

**Evaluation of  
International Trade Centre  
(UNCTAD/WTO)**

**Volume 5  
Corporate Performance  
and Capacity**

**COMMUNICA-  
TIONS AND  
MARKETING**

File No. 104.A.1.e.37  
April 2006

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**List of Acronyms**

CRM	Consumer Relationship Marketing
IT	Information Technology
ITC	International Trade Centre
JITAP	Joint Integrated Technical Assistance Program
OAS	Organisation of American States
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
PIO	Public Information Officer
PR	Public Relations
RFC	Recent, Frequent, Cost
seco	The Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs
SICE	Foreign Trade Information System/Sistema de Información al Comercio Exterior
SME	Small and Medium-Sized Enterprise
TRTA	Trade Related Technical Assistance
TSI	Trade Support Institution
UN	United Nations
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
USD	United States Dollar
WTO	World Trade Organization

# 1 ITC Communications and Marketing

## 1.1 Introduction

The International Trade Centre (ITC) is relatively unique among international organisations in its focus on providing technical assistance to the private sector. The mission of ITC and the resulting character of ITC as an organisation have important implications for the communications and marketing dimensions of the organisation. As an international organisation providing technical assistance to the private sector, the ITC has multiple audiences and multiple stakeholders.

ITC does not have a formal “marketing” department with the attendant functions as understood in the private sector<sup>1</sup>. Government and quasi-government organizations tend to have a communications department that is responsible for activities such as organizing seminars/conferences, preparing and sending out press releases, preparing and disseminating promotional material such as booklets, brochures and newsletters, as well as doing media advertising when such is necessary. These activities frequently are referred to as “promotion” or “public relations” (PR) or sometimes as “communications”.

ITC, in common with similar organizations, has a communications function (part of the Office of the Executive Director) that performs the functions listed above and also contributes to ITC’s wider technical cooperation activities as well. For example, ITC’s technical cooperation objectives are enhanced by the on-going upgrading of Forum magazine (see Section below) to include more in-depth research and analysis, to concentrate on key themes, to allow it to serve as training material in workshops, etc.

ITC is different from many international organisations and national development agencies in that it is dealing directly with the private sector. The organisations in the United Nations (UN) family are mostly intergovernmental in character or in terms of their major functions. Their “clients” are governments, and more specifically, the diplomats and government officials representing those governments. The “products” or “services” of most intergovernmental organisations focus on supporting intergovernmental processes, their core activities include: preparation for meetings, organising meetings, and reporting on meetings. The “clients” of ITC include governments and their representatives, but the primary function of ITC is to “serve” the private sector in the form of Trade Support Institutions (TSIs) and end-user enterprises in beneficiary countries. Thus, not only is ITC expected to convey a more business like image, communications and marketing functions are central to ITC achieving its mission. Furthermore, communications and marketing in ITC are more similar to those functions in a private corporation or in a non-profit organization than for most intergovernmental organizations since ITC is seeking to present its services and products to the private sector and business associations in beneficiary countries. The concepts of marketing and branding may seem inappropriate to a technical

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<sup>1</sup> The Division of Technical Cooperation and Coordination has been called the sales arm of ITC, but the sales function is not synonymous with marketing as is discussed below.

assistance agency, but if potential beneficiaries and donors are not aware of, and do not understand, ITC products and services, they will not be utilised.

In seeking to serve the private sector, ITC has a “*three track approach* to the delivery of technical assistance.” In the *ITC Business Plan 2004-2006*, ITC states:

“Track 1 enables ITC to achieve global coverage through the provision of low-intensity field-level support, based on: (i) an active publications and information dissemination programme; (ii) direct collaboration through the product-network approach; and, (iii) the provision of highly targeted inputs under Global Trust Fund Window II programmes (South-South Trade Promotion, World Tr@de Net, and E-Trade Bridge). Track 1 support will be delivered increasingly through cyber-collaboration (i.e. via the Internet). ITC’s Web Committee will coordinate the continuous upgrading (technology and content-wise) of the ITC website and sub sites”<sup>2</sup>.

The other two tracks of ITC delivery involve:

- Track 2: Joint delivery with other organizations in the Joint Integrated Technical Assistance Program (JITAP) and the Integrated Framework; and
- Track 3: Regional and country projects.

As the above quote from the *ITC Business Plan* with the references to dissemination of information and cyber-collaboration indicates, for ITC the use of web-based technologies is becoming an important element in their strategy of collaboration with partners and of delivery of information and are closely. These web-based technologies can be a significant dissemination vehicle and are closely related to the Communications and Marketing functions. Thus this report evaluates three related sets of issues:

- Communications;
- E-Readiness and Internet Dissemination; and
- Marketing including the use of e-technologies.

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<sup>2</sup> ITC, *ITC Business Plan 2004-2006*, p.3.

## 1.2 Methodology

The Evaluation utilised a variety of evaluation methods to assess the communications and marketing functions of ITC. Before turning to the evaluation methods it is useful to note some conceptual issues about communications and marketing and to introduce some definitions.

### Definitions and Concepts

The classic canons of marketing in the late 20th century were the four Ps, Promotion, Product, Price and Place. This was based on a manufacturing model where promotion and small differences in product characteristics were regarded as the key to reducing price pressures. Under this model, information about target consumers was limited and the focus was on product differentiation and enhancing the image of the product to improve market share and profitability. This model was promotion and product focused.

The new paradigm for marketing is Consumer Relationship Marketing (CRM), where the focus is on identifying clusters of target customers, then identifying and analysing their needs and matching them with competencies in the organisation. The key to this model is generating and processing detailed information about present or potential clients and interpreting this information and data in ways that will help the organisation to add value and serve customer needs. This model is customer focused.<sup>3</sup>

The ease of obtaining and processing information via the Internet and related Information and Communications Technologies are enabling for CRM. Since the e-tools facilitate it, CRM is often regarded as synonymous with Internet marketing but this is much too narrow a conception. CRM is a different marketing strategy which is focused on the client's needs. The use of e-tools is simply a means to an end.

### Evaluation Methods

The methods utilised for the evaluation of communications and marketing included the following:

- Desk study of ITC documents;
- Interviews of ITC staff;
- Review of ITC websites and comparable websites;
- Review and analysis of web-usage data;
- Review of past ITC evaluations where relevant;
- Benchmarking of the ITC website;
- Review of country studies and product studies for the Evaluation; and

An e-survey of the professional staff which was responded to by 60 people or half of the professional staff.

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<sup>3</sup> There is a vast literature on marketing, brand management and customer relationship management.

In addition as part of this review, the Evaluation also interviewed several broadly similar international organisations. The international organisations contacted included the Commonwealth Secretariat, the Trade Unit of the Organisation of American States (OAS), the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and the World Trade Organization (WTO). These contacts were specifically focused on reviewing the marketing and/or communications activities of the respective organisations.<sup>4</sup> Among the donors interviewed for this report at the Headquarters level was UK's Department for International Development<sup>5</sup>.

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<sup>4</sup> These and other organizations were interviewed for different purposes in the course of the Evaluation.

<sup>5</sup> Donor agencies were interviewed at the headquarters level and at the country level for other purposes for the Evaluation.

## 1.3 Communications in ITC

### Overview

“Marketing” in ITC, as in many public organizations, but frequently also in the private sector, is synonymous with “promotion” or “communication”. As indicated above marketing involves a broader range of functions. Communications in ITC consists of the following activities as identified by the organisation:

- Forum magazine (hard copy and web site);
- Direct marketing to specific target audiences, e.g. technical articles sent to mailing lists such as Forum subscribers;
- Development and implementation of corporate events, e.g. a conference on arbitration and mediation;
- Press-related activities;
- ITC web site;
- Formal presentations to donors.

The ITC communications department is responsible for the organization’s outreach activities, e.g. distribution and sale of publications<sup>6</sup>, press-related activities, speeches, visual identity, Forum magazine and exhibit development. The communications department contributes to and/or supports the production of publications, development of the ITC web site, holding of conferences and seminars. ITC has very little in the way of corporate promotional and marketing material such as corporate brochures, films<sup>7</sup>, CDs, etc.

Since 1998, when the current Public Information Officer (PIO) joined the organization, the communications department has developed a common visual identity for ITC and its products and services, and has developed cohesive communications strategies for various events and activities. The new visual identity was formally launched in January 2003 based on work done from 1999 through 2002. A formal information session for all ITC staff was held in January 2003 and a number of training sessions were held for (mainly) administrative staff early in that year. An administrative order was also promulgated on use of the visual identity.

