market and delivered to the final consumer
   - marketing and communication channels, i.e. the tools a company uses to promote, advertise and inform its target market of its brands and/or its products
   - legal aspects, i.e. management of all regulatory and fiscal practices, customs formalities, regulations and contractual rules for online sales on foreign markets
   - payment systems, one of the most delicate aspects of the digital export model as one must consider associated costs, security levels, level of integration between different systems and online sales management platforms
   - organizational aspects, i.e. the internal organisation structure to govern a new online market, in terms of skills and profiles involved

3) BEHAVIOURAL (learning by acting) staging and interpreting typical situations of Conversational Digital Marketing relationships, to establish direct relationships with potential customers, in order to:
   - adapt interpersonal digital communication techniques to different socio-economic contexts
   - adapt the techniques of two-directional communication between the user and the brand to different international contexts.
   - apply problem solving and decision-making techniques to solve problems deriving from heterogeneity of customer expectations and needs
   - customize the language and the communicative and relational style to the specificities of the single countries and to the customers' sensibilities

This output is split into 3 sub-tasks as follows:

Task 1.1 Field analysis/focus groups through:
- definition of the analysis methodology
- design of FG questionnaires and management tools
- identification of experts and business representatives to be involved in FGs
- realization of the FG in partnership territorial contexts
- preparation of national reports on FG results

Task 1.2 Definition of the training programme
- Detailed design of the teaching modules
- Definition of the structure of the training path and articulation of the sessions in days/hours (classroom, e-learning, work-based learning, movie education)
- Definition of methodologies for classroom sessions, e-learning, work-based learning, movie education

Task 1.3 Definition of the organisational-management aspects of the training programme
- Definition of the criteria to select participants
- Preparation of monitoring tools for the training program
- Definition of methods, criteria and tools to assess, evaluate and certify learning outcomes

1.1 Field analysis/focus groups

Here follows the list of skills emerged during the Focus Group conducted by partners with the involvement of:

- referees of partner training agencies, to analyse the state of the art of the training offer and to incorporate the strengths and areas for improvement to equip workers with international, digital business management skills
- representatives of small enterprises to ascertain the need for skills typical of digital internationalization processes
- workers of small enterprises, to identify the level of possession and exercise of the target skills and the needs not adequately met by the training offer

Skills for internationalization
Cultural awareness
− the knowledge of host countries (these skills are useful for the "real" context and "digital" one).
− cultural awareness
− Understanding of local cultures and of local markets
− Intercultural understanding
− cross-cultural communication
− cross-cultural adaption
Marketing/communication skills:
− marketing strategy
− market segmentation
− communication (also cross-cultural),
− foreign language skills
− cooperation skills
− negotiation skills
− sales skills
Logistics and legal knowledge:
− payment and revenues management (e.g. e-commerce has been mentioned)
− logistics management
− knowledge on international business rules, techniques and customs
− knowledge on international finance
− knowledge on commercial law
− skills to prepare documents in international business
Skills in digital internationalization
Technical and general digital skills
− ability to online work
− technical efficiency
− Computer/ Smartphone savvies
− Artificial intelligence
− knowledge on cyber security
− Coding and/or no-code approach
− Knowledge of search engines
− Search Engine Optimization –SEO
Digital communication skills
− Knowledge of communication tools

– Communicating through different digital platforms and devices
– Daily use of E-mails, word, excel spreadsheets,
– Using websites, video conference tools like Skype, Microsoft Teams and Zoom platforms,
– Skill of preparing digital presentations, power point, videos, films and marketing materials,
– Usage of language and translation based tools

The use of digital tools:
- knowledge of building and delivering digital tools,
- Ability to build user-friendly systems,
- ability to build www pages, online shops, internet communicators,
- Understanding and implementing web-based or software based solutions for business processes,
- Graphic design / Web development/ Photography
- Programming

Digital marketing
- Ability to create content in local language and fitting cultural preferences
- Social media savvy in particular on platforms that are in use in target markets,
- Planning of online media
- Social media skills
- digital campaign across all levels and areas within/externally to the company

Online market research
- Google Analytics
- Searching for information on the internet, networks and websites
- Ability to find right channels to target the right segment of the market in the given country
- Online data acquisition and use of online marketplaces
- Information Literacy.

Training Programme

The present section illustrates the structure, the content and learning methodologies of the BIG training program.

