

The modern methods of increase of management efficiency of small and medium businesses

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Abstract. The article contains the analysis of dynamics of development of the subjects of small and medium businesses in the Russian Federation. Despite the measures of the state policy of Russia in relation to the development of small and medium businesses the reduction in the number and turnover in this sphere is found out. The key factors of successful entrepreneurial activities have been analyzed. The modern methods of increase of efficiency of activities in small and medium businesses have been offered. The possibilities of receiving the state support of businesses, use of the services of business consultants and more traditional methods of management optimization – business planning, optimization of strategy and structure of an organization, receiving supplementary education in the chosen field of activities have been considered. As the most common problem for small business is the limited financial resources, we have focused on finding free or cheap ways of optimization of activities as well as opportunities for reduction of expenses in this work. One of the effective ways of increasing efficiency is the use of the modern information technologies including the cloud services. The comparative analysis of several services, offered in Russia, as well as prospects for their development has been performed. The analysis has revealed that the cloud services are still undiscovered reserves for many Russian and foreign firms.

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Introduction

In 1995 the development of small business becomes a priority direction of economic development of Russia. In 2007 the Law on development of small and medium businesses [1] actually equalized the value and rights of these two segments of entrepreneurship. The survival and development are important for any business. This is possible only with the high efficiency of management.

The aim of this work is a search and study of new methods of increase of the management efficiency of small and medium businesses.

The objectives of the work: 1) to determine the dynamics of development of small and medium businesses in Russia; 2) to offer the modern methods of increasing the management efficiency.

Today in Russia the state business support infrastructure, including the Federal and regional funding, has been established to assist the beginning and active entrepreneurs. There are also many commercial companies – consultants in the business. They offer the following services: the registration of firms, business planning, accounting outsourcing, branding, advertising, organization of management systems, creation and promotion of corporate websites, business trainings.

In conditions of insufficient funds, typical of small business, the state channels and also useful Internet information may be of use. The Federal portal for small and medium businesses [2], the investment promotion Agency of the Republic of Tatarstan [3] and other Internet sources provide information about the possible support measures. The Republic of Tatarstan (RT) is one of the most investment-attractive regions of Russia. There are Technoparks, business incubators, industrial Parks and locations, cluster development centres, etc. operating. The Development Corporation of RT has been established. The assistance to the entrepreneurs in obtaining the necessary credits is provided by the Guarantee Fund of RT. An entrepreneur can obtain the following types of a real state assistance in business:

- telephone, video and electronic consultations;
- participation in exhibitions, forums, seminars;
- financial assistance according to the programmes – leasing-grant, social business, financing innovations, technological connection and energy saving, starting a business, subsidizing credits, export support;
- preferable terms when in the business-incubator, industrial Park, Technopark, IT-Park,

agro-industrial Park, industrial location or Technopolis.

Let us determine how effective the state-support means are, whether they are sufficient or not. To analyze the dynamics of development of small and medium businesses let us use the data of the Federal State Statistics Service [4].

Table 1. Statistics of small enterprises (SE) of Russia

Year	The number of SE in the Russian Federation
1.01.2012	242677
1.01.2013	238097
December-June 2013	234495

Table 2. Statistics of medium enterprises (ME) of Russia

Year	The number of ME in the Russian Federation
1.01.2012	4543
1.01.2013	3892
December-June 2013	3634

The sequential decline in activities of small and medium businesses is fixed.

Table 3. The dynamics of turnover of SE in Russia

Year	The turnover of the SE for the year in Russia, thousand RUB
2011	15584817305
2012	15116297261

Table 4. The dynamics of turnover of ME in Russia

Year	The turnover of the ME for the year in Russia, thousand RUB
2011	1110718501
2012	1071007756

The turnovers of both small and medium enterprises are reduced.

Thus, these figures show that, despite the measures of the state support of entrepreneurship, small and medium businesses are poorly developed, are often unprofitable in general in the economy of the country. In these conditions the study of the modern, effective methods of increasing the management efficiency is very actual.

The body

The strategy, organizational structure, marketing system, business processes influence considerably on the efficiency of small and medium businesses. Ultimately, however, all these factors

depend mainly on the personality of the entrepreneur himself, his experience, education, degree of thinking out the smallest details of his business. Unfortunately, the statistics and performed analysis show that a Russian businessman most often lacks enough education. For example, the largest group (28.8%) among the individual entrepreneurs by level of education is the group with general secondary education. On the second place (24.6%) – with professional secondary education and only on the third place is the group with higher education – 23.8%. And this is not even about the conformity of the profile of education to the chosen type of business. The part of the entrepreneurs (5.2%) has only the basic general education.

As for the experience, the Russian market system is young yet – it is hardly thirty. There are no dynasties of entrepreneurs and there are few companies successfully developing for a long time, i.e. that determined a secret of success in business. In the new business also a decisive criterion of success is the previous entrepreneur's experience in the identical business as an employee or in another role.

Increase of efficiency of business management is possible with the help of the modern information technologies, use of software products. The work of an enterprise is impossible without an effective information support of its activities. The volume of data is growing steadily and its handling is becoming more complicated. The business competitiveness depends on the speed of data collection and quality of analysis of information necessary for making the correct management decisions. There are special software products for small businesses. The most popular are software products of such manufacturers as: "1C", "BEST-5", "Infosoftware", ITC "FRIGATE".