The ITC web site was revised (first three levels) and launched in 2000. A web committee supervises how the site is used, modified and how new information is introduced. The web committee, which includes the PIO, is reviewing how the site should be restructured. For a more detailed discussion of the ITC web site, see Section below.

The budget for “marketing” was officially established in 1994 and has changed very little since; most of the budget is for production of Forum magazine and is substantially un-

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<sup>6</sup> Most publication sales are from the UN sales operation.

<sup>7</sup> The Azimuth films (for projectors) are now about 8-10 years old and thus are not as relevant as they should be and the dissemination modalities now tend to emphasise digital media.

changed since the early 1990s<sup>8</sup>. See Annex 1 – Summary of Communications Group’s Resources and Outputs<sup>9</sup>, for information on budget changes since 1994.

### **Communications Strategy**

ITC’s communications strategy was formally developed and implemented in 2000. Since that time it has evolved and changed (but not radically), yet a new formal communications strategy has not been adopted. Communications staff updated the existing strategy in order to assist the Evaluation in better understanding ITC’s actual communications strategy.

ITC’s communications strategy is based on<sup>10</sup>:

- **Creating Unity:** Developing a unified look; defining and developing trade topics that represent the organization; and creating common messages for each trade topic.
- **Modernizing Communications Tools:** Streamlining/upgrading/creating communications tools.
- **Improving Outreach:** Developing communication strategies for specific topics, events or publications; using technologies to improve dissemination; revising target lists; empowering staff through training and tools at their disposal.

The communications department has also developed a one page summary of messages to be communicated to ITC’s seven main audiences<sup>11</sup>. The preparation of such summaries is a very useful approach and needs to be (and is being) implemented for all activities. Clarity of the message is essential to successful communications. However, there are too many messages depending on the audience and there is a danger that key audiences may get a mixed/confusing message as to who ITC is and what ITC does. There appear to be four key messages<sup>12</sup>:

- ITC has contacts, information and knowledge;
- ITC delivers good value for money;
- ITC can help deliver your (the parent organisations UNCTAD and WTO) message;
- ITC is an agency of the UN and of WTO.

The “information” message is a component of all messages no matter how phrased. Thus message #1 above is the key message to stress above all others.

Some of ITC’s key activities are reviewed below.

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<sup>8</sup> For 2004 the budget was composed of USD 71,000 for public information and USD 250,000 for Forum magazine. When organizing events, some departments are beginning to include a budget for communications in the overall event budget.

<sup>9</sup> Reproduced from material provided by the communications group. The above is believed to be correct, but has not been verified independently by the consultants.

<sup>10</sup> Taken from the communication’s group’s strategy paper.

<sup>11</sup> Clients, donors, parents, partners, media, ITC staff, general public.

<sup>12</sup> From the internal document Communications Audiences and Messages.

### Forum Magazine and Web Site

Forum magazine is the main marketing/communications vehicle for ITC. In recent years the magazine has been re-structured around themes of interest to ITC’s target market. These same themes are then used in other activities, whether mailing to target markets or as part of an event, e.g. “Putting E to work”. The magazine of course adheres to the ITC visual identity guidelines since the ITC visual identity was created and tested first through its magazine.

The magazine has its own web site (<http://www.tradeforum.org/>) which was launched in 2001. Usage has increased steadily since then and has reached a plateau in 2003 (see usage statistics below). There are external contributors of articles or opinions, and the magazine has for some time served as an “incubator” for other ITC products. Because Forum magazine had a critical mass of readers and a budget attached to it, the communications department developed, over time, other products with the same visual identity, e.g. fact sheets, information nodes, press releases, print publications and the like. It also serves as the basis for content, key message and target audiences to reach with ITC’s message.

The Forum web site links to the ITC web site (<http://www.intracen.org/index.htm> - described below) and vice-versa. The link is permanent in that it is always at the top of the page no matter what page one is on. The colours used in the Forum web site are the ITC colours thus re-enforcing the link between the two.

The Forum web site is interesting in that it is not hosted by ITC itself although it is linked to it, but by an independent firm Pressflex ([www.pressflex.com](http://www.pressflex.com)). An end-user will not know, and will not care, who hosts the Forum web site, as long as the information is available. Pressflex has ninety (90) magazines as clients, including the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Observer, Business Council for Sustainable Development and other development-related magazines, which drives additional customers to the Forum site. ITC receives a semi-annual in-depth report from Pressflex on factors such as who is visiting the site, where are they coming from, trends based on traffic at other magazines, etc. Pressflex also helps with marketing and promotion and shows how sites can link to one another.

The site is easily navigated, is clear as to what information is available, and is available in all three official languages (English, French, and Spanish).

**Table 1: Forum Magazine Web Visits<sup>13</sup>**

	2002	2003	2004	2005*
Web visits	337,718	483,149	820,867	900,000
Incoming links	N/A	157	160	176

\* First half of the year at an annual rate.

<sup>13</sup> Taken from ITC’s internal statistics.

Pressflex collects statistics on visits to the Forum web site by country of origin. According to Pressflex statistics (Pressflex report June 2005), traffic growth on the Forum sites in the first half of 2005 has surpassed expectations: by topping 90,000 visitors a month from March through June, growth so far this year is up 64%. The Forum site accounts for almost a third of all ITC web site traffic, including [www.intracen.org](http://www.intracen.org), its sub sites and other stand alone sites. Traffic from developing countries and economies of transition made up 47% of the total in May, a major improvement on November's 26% ratio. This, however, is in all likelihood due to an improvement in the generation of the geographic breakdown on the statistics pages introduced earlier this year: the software can now identify the origins of 99% of visitors, compared to around 70% in the past. It appears that a disproportionate number of visitors whose origins were previously unknown were from developing countries and economies in transition.

For more information related to 2005 year statistics, including the main trends in the Forum web site development and future tendencies, please see Annex, which contains abstracts from the Pressflex site analysis report, prepared in June 2005.

### **Events – Communications Strategies**

In order to ensure that ITC's most important messages are properly articulated, communicated consistently and to a particular target audience, certain events have a one to three page strategy paper prepared that consists of some or all of the following main sections:

- Background or overview;
- Objectives (for the event);
- Theme and/or message;
- Methodology;
- Activities;
- Elements.

The communications strategy paper is discussed and agreed by all concerned (communications department, ITC department responsible for the event, others), and then a number of key points under each section ensure that the message delivered will be targeted and consistent. Events (and thus strategy papers) can include outside agencies as for example the World Summit on the Information Society which had ITC, the Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (seco) and the World Bank as partners.

However, there is a degree of inconsistency in the papers that have been developed to date. For example, some papers have a background or overview (the name varies) and some don't. Some have objectives, some have goals. Some have a methodology others have a marketing strategy.

As well, each event has five goals (objectives) set for it – awareness, positioning, credibility, partnerships and vision. Not all goals are equally important or equally attainable.

Awareness is very easy to attain, while positioning and credibility are much more difficult. As well, high awareness does not necessarily translate into the desired positioning or credibility.

Suggestions on possible improvements to this tool are given in the Recommendations section below.

Even though that is not their primary purpose, the communications strategy papers for an individual event are an excellent tool for ensuring consistency of message delivery. This procedure is not used for most events, partly because of resources, and partly because of practice.

## 1.4 Dissemination and Web-Presence

### Publications

#### *ITC Internet Delivery*

There are several websites that ITC uses to communicate its mission, programs and activities and to deliver products over the Internet. One is the Forum website described above, and another is the main ITC web site itself. Various ITC programs such as the Market Analysis Section and the International Purchasing and Supply Chain Management Section have their own websites not hosted on the ITC website and some such as Legal Framework have independent websites developed with international partners such as Juris International ([www.jurisint.org](http://www.jurisint.org)).

#### *The ITC Website*

The ITC web site is hosted and maintained by the ITC information technology (IT) department. The site was revised to be consistent with the ITC visual identity in 2000 and is ITC's electronic "face" to the world. Complete information on ITC and all its activities is available on the site.

The home page is reasonably well presented in that the eight main headings lead one further into specific sections and information. The colours used reinforce the visual identity. The visual focus is on the central "40" denoting ITC's 40 years of existence. The "0" in the 40 repeats the globe theme of the ITC logo.

However, further navigation into different parts of the website is only possible after some familiarity with the home page and the structure of the website is acquired. It is not visually easy to grasp the lay-out as there are too many separate sections (each of which is necessary to some degree) laid out around the central "40". The reader's eye is forced to travel in a random fashion across the page to find what might be of interest to him/her – languages in the top right hand corner, partners and technical information such as site map in the bottom right hand corner, another reference to ITC's 40 years in business in the bottom left hand corner (all navigate further into the site) and ITC's logo in the top left hand corner (no further link). The right side has a column on news, while the left side is empty. It is also not clear why Forum magazine is not specifically named, given that it is the flagship publication of ITC. Instead there is a link to "The Magazine of the International Trade Centre". ITC has a strong brand in the Forum name and it is very strange that this is not exploited further.