Training programme aims to reach companies strategic objectives as came to light with Focus; those objectives should lead to a proper and sustainable plan of the international and digital presence, referring to a modern and meticulous framework of methodology and contents.

The training offer is configured as a "three-dimensional" didactic model, a learning process in "3D", in which the fundamental Dimensions of professional action, coinciding with Context, Role, Person, have constituted the Drivers for the development of the entire didactic system and the relative training response which in turn is divided into the 3 dimensions of learning (COGNITIVE - learning by thinking; OPERATIVE - learning by doing; BEHAVIOURAL - learning by acting).

In particular:

- **the context**: it integrates learning related to (exogenous and endogenous) logistical, cultural, legal factors, etc., which condition, influence and frame the processes of international business development in the intercultural field;

- **the role**: it deals with the development of skills toward a digital mindset that must be furnished also with digital operation skills and digital communication skills, being appropriate to the digital transformation of sales process;

- **the person**: it concerns behavioural qualities as relational, negotiation, communicative, problem solving; all of them are relevant to transform technical and theoretical knowledge in excellent professional performances.

Hereafter there is a table of connection among skills and knowledge needs as emerges during Focus group sessions and their conversion in training programme.

Table 1. Connection among needs and training

Skills for internationalization	Training Modules
Cultural awareness − the knowledge of host countries (these skills are useful for the "real" context and "digital" one). − cultural awareness − Understanding of local cultures and of local markets − Intercultural understanding − cross-cultural communication − cross-cultural adaption	**Driver 1: Context** **Module 1: Cultural awareness** **Unit 1 – Cultural differences and Intercultural Competence in International Marketing**
Marketing/communication skills: − marketing strategy − market segmentation − communication (also cross-cultural), − foreign language skills	**Driver 1: Context** **Module 2: International Marketing and sales** **Unit 1 – Introduction to International marketing and Sales in International market**

− cooperation skills − negotiation skills − sales skills	**Unit 2 – Inside sales and selling remotely**
Logistics and legal knowledge: − payment and revenues management (e.g. e-commerce has been mentioned) − logistics management − knowledge on international business rules, techniques and customs − knowledge on international finance − knowledge on commercial law − skills to prepare documents in international business	**Unit 3 – Payment, logistic and legal knowledge**
Skills in digital internationalization	
Digital marketing − Ability to create content in local language and fitting cultural preferences − Social media savvy in particular on platforms that are in use in target markets, − Planning of online media − Social media skills − Digital campaign across all levels and areas within/externally to the company − Knowledge of search engines − Search Engine Optimization –SEO	**Driver 2: Role** **Module 3: International digital marketing** **Unit 1: Web design and content development for international market** **Unit 2: SEO and SEM** **Unit 3: Social media marketing** **Unit 4: eCommerce & International Marketplace**
Online market research − Google Analytics − Searching for information on the internet, networks and websites − Ability to find right channels to target the right segment of the market in the given country − Online data acquisition and use of online marketplaces − Information Literacy.	**Driver 2: Role** **Module 4: Data Driven Marketing** **Unit 1: Online market research** **Unit 2: Data Analytics**
The use of digital tools: − Knowledge of building and delivering digital tools, − Ability to build user-friendly systems, − Ability to build www pages, online shops, internet communicators, − Understanding and implementing web-based or software based solutions for business processes,	**Driver 2: Role** **Module 5: Technology and productivity** **Unit 1: Must have and new opportunity with Artificial intelligence and deep learning**

− Graphic design / Web development/ Photography − Programming	
Technical and general digital skills − Ability to online work − Technical efficiency − Computer/ Smartphone savviness − Artificial intelligence − Knowledge on cyber security − Coding and/or no-code approach	
Digital communication skills − Knowledge of communication tools − Communicating through different digital platforms and devices − Daily use of E-mails, word, excel spreadsheets, − Using websites, video conference tools like Skype, Microsoft Teams and Zoom platforms, − Skill of preparing digital presentations, power point, videos, films and marketing materials, − Usage of language and translation based tools	**Driver 3: Person** **Module 6: Digital communication** **Unit 1: Cross cultural communication** **Unit 2: Online Communication and tools**

Hereafter the table with detailed training programme and its didactic drivers and modules

