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CULTURAL SHOCK IN INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS: CAUSES, CONSEQUENCES AND COPING STRATEGIES

Культурный шок в международном бизнесе: причины, последствия и стратегии преодоления

In this article, the challenges of cultural shock in international business are highlighted. It explores the causes, such as misunderstanding local norms, and proposes strategies like deep localization and staff training to overcome them and achieve global success.

This research aims to thoroughly explore culture shock's significant impact as a risk factor in international business. It will identify the key challenges faced by expatriates and international teams. The ultimate goal is to develop practical management and personal strategies that help personnel successfully overcome culture shock, thereby improving their intercultural competence and the overall success of international ventures.

Cultural shock is a state of disorientation and discomfort that arises when encountering an unfamiliar culture. In business, it manifests in failed marketing campaigns, conflicts with partners, decreased productivity, and, as a result, financial and reputational losses. Successful adaptation to cultural specifics is a key factor for competitiveness in the global market.

Cross-cultural differences in international business can cause many problems. These problems affect employees and how the business works. One problem is that people may not understand each other's cultural values and rules. Differences in how people see individualism, religion, and manners can cause conflicts and misunderstandings. Language problems are also common. If translations are incorrect or communication is poor, it can lead to mistakes, wasted time, and money. If these problems are not managed, they can cause serious damage. The company might see lower productivity, higher staff turnover, more conflicts with partners and customers, failed marketing, and financial losses. The company's reputation can also suffer.

Many big brands fail in new markets because they do not understand local cultures well enough. Sometimes they make simple mistakes, like Chevrolet naming a car Nova. In Spanish, Nova sounds like 'no va', which means 'it doesn't go.' More mistakes that are serious happen when companies ignore local religion and customs. For example, launching ads that offend conservative groups. Companies also fail when they offer products that do not match local tastes or break local rules, such as selling pork in Muslim countries.

Another problem is not adapting enough. This means changing not just the words but also the product, marketing, and how they sell. McDonald's is a good example. They

change their menu for each country. In India, they sell the McCurry Pan. In Japan, they sell the Teriyaki Burger. They also use local culture in their ads, like celebrities and humor, to connect with people.

Many examples show these problems. Walmart left Germany because they did not understand what customers wanted. Germans care more about quality than low prices. Walmart also had issues with German labor laws and their style of service, like demanding employees smile. Home Depot failed in China because they thought people would want to do home repairs themselves. Nevertheless, most Chinese prefer to hire workers. Best Buy could not compete in Europe because local stores had better products and prices.

Coping Strategies: Market research (analysis of cultural, economic, political aspects), product and marketing localization, staff training, building partnerships, flexibility, adaptability, and establishing long-term connections.

Thus, cultural shock is a serious but surmountable obstacle on the path to global success. Investments in research, localization, staff training, and building partnerships help minimize risks.

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THE INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL MEDIA AND DIGITAL CULTURE ON INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS

Влияние социальных сетей и цифровой культуры на международный бизнес

Nowadays, social media has profoundly changed the global business environment, accelerating the pace and scope of how companies communicate, market, collaborate, and expand across borders. Digital platforms have erased many traditional barriers such as geography and time zones, enabling companies to engage worldwide audiences instantly and at a scale previously unimaginable.

The purpose of this article is to explain how social media and digital culture transform international business, by reshaping communication, marketing, collaboration, and organizational dynamics.

Social media platforms like Instagram, Twitter, and TikTok enable businesses to craft targeted campaigns for culturally diverse audiences. With the latest research from GWI revealing that the «typical» social media user now spends 2 hours and 23 minutes per day using social media. Through advanced analytics and AI-driven insights offered on these platforms, companies gain real-time data on customer behavior, preferences, sentiment, and emerging trends, which informs product innovation, pricing, and promotional tactics.