Navigating further, the first impression of a new visitor to the site is of the overwhelming amount of information available. A second level site has a conceptually simple layout of a column on the left hand-side that gives a table of contents for that particular sub-site, e.g. Products and Services. Clicking on any heading in the table of contents takes one deeper into more specific information. Depending on the topic selected, the right side of the page may or may not have another column of headings to select. Across the top is a consistent bar allowing the visitor to go back to the home page, to six of the main headings in

the circle around the 40 on the home page (but not all of them, e.g. “The Magazine of the International Trade Centre” is missing), to ITC partners and to a search engine.

That the ITC web site has a vast amount of very valuable information for businesses engaged in (or wishing to be engaged in) international trade is borne out by the usage statistics which show that the overwhelming majority of users are from developed countries. For example, for March and August for the years 2002, 2003 and 2004 users from developed countries range from a low of 63% to a high of 72%. This is not at all surprising as penetration of computers and the internet in these countries is high and increasing all the time, and most firms are quite knowledgeable in business matters.

While it is logical to collect statistics on visitors from geographic regions and countries, statistics on cities and organizations are less useful. The question that ITC has to answer is “what management decision(s) can we make based on an analysis of the statistics?” In many developing countries, however, the exact opposite is true. There it is often difficult even to get reliable electricity supplies and fixed line telephone access. In such a situation to discuss penetration of personal computers and the internet (and thus usage of ITC’s web site) is almost meaningless. Thus it is encouraging to see that visitors from less developed countries and developing countries are roughly one third of all visitors to the ITC website.

Despite this low (relatively) figure, it does not mean, that ITC should not continue to develop its web site (and other e-trade products and services) for developing countries. Quite the contrary – this should continue to be a priority (the E-trade Bridge program is reviewed the Evaluation Report on Enterprise Competitiveness of this report – see also <http://www.intracen.org/etradebridge/welcome.htm>).

A difficulty encountered because of the very large amount of information available, is that it is very easy to get “lost” in the ITC web site. Partly this is because of the number of levels of information (in Business Support services there are up to six (6) levels depending on the topic selected, and in Products and Services up to eight (8)), and partly because of the many interesting information options available.

While it is possible at any time to click on “Home” and thus go to the home introductory page, if one wishes to find something in the “middle” that was viewed a short while earlier, it is sometimes difficult to do, without going back to the very beginning and starting all over again.

These issues are recognized by the IT department and a review process is underway to completely re-structure the site in order to update the site technically at two levels:

- Provide a new design (visual) for the site;
- Based on the design to develop appropriate technical platforms (ITC’s IT department is buying various technical tools that will improve how the site is organized, published, linked to search engines, how and what kind of statistics are collected, etc.);

- Communicate a clear message from ITC (whatever that message may be);
- Provide consistency in the look and feel of the site (templates will be developed to assist in publishing);
- Develop a more systematic approach to collecting statistics.

The IT department also recognizes the limitations faced by many developing countries, e.g. poor telecoms service which means low download speeds, and will design the new web site accordingly.

All web site activities and especially the current changes are driven and supervised by an inter-divisional working group with key issues addressed by sub-committees, e.g. the current review of the ITC web site.

It is very difficult to benchmark website usage. First of all there are technical challenges of measuring hits versus visits. For example, the structure of a web page can influence the number of hits recorded when it is opened. Although there are challenges with any website usage indicator, the number of visits is regarded as more useful than the number of hits. However for completeness both are reported in Tables 2 below.

The challenge in benchmarking web usage is to find comparable web sites. One obvious web site to consider is the web site of the WTO, but this is a large website with a global presence and many thousands of pages of documents stored in the website. Furthermore the ITC has several sub sites.

The ITC has a reasonably effective web-presence and is using the Internet to distribute some tools and services. Initiatives under consideration to strengthen the web presence, to improve the web site for indexing and the access of search engines, and to increase links on other web sites including the large and visible WTO web site, warrant immediate implementation. Greater attention needs to be paid to updating the information and materials on the web sites. Frequently the Evaluation used material from the web site and received comments that the materials and information was out of date or inaccurate. Ensuring that the information presented by ITC on the website is up-to-date and accurate should be a high priority.

**Table 2: General Statistics**

Statistics	December 2004		January 2005		March 2005		April 2005	
	ITC	WTO	ITC	WTO	ITC	WTO	ITC	WTO
Hits Entire Site (Successful)	1,621,091	21,754,391	1,864,119	25,025,702	2,185,467	28,348,470	2,147,792	Over 32 million
Page Views	1,223,979	3,012,022	1,385,589	3,392,696	1,661,811	3,615,024	1,664,824	n.a.
Visits <sup>14</sup>	191,893	642,523	222,571	733,649	250,169	830,529	244,882	924,000

**Table 3: Average Hits per Day**

ITC	ITC	WTO	SICE <sup>15</sup> (OAS) Home Page
Hits Per Month /Entire Site Successful/ Period (March 2005)	Average Hits Per Day Period (March 2005)	Average Hits Per Day Period (March 2005)	Average Hits Per Day (Period: June-December 2004)
2,185,467	70,498	914,466	40,932

**Table 4: Average Visits per Day**

ITC	ITC	WTO	SICE (OAS) Home Page
Visits Per Month Period (March 2005)	Average Visits Per Day Period (March 2005)	Average Visitor Sessions Per Day Period (March 2005)	Average Visits Per Day (Period: June-December 2004)
250,169	8,069	26,791	5,631

**Table 5: Top Five Countries (April 2005)**

ITC		WTO	
Countries	Visits	Countries	Visits
1. United States	130,038	1. United States	380,157
2. Uruguay	7,349	2. Mexico	28,605
3. Australia	7,290	3. France	22,965
4. United Kingdom	6,360	4. Canada	19,446
5. France	5,348	5. United Kingdom	17,537

<sup>14</sup> WTO statistics source has this section originally named 'Visitor Sessions'; it is named 'Visits' in the Table 2. General Statistics.

<sup>15</sup> Foreign Trade Information System/Sistema de Información al Comercio Exterior

**Table 6: Top Geographic Regions (March 2005)**

ITC		WTO	
Geographic Regions	Visits	Geographic Regions	Visitor Sessions
1. North America	138,459	1. North America	389,872
2. Western Europe	34,320	2. Region Un-Specified	228,844
3. Asia	24,294	3. Western Europe	91,975
4. South America	13,534	4. Asia	39,456
5. n.a.	8,973	5. South America	26,016
6. Australia	7,785	6. Eastern Europe	14,660
7. Middle East	6,683	7. Northern Europe	10,240
8. Eastern Europe	4,449	8. Australia	9,693

### 1.5 The Marketing Function within ITC

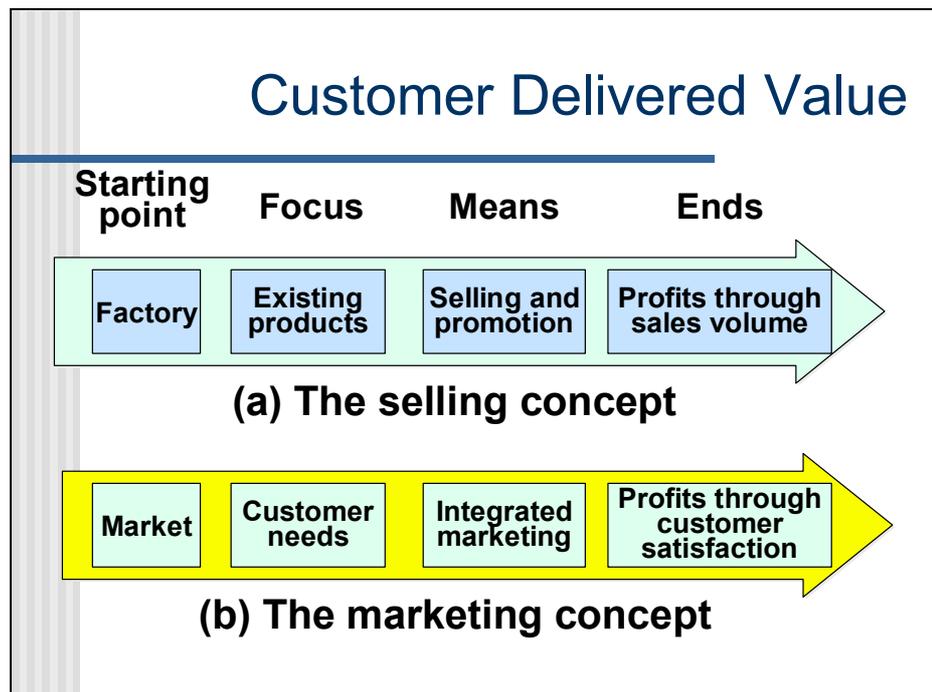
As mentioned previously ITC does not have a formal marketing department or division. The communications department fulfils some marketing functions, but the department’s primary function is not marketing. Also as previously noted, the Division of Technical Cooperation and Coordination is considered the sales arm of ITC, but “sales” is not synonymous with marketing – sales is a component of the marketing function.