Table 2. Program content in detail: Driver and modules

Driver 1	**Contest**
Description	• *legal aspects, i.e. management of all regulatory and fiscal practices, customs formalities, regulations and contractual rules for online sales on foreign markets* • *logistics channels, i.e. ways in which products sold are distributed on the target market and delivered to the final consumer* • *commercial media, i.e. set of digital sales channels used to allow final consumers to obtain products* • *marketing and communication channels, i.e. the tools a company uses to promote, advertise and inform its target market of its brands and/or its products* • *organizational aspects, i.e. the internal organisation structure to govern a new online market, in terms of skills and profiles involved* • *the knowledge of host countries (these skills are useful for the "real" context and "digital" one)* • *Understanding of local cultures and of local markets* • *Intercultural understanding*
Module 1	*Cultural Awareness*
Unit 1.1	Cultural differences *and Intercultural Competence in International Marketing*

Module 2	International Marketing and sales
Unit 2.1	Introduction to International marketing and Sales in International market
Unit 2.2	Inside sales and selling remotely
Unit 2.3	Payment, logistic and legal knowledge
Driver 2	**Role**
Description	• Be aware of digital transformation challenges in the company; • Change and update the management style through a digital point of view; • Ability to manage new operations connected to a digital approach; • Development of the social collaboration process; • Capacity to use digital tools for being more effective; • Team management with digital tools; • Monitor web marketing campaigns to maximizes results; • Effective use of web marketing tools: SEO, SEM, email marketing, social media and mobile; • How to become the most authoritative voice in the market niche and convert customers into supporters of the Brand through Blogging, Social Networks and advanced Marketing; • Models to sell directly online in western and eastern markets, planning the required strategies, timelines and investments in a consistent and realistic way; • Methods and techniques to position themselves on Google, Yandex (Russia), Baidu (China) and Naver (Korea) to intercept the demand and be evaluated sooner (and better!) than competitors.
Module 3	International digital marketing
Unit 3.1	Web design and content development for international market
Unit 3.2	SEO and SEM
Unit 3.3	Social media marketing
Unit 3.4	eCommerce & International Marketplace
Module 4	Data Driven Marketing
Unit 4.1	Online market research
Unit 4.2	Data Analytics
Module 5	Technology and productivity
Unit 5.1	Must have and new opportunities with Artificial intelligence and deep learning
Driver 3	**Person**
Description	methods and techniques to personalize conversations; speed of reaction and information sharing; create new collaboration channels for customer care and sales; strengthen relationships with partners and suppliers; new creative and communication ideas; create personalized communication for the customer.
Module 6	Digital Communication
Unit 6.1	Cross-cultural communication
Unit 6.2	Online Communication and tools

The following tables summarize the references to the modules, the learning outcomes, the hours, the topics, methodologies and the learning material

Table Specific structure of the training program and Teaching methodologies

	Expectations	Explanation
1	Title of the module	
2	Short description of the content	
3	Expected learning outcomes	
4	Length of the module	… hours (class, e-learning, SMEs check-up/movie education)
5	Learning topics	
6	Learning materials	
7	Learning methods	class, e-learning, SMEs check-up, movie education???

More in depth, under the methodological point of view, the training program is designed using the following teaching methodologies:

- Face-to-face sessions
  The workers will have to attend a certain number of face-to-face sessions at the premises of the training organization/company. There they will be able to have a face-to-face contact with an expert and ask all kind of questions.

  … hrs per module (total …)

- E learning (using the OER and learning environment)
  There will be an e-learning platform where all OERs will be uploaded and all the workers will have access to it. There the courses will be structured in the form of modules and the trainees will have to pass all the topics in each module in order to finalise the course.

  … hrs per module (10 mins per pill + FIM / total …)

- Company Check-ups (work-based learning)
  The workers will be given a real practice case to analyse in their own companies

  … working days (total … hrs)

- Movie education (Action learning)
  This activity that is based on the "Movie Education" methodological model and the creation of short didactic films which will enable workers to learn the techniques to elaborate a narrative text to use in the design, scripting and interpretation of sketch-coms to stage and interpret typical situations of Conversational Digital Marketing relationships, to establish direct relationships with potential customers, in order to:
  - adapt interpersonal digital communication techniques to different socio-economic contexts

- adapt the techniques of bidirectional communication between user and brand to different international contexts
- apply problem solving and decision-making techniques to solve problems deriving from the heterogeneity of customer expectations/needs
- customize the language and the communicative and relational style to the specificities of the single countries and the sensibilities of customers

… days (total … hrs)