Of course, ITC’s management and staff undertake “marketing” activities whenever they participate in, or organize/host an event, or produce a new product. These activities or products are of high quality and are suited to their particular purpose or target market. However, it is important to note that using such an activity or product for marketing is not the primary purpose. The primary purpose of the activity or product is to fulfil ITC’s development mandate. It needs to be stressed, however, that each time an activity is undertaken “marketing” does take place, and this should be kept in mind when organizing/developing the activity.

Activities that are recognized as marketing activities, and that are treated as such, are presentations to donors or major stakeholders. These presentations are well-prepared and presented and are viewed favourably by the target audience as being professional as to both style and content (with the exception of one donor who regards them as being too “slick”).

At a conceptual level, many companies and organizations (even in the 21<sup>st</sup>. century) still function according the Selling Concept, i.e. they are focused on their own concept of what the client needs and sell the products they make (no matter what the client needs or wants). An organization that functions according to the Marketing Concept is externally focused and “manufactures” and sells products that the client needs and wants. These two concepts are shown graphically below.

**Figure 1: Customer Delivered Value**



ITC in terms of its products still functions basically under the selling concept. This is supported by the results of the survey of professionals in October 2004, in which 61% of respondents “agreed somewhat”, “agreed”, or “agreed strongly” with the statement “Almost all of the “new” products or programs that we introduce are actually a modification or blend of existing products and programs”<sup>16</sup>.

In terms of the projects or activities ITC undertakes, it operates much more according to the Marketing Concept again as shown by the survey mentioned above. This apparent contradiction can be explained by the fact that ITC determines what the needs and wants of its clients are, but then tries to satisfy those needs and wants with existing products (or modifications of same). A crude analogy would be that an automobile dealer has determined that a customer ideally needs a 10 ton truck to haul gravel, but tries to convince the customer that a half ton pickup truck that makes numerous journeys will satisfactorily achieve the same objective.

It would therefore be very useful for ITC to establish a marketing department or function within the organization, whose function would be to ensure that the organization’s marketing strategy, plan and resulting programs are developed and carried out in an integrated fashion (see Recommendations section below) and according to the marketing concept.

### **Marketing ITC Products**

The Marketing Function in ITC relates to the decisions about what products to launch, how to market those products, how to support them, and when to stop supporting products.

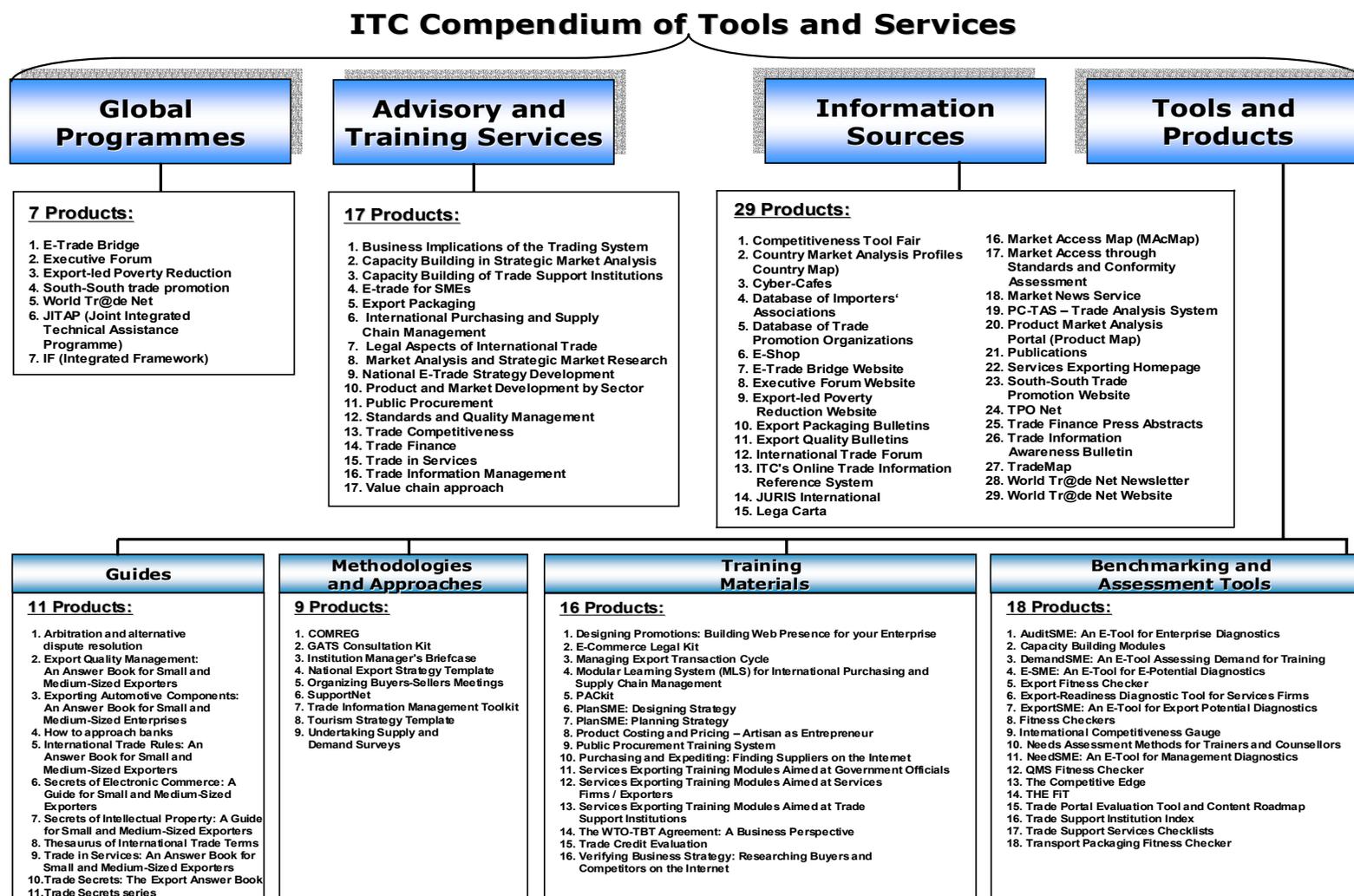
From the Compendium of Tools Services and Products on the ITC web site, it is evident that ITC has four (4) “product lines” (Global Programmes, Advisory and Training Services, Information Sources and Tools and Products) with seven (7), seventeen (17), and twenty-nine (29) products in the first three product lines. The category of Tools and Products is further divided into four sub-lines, Guides, Methodologies and Approaches, Training Materials and Benchmarking and Assessment Tools. These contain eleven (11), nine (9), sixteen (16) and eighteen (18) products respectively<sup>17</sup>. This is shown graphically overleaf.

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<sup>16</sup> The survey of professional staff in the ITC conducted by the Evaluation is described in the Evaluation Report, *Human Resource Management*.

<sup>17</sup> ITC website, About ITC → Compendium of Tools, Services and Programmes.

Figure 2: ITC Compendium of Tools and Services



Products are described in detail in the ITC web site: <http://www.intracen.org/index.htm>. However, it is difficult to tell precisely how many “products” ITC has, as the ITC web site shows a number of products in two or more areas. For example information on the Executive Forum is available in the Partners and Networks section, in About ITC and in the Compendium of Tools and Services. This reflects the fact that products have different dimensions and it also is no doubt intended to allow potentials users to find products, but it does reflect the fact that ITC has many products.

It appears that ITC’s product lines have evolved over time in a manner that may be more understandable and logical to ITC than to (potential) clients. For example, most people outside ITC will know approximately what might constitute Advisory and Training Services and Information Services, but knowledge as to what constitutes Global Programmes and Tools and Products is likely to vary widely. ITC created the Compendium of Products and Services about two years ago in an attempt to present ITC’s products and services to clients in a clear and understandable manner.

An added difficulty from an outsider’s point of view in understanding ITC’s range of products and services, is that many of the 107 names for the products and services listed in the Compendium of Tools and Services are cryptic to say the least, and not one could be called a brand. The closest that the names come to being brand names is in some of the “e” products. In addition, the name of the section itself is a bit confusing. ITC’s home page gives the heading “Compendium of Tools and Services”, yet when this heading is clicked on; it takes the reader to the “Compendium of Tools, Services and Programmes” page. Consistency in naming is an important factor in good communications.

Nevertheless, some names are very good in that they are descriptive of the product/tool/service, e.g. South-South Trade Promotion, Export-led Poverty Reduction, etc. Others are totally meaningless except to those “in the know”, e.g. Software package for managing Company Registers, Packaging information, JITAP, etc. There is some consistency in some of the product<sup>18</sup> names; for example there are a number of “export” products and there is the “e” series of products.

However, as ITC regards marketing as one of its strengths, it should be more aware of the power of branding and the importance of naming. However, branding involves much more than naming.

Branding is a major issue in product strategy – for both consumer goods and for industrial goods (or services). Russell Hamlin, the Chief Executive Officer of Sunkist Growers observed: “...an orange is an orange is an orange, unless it happens to be Sunkist, a name 80% of (American) consumers know and trust”. Well-known brands command a price premium, are barrier to entry into a market by competitors, are a guarantee to the buyer, help segment the market, and allow a company to more easily introduce new products. While preventing competitors from entering ITC’s market is not a major consideration

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<sup>18</sup> We use the word “product” for ease of reference so as not to have to repeat all the time “product, service, tool, programme”.

for it, some of the other benefits could be very important, e.g. the ability to charge a price premium means that ITC could charge more for services that already have a fee, or could institute a fee for products and services that currently are free. More importantly for a technical assistance organization, recognizable brands give a clear quality signal to potential users and partners and help potential users to find the tool or service that is useful to them.

A brand is a complex symbol made up of many elements both tangible (features) and intangible (benefits). A brand can convey up to six levels of meaning to a consumer<sup>19</sup>:

- Attributes – a product is well-made, expensive, stylish (a Rolex watch), cheap, utilitarian (a USD 5 no-name watch), etc.;
- Benefits – based on features, but are intangible or difficult to measure; the potential benefit of a well-made car is that maintenance costs will be low;
- Values – a brand conveys the producer's values, e.g. Swatch stands for fun design in watches as jewellery;
- Culture – a brand may represent a national, corporate or product culture, e.g. Mercedes represents perceived German culture – organized, efficient, high quality and high cost;
- Personality – brands can convey a personality just as people can; a product can be serious (engineering products), light-hearted (party balloons), young (fashion) etc.;
- User – the brand suggests the kind of consumer who will buy or use the brand; we would expect a senior executive to stay at Four Season's hotels, not a 20 year-old student traveller with a back pack.

All brands have a position in the minds of their target market. The most successful brands will have been managed so that the position the company wants consumers to perceive for its brand(s) is the same as the position in consumers' minds. A company (brand) will have a position in consumers' minds whether they manage that position or not. If they do not manage the brand, the position may not be one that the company wants. Thus companies should research their position to see how closely their desired position is to that in the minds of their target market. An unbranded commodity generally will not have any particular position in consumers' minds (or put another way – it will have many different positions). According to Kevin Lane Keller, "what distinguish a brand from its unbranded counterparts are the consumers' perceptions and feelings about the products attributes and how they perform. Ultimately, a brand resides in the minds of consumers."

One of the first tasks facing any marketer is to decide where on the brand pyramid<sup>20</sup> its products are, and where it would like them to be. At the lowest level are *brand attributes* (ITC has many qualified sector and geographic experts), next are *brand benefits* (ITC's experts will help our association's members export their products) and at the highest level

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<sup>19</sup> "Consumer" is used here in the sense of any person or organization that comes in contact with the brand, e.g. a TSI.

<sup>20</sup> "Brand Asset Management", by Scott Davis, Jossey-Bass, 2002.

are *brand beliefs and values*. (ITC's experts are the best in the business) The attribute is the least desirable level (but necessary). First, consumers are more interested in benefits than in attributes<sup>21</sup>, second competitors can easily copy attributes, and third the current attributes may become less desirable to the consumer.

Fortunately ITC has the basis for developing powerful brands based on its positive reputation, its many years of experience in Trade Related Technical Assistance (TRTA), its focus on trade development for Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (SMEs) and its relatively positive image among its target market, its donors, partners and other stakeholders. Within ITC's product line there are some "natural" opportunities for branded product lines, for example the previously mentioned "e" products, the various guides, export products and the like. Even where there is no consistency or similarity of names, there are branding opportunities, e.g. in the various training programmes or the various information products.

#### *Product Development/Product Proliferation*

ITC has a well-developed product (and program) development system, but it may be overactive and is not adequately monitored and managed. Individual sections can propose new products and if they are financed from the regular budget, there is no real check on whether the product is likely to be utilised extensively by ITC partners and beneficiaries. Perhaps there is more of a test of the potential utility of products with donor funding but this is not "market-testing" and there is no tracking of whether products achieve their intended degree of utilisation and potential benefits.

An issue that is constantly faced by both commercial and non-commercial organizations, and one which is very difficult for almost all, is if, when, and how to impose discipline on the process of product extension and to prune the product line<sup>22</sup>. Because in all "manufacturing" organizations, products tend to proliferate over time, the product line tends to grow and become unwieldy and sales and profits tend to adhere to the so-called 80:20 rule<sup>23</sup>. With an increase in the number of products, product duplication, overlap, and line extensions (the dreaded "lemon-flavoured" product<sup>24</sup>) become rife, with a consequent increase in both cost of production, maintenance and delivery. Each brand extension seems to offer the potential for increased sales, but when the fixed costs of the organisation are considered the potential for economies of scale are dissipated. Also very frequently, this multiplicity of products tends to confuse customers as they both no longer know which product is "right" for them, and/or since the amount of choice is so broad they cannot decide and end up choosing nothing or reverting to their own status quo.

Because ITC is not a commercial vendor of goods and services, and because of the specificity of its clients and its product offerings clients are not so readily going to shop at an-

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<sup>21</sup> A person buying an electric drill is not buying an electric drill per se, but the ability to make a hole.

<sup>22</sup> "Product" is used here in the widest sense and includes services, as well as tangible and intangible products.

<sup>23</sup> The 80:20 rule is that 20% of the products generate 80% of the profits.

<sup>24</sup> "Lemon-flavored" products have minimal differences among them. The phrase was coined with the discovery that consumers associated the aroma of lemon with freshness and cleanliness, and thus manufacturers of household cleaning products began to add lemon scent to laundry detergents, dishwashing liquids, and the like.

other trade development “store”. But ITC will nevertheless incur additional costs as products proliferate, as staff maintain and update information on products or explain differences among products. Then there are manufacturing and storage costs for electronic and/or paper versions of a product. More substantial are updating costs and support costs. But the real cost is in the potential for confusion among products by potential users. Many ITC beneficiaries and partners were interviewed during the Evaluation. Although many of them had a very positive appreciation of ITC, they tended to know only a few ITC products and services.

ITC does have some clear and well-known brands. For example, Trade Map is well known, but other ITC products are not well-known and the perception of potential users is a cluttered set of products. Now it could be answered that the ITC is like a supermarket or at least a late night convenience store offering many products on the shelf available to respond to sudden needs or wishes among its users while only a few basic products draw customers into the shop. The answer to this rejoinder is that supermarkets or convenience stores only stay in business if they can select products for their shelves which correctly forecast the sudden requirements of the clients.

Brand rationalisation is a continuing challenge in private companies subject to market disciplines. It is not surprising it is a challenge for an international technical assistance agency which neither measures its costs of product development and support nor measures the utilisation of its products systematically.

ITC does not have the luxury of customizing each and every product for each and every client. Its challenge is therefore to determine how to make a core group of products that can be adapted for use by many potential clients, yet still be precise enough that they are significant and useful to individual clients.

#### *Staff Perspectives of Project/Program Development*

Some perspectives on the project programme or product development process can be obtained from the survey of professional staff conducted by the Evaluation. From the survey of professional staff, almost one quarter of respondents have a weak sense of ownership of a project or program, two fifths expressed the view that ownership was average and one third expressed the view that ownership was relatively strong -- see Annex Three. Perhaps more significantly 30% thought co-operation among divisions was weak, about two-fifths thought co-operation was acceptable and about one quarter thought co-operation was good. Thus it appears that, while both ownership and cooperation are “average”, there is room for improvement in both areas.

60% of respondents to the Survey of professional staff conducted by the Evaluation indicated that new products (programs) are somewhat based on existing products, and only one-sixth disagreed with this statement, which confirms the tendency to brand extension.

### **ITC Field Presence**

Virtually all staff is located at ITC's head office in Geneva. This is a result of history since more than 20 years ago; United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) was the "retail" arm of ITC and as such provided a field presence. With UNDP's change in focus from economic development (in the broadest sense) to social development (thus there are far fewer joint projects implemented), and the reduction in its economic development budget<sup>25</sup>, ITC's relationship with UNDP has changed. UNDP still could assist ITC on request as the UNDP Resident Representative is also the UN Resident Coordinator, but the relationship is weaker than before.

ITC's normal mode of operation is to work out of the head office in Geneva (with the exception of project offices – see below) and to make periodic visits to the field as and when required. This has led to some comment that ITC's experts (particularly external consultants) are not "on the ground" long enough in any country to be able to fully understand the issues and situation in that particular country.

At the moment ITC's only field presence is five project-related offices outside Geneva (Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos, Kyrgyzstan and Bolivia) which are funded by seco. There are likely to be additional seco-funded project offices in the near future.

Given that the nature of TRTA is changing and that many donors are decentralizing operations, it may be necessary for ITC to re-think its policy of delivering most assistance from Geneva. It is recognized that building and operating a decentralized operational structure is more complicated and more expensive than conducting all operations from one central location (ITC will either need additional resources or will have to reallocate existing resources).

A possible approach that falls between having ITC's own field offices (greatest control and strongest impact, but most expensive) and a long-term representation partnership (relatively inexpensive, but low control and modest impact – see next section), is to adapt the manufacturer's agent model to ITC's needs. Under this model an individual (contracted full-time or part-time as required) in certain countries would be ITC's official representative. Fees and expenses would be negotiated individually. The advantage with this approach is that from the client's point of view ITC has a permanent agent in the country or region, while from ITC's point of view it gives maximum representation and flexibility with less-than-maximum financial expenditure.

ITC has a variation of this in place in South Africa where a consultant is contracted to ITC for six months per year. In Asia ITC uses national consultants for projects and the same ones are used year after year. The limitation on these two approaches, satisfactory as they are given the current requirements, is that they are reactive not pro-active.

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<sup>25</sup> In 2004, only one half of 1% of ITC's regular budget funds come from UNDP.

## 1.6 Evaluation Findings

ITC has a very specific target market and thus it can use (and does use) a very focussed approach to “marketing” itself to this target audience.

ITC has available four broad marketing tools:

- Its various products and services (visible to its target market as publications, hand-out material, events and the like);
- Its communications activities, e.g. Forum magazine, press-related activities, etc.;
- The two web sites (ITC and Forum), and;
- Presentations (and associated materials) to donors and stakeholders.

The communications department is working very well with limited human and financial resources and has developed a consistent “look and feel” for ITC products and services through the visual identity program and has introduced, for a government organization, some innovative and valuable tools such as the communications strategy papers.

The department is taking the initiative to present a consistent overall message about ITC to its various publics (donors, stakeholders, beneficiaries, etc.) through various activities for which it has responsibility and supports the activities of other departments as appropriate and as possible given the resources available.

The budget for communications has changed little over the last ten years, while the environment in which ITC works has changed substantially. Thus expectations of various audiences have also changed and have become more demanding.

The ITC web site is both a valuable development tool as well as a promotional tool for ITC, but it does need substantial upgrading.

While the communications/marketing function is working well, a few enhancements are possible, as outlined in the Recommendations section below.

## 1.7 Conclusions and Recommendations

The key conclusion of this analysis is communications and marketing including branding are central ITC's mission as a technical assistance agency focused on trade development. If potential beneficiaries and donors are not aware of, and do not understand, ITC products and services, they will not be utilised. ITC recognises that communications and marketing are important, but the resources allocated to communications are limited and the marketing process in ITC is not well integrated. Compared to other international organisations and technical assistance agencies ITC is quite effective at promotion and has good networking with partners and beneficiaries. ITC does practice branding but it does not have a coherent disciplined and integrated branding strategy. There has been a clear tendency to product proliferation and there is a need for brand rationalisation.

### Communications Department

- The role and resources of the communications department should be increased in line with the goals and objectives set for it by senior management and in accordance with a new integrated communications and marketing strategy. It is positive that the communications department reports to the Office of the Executive Director, but if a marketing department is established as recommended below, then the communications department should become a part of the marketing department.
- Using the visual identity as a base, all ITC products and services should be developed and implemented with both the end use and end-user in mind (the purpose of the product and service) and with the use of that product or service as an ITC marketing tool in mind as well, i.e. every product or tool represents or "sells" ITC in both intended and unintended ways.
- The review and revision of the ITC web site is positive and should be moved ahead with all possible speed; the site should be made more easily navigable starting by giving the home page a "cleaner" design. Access to the Site Map should also be available from any page within the site and should be able to answer the question "where am I?" in a graphical form.

### Communications Strategy Papers

The concept of the communications strategy papers is very good and, in order to increase the consistency of ITC's message to its various audience, should be strengthened, i.e. every event, large or small, should have a communications strategy paper developed for it. Development of these strategy papers should become automatic for anyone undertaking an event or activity.

The communications strategy papers should have a consistent structure from event to event, i.e. be consistent in both headings and content. A possible structure could be the following:

- Background;
- Objective of the event;

- ITC communications objective (one key objective with 2 – 3 sub-objectives)<sup>26</sup> ;
- Key message to be delivered (there may be 1 – 2 sub-messages, but they must be tied to the key message and must support it);
- Delivery mechanisms (or activities) – both Above-the-line and Below-the-line activities as appropriate; and
- All activities/events should have a communications budget component as part of the overall event budget.

It is necessary to measure whether communications objectives for an event or activity have been met; this implies both before and after measurement.

### **Strengthening the Web-site(s) and Internet Presence**

The current initiatives under consideration in ITC to strengthen the web presence, improve links and indexing by search engines should receive high priority. Although digital divide issues impede internet distribution of ITC products and services in Low Income countries, Middle Income countries utilised ITC products by this means and the capacity of low-income countries to access the Internet will improve in the future. ITC has the potential to leverage its products and to distribute them at low-cost over the Internet and some programmes are doing so at the present time.

Voluntary registration should be introduced on the web site(s) that ITC can learn more about the Internet users and communicate with them by e-mail about new developments or to test their response to products and services. (There are already registered users on some the sub-sites, but this should be introduced more broadly.)

Greater attention needs to be paid to the presentation and updating of ITC information and materials on the various websites and sub-sites. Often the Evaluation was informed that information on the web site(s) was not up-to-date.

Strengthening the web presence and ensuring that the information presented by ITC on the website is up-to-date and accurate should be high priorities.

### **ITC Marketing and Results Monitoring Department**

Based on the analysis in the previous section, it is recommended that ITC should establish a marketing department whose function would be to ensure that the organization's marketing strategy, plan and resulting programs are developed and carried out in an integrated fashion across all divisions and that there is a coordinated, ongoing market analysis program. This division should also monitor utilisation and results achieved with ITC products.

The rationale for such a recommendation is that if “everyone is in charge then no one is in charge”. No matter how good the interdepartmental coordination and consultation, and the staff survey suggests that there are some deficiencies in this area unless one unit

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<sup>26</sup> If there are too many objectives there is a great danger that they will be assigned various priorities by various people with the result that none will be met.

or one department has both responsibility and authority (and the necessary resources) for marketing organization-wide, then sooner or later there will be gaps, overlaps, inconsistencies, etc., all of which serve to give ITC's target audience a flawed picture of the organization. The result would be that ITC's target market may have unrealistic expectations of what ITC is and does (and can do for them) or may have expectations that are too low. In either case ITC will not achieve its objectives.

Marketing programs may have many specific objectives, but all of them ultimately focus on fulfilling the needs and wants of a particular target audience (the customer) better than competitors resulting in a satisfied, loyal, long-term and profitable customer. In ITC's case profit is not an objective, but ITC definitely wants satisfied, loyal, long-term customers, whether they are beneficiaries, donors, or other stakeholders. Some might say that the concepts of marketing and "profitability" are not appropriate for a technical assistance agency, but the ITC is working with a limited budget and development partners expect it to achieve results or to help TSI and Small and Medium-Sized Enterprise (SME) partners to achieve results.

The marketing department would be responsible for, in the broadest sense, "selling" ITC and determining which present or potential products and services are likely to be useful to and utilised by, partners. The functions would include, but not be limited to, activities such as the following:

- Monitoring and analysing the macro and micro environment in which ITC operates;
- Developing a marketing strategy, plan and program to achieve ITC's goals;
- Implementing the marketing plan and program;
- New product development;
- Managing the ITC brand;
- Managing ITC's image;
- Evaluating and controlling (and modifying if necessary) ITC's marketing activities; and
- Monitoring the utilisation of, and results achieved with, ITC products.

Organizationally, it is recommended that the marketing department be headed by a director at the same level as the other directors in ITC, and that the communications function/group be included in the marketing department. It is definitely *not* recommended that there be a separate "marketing" department and a separate "communications" department. It needs to be stressed that the marketing department also needs an appropriate budget to carry out its mandate.

In addition to the recommendations to strengthen Internet presence and to establish a Marketing and Results Monitoring Department noted above, the other recommendations are:

**Recommendation:** ITC should reinforce branding and positioning activities in order to make its marketing activities more cost-effective and in order to assist its target market(s)

and target beneficiaries to more easily understand its products, tools, services and programmes.

**Recommendation:** ITC should conduct an analysis of product usage based on the Recent, Frequent, Cost (RFC) model which allows an organization to organize its products as most profitable, average profitability, least profitable. Even though ITC does not earn a “profit” the principles can still be applied. In particular ITC needs to track the utilisation of products and the results achieved.

**Recommendation;** ITC should evaluate establishing pro-active regional or country representation in order to be closer to both its clients and its stakeholders and partners.

**Annexes**

Annex 1: Summary of Communications Group's Resources and Outputs

Annex 2: The Forum Web Site Statistics (Provided by Pressflex)

Annex 3: The Staff Survey

Annex 4: Recent-Frequent-Cost Analysis

Annex 1: Summary of Communications Group's Resources and Outputs

**Table Annex 1:1 Summary of Communications Group's Resources and Outputs<sup>27</sup>**

Year	Public Information Budget, USD	Public Information Expenditures	Forum Budget, USD	Forum Expenditures	Staff	Title
1994	50,000	1 <sup>st</sup> ITC film Miscellaneous	235,000	Printed version in three languages (28,000 copies) Cover in colour, interior b/w Translations, revisions Photos/illustrations	4	Senior PIO Associate Forum editor and PIO Senior Dispatch and Publications Distribution Clerk Assistant
1997	50,000	1 <sup>st</sup> ITC colour brochure Film Miscellaneous	242,000	Printed version in three languages Covers and centre pages in colour, interior two colours Translations, revisions Professional Graphic Design Photos/Illustrations	3	Senior PIO Senior Secretary (Forum) Senior Dispatch and Publications Distribution Clerk
2004	70,000  1 <sup>st</sup> time increase of 15,000	Press (writers, translations, revisions) Exhibit material Visual Identity Graphic development (greeting cards, business cards, seal) Marketing/outreach on Women in trade development Web sub-site development (News, Visual Identity, 40 <sup>th</sup> ) Mailing list assistance Support for 40 <sup>th</sup> anniversary publications	249,200	Printed version in three languages (28,000 copies) Web version in three languages Covers and centre pages in colour, interior two colours Professional Contributing Editors Professional Graphic Design Translations, revisions Professional Copy Editing Photos	4.5	Senior PIO Associate Editor Forum Senior Public Information Clerk Senior Dispatch and Publications Distribution Clerk Public Information Clerk (Mailing lists /distribution)

<sup>27</sup> Reproduced from material provided by the communications group. The above is believed to be correct, but has not been verified independently by the consultants.

ITC COMMUNICATION  
AND MARKETING

ANNEX 1

Year	Public Information Budget, USD	Public Information Expenditures	Forum Budget, USD	Forum Expenditures	Staff	Title
		Miscellaneous		Envelopes (80,000 x year) Printing of subscription forms (1 <sup>st</sup> since 1964)		

**Budget 2004**

Public information	USD 70,720
Forum Magazine	USD 249,200
<b>Total 2004 Budget</b>	<b>USD 319,920</b>

**Annex 2: The Forum Web Site Statistics (provided by Pressflex and ITC)<sup>28</sup>**

Traffic growth on the *Forum* sites in the first half of 2005 has surpassed expectations: by topping 90,000 visitors a month from March through June, growth so far this year is a staggering 64%. The Forum site accounts for almost a third of all ITC web site traffic, including www.intracen.org, its sub sites and other stand alone sites.

The growth is chiefly due to high quality incoming links, and the resulting higher ranking in search engines, as well as more frequent site updates. Almost half of our audience comes from ITC target countries. The *Forum* sites continue to be the most trafficked ITC sub site, drawing five times as many visitors as the next most popular, trademap.net.

There are 286 non-directory links pointing into the Forum pages, a growth of 19% since last December and a very significant contributor to traffic growth.

This growth is not going to last forever. Hence it is important to serve better the already got audience. This can be measured by the number of pages each visitor reads on the site – a number which has been set as a prime goal to increase in future. And indeed, visitors spent more time on the site.

**Table Annex 2:1 Forum Magazine - Pages per Visit**

<b>Pages per visit</b>	<b>May, 05</b>	<b>Nov., 04</b>
<b>English</b>	3.4	2.6
<b>French</b>	3.0	1.9
<b>Spanish</b>	2.8	2.2

This is due to the efforts late last year to reorganize the site's navigation area and to present more content on each screen, with a new template and more frequent use of the “What's new on this site” button. In order to continue to improve visitor experience, and keep readers around for longer, it is planned to reorganize the “Themes” area of the site. By setting up subsections, it will be possible to make it easier for readers to find not only the articles they are looking for, but also to bump into other articles of interest, which they will then stay to read.

Traffic from developing countries and economies of transition made up 47% of the total in May, a major improvement on November's 26% ratio. This, however, is in all likelihood due to an improvement in the generation of the geographic breakdown on the statistics pages introduced earlier this year: the software can now identify the origins of 99% of visitors, compared to around 70% in the past. It appears that a disproportionate number of visitors whose origins were previously unknown were from developing countries and economies in transition.

The Spanish site continues to pull in the highest proportion of visitors from ITC target countries (74%), followed by the English (42%) and the French sites (27%). Among read-

<sup>28</sup> Source: Pressflex, June 2005.

ers of the French site, Morocco continues to top the list of developing countries, its share up from 5% in November to 8% in May, and an unusually high ratio for a small country.

On the Spanish site, Mexicans make up 17% of visitors, unchanged from November, followed by Peruvians (11%) and Colombians (9%). These high numbers suggest the potential the Forum sites have in developing countries in general. The geographic breakdown of visitors to the English site from developing countries is more even: China heads the list with close to 9%, followed by India (5%) and Turkey (2%).

More than 21,000 visitors arrived to the site via search engines – more than double the number last November. These readers make up a quarter of all visitors to the site, providing an important outreach towards readers who are active information seekers and may not have heard of either ITC or the *Forum*. As before, more than half of search engine visitors arrived at the Spanish site, reflecting the lower level of competition in Spanish language content on the Internet.

Only 7% of total traffic comes from robots and another 5% from (non-human) news aggregators. In other words, 88% of the sites' traffic is from humans.

The surge in traffic over the last six months has been higher than expected. The *Forum* sites now have almost the same traffic as the *OECD Observer*, a peer Pressflex client, but one that is published by an institution with much higher name recognition than ITC. Equally importantly, traffic from developing countries has grown to almost half of total traffic. This is attributable to two factors:

While internet penetration has begun to plateau in developed countries, it is rising faster than ever in the developing world;

The new links that get established to the Forum pages are overwhelming from either developing countries or from pages with target audience in developing countries.

The *Forum* is by far the most trafficked ITC sub site. According to statistics available via ITC's intranet, the next highest trafficked one, trademap.net attracted 600 visitors a day, a fifth of the *Forum* sites' traffic. First and foremost this is due to the accessible nature of *Forum*'s content, but easy navigation and a communication-minded site structure with outward focus also help.

The sites have retained their Google ratings since the end of last year. (Google ranks pages by their relevance and a higher score means higher ranking on search results pages.) The English site ranks 7/10, and the other two 6/10. The higher English ranking is the result of more regular content upload and, especially, a higher number of links pointing into the site.

In connection with ITC's anniversary publication, a Russian site, has also been launched, which, for the time being, is in pdf-format only. This site is highly referenced from among the language links at the top of all three sites, as well as from within the anniversary articles. In order to fully exploit the search engine potential of this issue and to ensure that

Russian readers do not feel they are getting an inferior product, producing a “real” Russian language site would be an important step forward. This would be worthwhile even though no Russian language content gets produced regularly: the potential search engine benefits delivered by the Pressflex system are lost under the current set up.

At the end of last year the site was redesigned. The new design has brought the site in line with current internet trends – where bigger computer screens mean more information can be put in front of visitors. Besides giving a more modern look, this also entices people to click around – since more (organized) information is displayed. As already mentioned, the redesign and the navigation bar restructuring have already resulted in a higher rate of viewer retention on the sites. The focus of the first phase of the redesign and restructuring has been the front page and the article pages. During the summer the sub-themes will be set up, and articles reclassified into them. This will present the archived articles in a more organized and user-friendly format.

The new design could likely be used on other ITC sites – especially as it has shown to increase visitor retention/site stickiness.

Not only does high traffic on the *Forum* sites benefit ITC directly by putting its message in front of 90,000 visitors each month, but it also helps indirectly by bringing traffic to the [www.intracen.org](http://www.intracen.org) site.

Articles contain “deep-links” to informative [intracen.org](http://intracen.org) pages, so that readers interested in the subject can find more details without having to navigate through the [www.intracen.org](http://www.intracen.org) site.

The *Forum* has received 415 subscription requests through the end of May. This is a major increase over last year, when fewer than 250 subscription requests arrived over the same period, and 500 for the entire year. The *Forum* site is a major tool in rebuilding the magazine's print circulation after the clean up of the database last year.

Of the total 400 were qualified free subscriptions and 15 were paid.

There are 5,147 readers registered for the e-mail alerts on the three sites. This is an 8.6% decrease since the end of last year – but it is the result of the merger of the previous two e-alerts offered per language version. The subscriber lists were merged along with the contents of the e-alert, which means that duplications between the two e-alerts have been removed.

### Annex 3: The Staff Survey

The survey of professional staff was administered to 120 professional staff in October 2004. The response rate was 60 out of 120 or 50%. Selected results relevant to Communications and Marketing are presented here.

60 responders registered

#### Corporate Goals

##### 1. *How clear to you are ITC's corporate goals?*

60 responders registered (100.00% from 60)



##### 2. *I keep ITC's corporate goals in mind in everything I do at work?*

60 responders registered (100.00% from 60)



##### 3. *Without looking them up I'm not sure what ITC's corporate goals are.*

59 responders registered (98.33% from 60)



**Product/program development**

**1. Almost all of the “new” products or programs that we introduce are actually a modification or blend of existing products and programs**

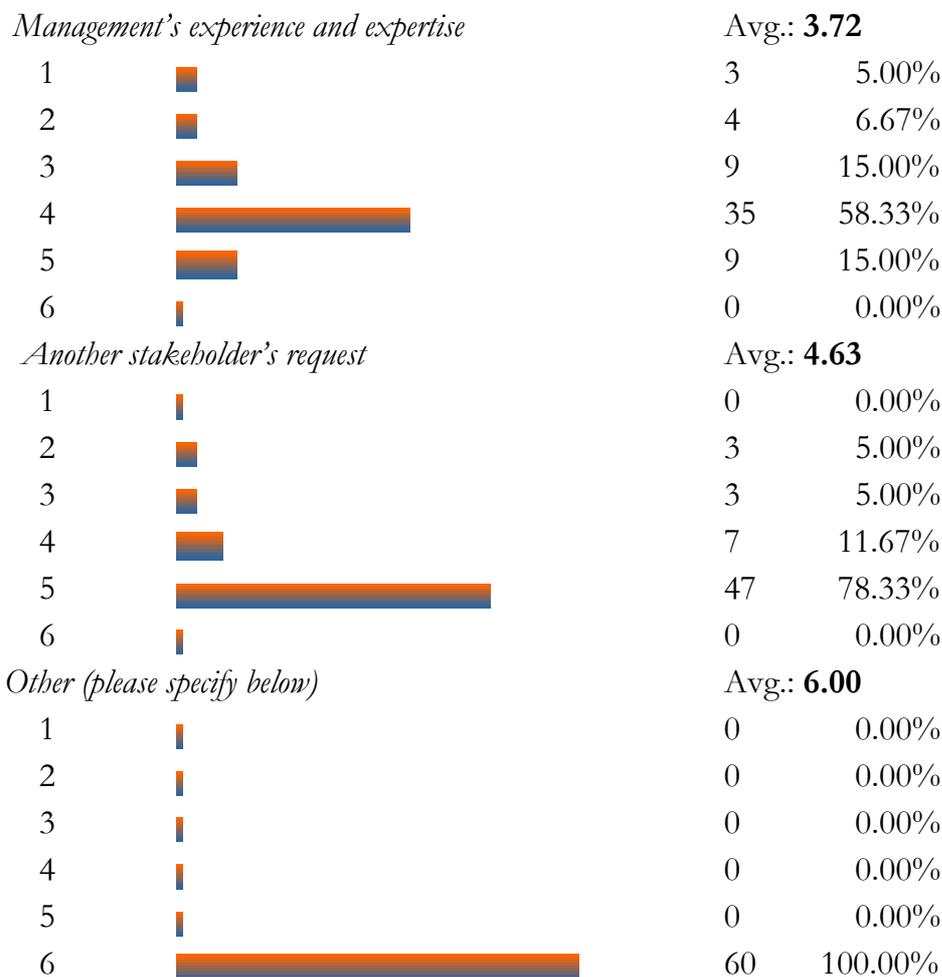
55 responders registered (91.67% from 60)



**2. Projects/countries are selected for ITC intervention based on (indicate, in order of priority (mark 1, 2, 3, etc.), all that apply):**

60 responders registered (100.00% from 60)



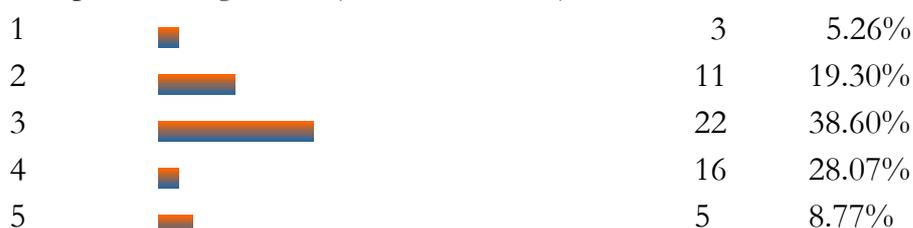


2.1. Specify responders registered (5.00% from 60)

- In the past, there were systematic "programming missions" whereby a team of ITC officers from various Divisions/Sections would jointly undertake a formal need assessment in a given country, anticipating any request from the field. This would have resulted
- Not sure of the relative order of these items. I think that it depends on the case and is a mix of factors.
- Country selection for global programmes is at the initiative of the beneficiary country

**3. All staff involved in a project/program have a strong sense of ownership of that project or program, even if did not originate in their own division**

57 responders registered (95.00% from 60)



**4. Cooperation among all divisions at all levels, but particularly among the operational divisions (DPMD, DTCC, DTSS), is very good.**

60 responders registered (100.00% from 60)



### Annex 4: Recent-Frequent-Cost Analysis

The RFC Analysis is a marketing technique based on the premise that the “best” products (customers, services, etc.) are the ones that have been used most recently, are used frequently and have the highest profit/lowest cost. The three criteria, R, F, and C, will vary from organization to organization and from product to product (or product line). R for one product (line) may be a month ago, for another nine months ago. Similarly, F or frequency will vary – for one product frequency may be weekly (a database for example), while for another frequency may be a year (a conference for example). The same principle applies to cost. Values are multiplied to arrive at a score, e.g.  $5 \times 5 \times 5 = 125$ . Each organization will have to develop its own parameters for what is the norm for R, F and C to be able to rank its products.

The Table Annex 4:1 below gives a sample analysis for three product lines based on a score of 1 – 5 where 5 = most recent, most frequent, least cost product (line) and 1 = least recent, least frequent, highest cost product (line). Thus an overall score of 125 will indicate the best product and a score of 1 will indicate the worst product.

**Table Annex 4:1 Three product sample analysis**

	Recency	Frequency	Cost	Score
Product N1	5	5	5	125
Product N2	3	4	4	48
Product N3	1	3	2	6

To add more precision to the analysis, recency, frequency and cost may be weighted. In some cases recency may be very significant in others frequency or cost will be.

The organization will have to apply its best judgment in assigning values and weights. The weight must add up to 1.0. The organization may decide that no product with a score below, for example, 2.5 will remain in the product portfolio. Exceptions to this would have to be approved by a review committee. An example follows:

**Table Annex 4:2 Example**

	RECENCY		FREQUENCY		COST		SCORE
	Value	Weight	Value	Weight	Value	Weight	
Product N1	5	.5	5	.1	5	.4	5.0
Product N2	3	.6	4	.2	4	.2	3.2
Product N3	1	.2	3	.5	2	.3	2.3

**In this case a perfect score will be 5 while the worst score will be 1.**