Often the owners of small and medium businesses are badly familiar with computer technologies, have no opportunities to purchase the expensive software products, have no opportunities to hire employees – programmers, accountants. In these conditions it is recommended to use the possibilities of a cloud service. The cloud services are any services for solution of business problems in which the data and functionality are on an exterior server and are served by the third-party specialists.

Abroad cloud technologies are used for quite a long time. In Russia the infrastructure outsourcing of information technology (IT) is only starting to develop. In the future, other approaches to the management of IT infrastructure – cloud computing, i.e. providing the end user with a remote access to the leased computer powers via the Internet will be used. There are three models of providing with cloud services: IaaS, SaaS and PaaS [5]. Let us consider

some, quite affordable for small businesses in Russia, types of the cloud services.

Online-accounting (My business, Accounting, Contour, Cloudspark etc.). For example, the project of Cloudspark company – lease 1C. A team of specialists in the cloud technologies Microsoft helps to use Microsoft Office 365 for the effective solutions of business tasks. It is impossible to do business without accounting, but the expenses for a professional accountant may be too large. The service offers the professional accounting services that can help when it is necessary to prepare information and reports promptly. The documents circulation can be managed from one computer. A convenient tool is offered for the active accountants that will allow keeping things in order without any extra effort. Online-accounting does not require special knowledge and skills, i.e. the purpose of the project is to enable the companies of small business to focus on business solving all uncharacteristic tasks with zero investment. The first month of operation of the system is free of charge. One can work with 1C applications through the browser from any devices independently or work involving a remote accountant. One can manage accounting from a mobile device, no need to install the software on office computers. An opportunity to file accounts from the online service is available for all the customers. An electronic digital signature is situated in the cloud, i.e. there is no need to install an additional software, no need to worry about the means of encryption, keys with a signature, one can forget about the problems with the certificates. The data is safely protected: 2 data centres are used, daily backup, anti-virus. The twenty-four-hour technical support provides the uninterrupted operation.

Trade management (1C: Trade Management, My warehouse, CloudShop and others). For example, CloudShop application is for trade automation. The application is available for download in Google Play, and it's free for the present. CloudShop is all the main trading operations: data of suppliers, accounting of goods, purchases, sales, inventory, returns, document journal and other processes. Having a shop or small trading network, one can monitor all the manipulations in his shop in real time by downloading and installing the application on his smartphone. It includes all the necessary functionality for automation of the small retail network:

- All operations for accounting: sales, purchases, returns;
- Receipts and profits in real time;
- Control of balance and money;
- Team-work, involvement of employees.

The savings are achieved due to the fact that it requires no additional equipment and other

programmes. One only needs a smartphone with Android and the Internet. The information about the remaining goods and money at the box office is always available. The information is updated in real time. The full safety and security are guaranteed. The strong encryption makes it impossible to steal information.

Mobile trade "OPT-SERVICE". This is a cloud service for the companies engaged in wholesale supplies of food products and household chemicals. The tasks are to automate the work of sales Department, optimize the warehouse and transport logistics. All this will make the trade enterprise management easier and more efficient. A trade representative, visiting a trade outlet, collects various data. Some of it is directly reflected in the accounting system. The software package allows to automatically generate such documents without the participation of operators in the office. The documents are stored in the database and are available for viewing, analyzing and downloading into the accounting system. The list of the documents available for registration at the moment: a customer's application, return from a customer, a customer's goods on the shelves, a customer's out of time goods on the shelves, receipt of payments from a customer, GPS coordinate. The first month of operation of the system is free of charge.

These are just a few examples of free or affordable for small and medium entrepreneurs services. On the whole, the advantages of the cloud services are: 1) there is no need to buy equipment; 2) no need to install the programmes on a server or on a computer; 3) all the updates are automatic; 4) quick start of work; 5) mobility; 6) payment for the subscription; 7) any number of users; 8) there is a choice, i.e. a great number of companies and solutions; 9) support from the developers. Cem Gurkok [6] believes that cloud computing provides a reduction in capital expenses, independence, pooling of resources, reliability, scalability, flexibility and easy servicing. In our opinion, there are not so much serious disadvantages of the cloud services. For example, it is an obligatory connection with the Internet, lack of a possibility to process decisions. Today, there is a detailed research of strong, weak points, possibilities and threats of the cloud technologies [7].

However, at present, the prevalence of such services in small and medium businesses is still low, despite the fact that in Russia "its volume reached nearly half a billion in 2012, and by 2015 it will exceed \$ 1 billion" [8]. Also the foreign researchers show that the owners of small or medium business are often not ready to move from the use of the old IT-system to the cloud technologies [9]. The reasons

are various – fears for the safety of confidentiality of information, lack of information about the expenses and conditions of use, etc. In his work Nabil Ahmed Sultan [10] also points out some problems that can prevent entrepreneurs from introducing such services. However, it is stated in his article, "cloud" computing, is likely to become commercially viable for many small and medium enterprises due to its flexibility and payment terms, especially in the current times of economic hardship. Thus, the performed research shows that the cloud services and cloud computing for many Russian and foreign companies is a reserve which they have not opened yet.

Conclusions

Thus, the main advice for a beginning or active entrepreneur, who wants to increase the efficiency of small or medium business, are:

- 1) Getting or improving education;
- 2) Gaining experience of work in the chosen field of business;
- 3) Constant searching and studying of information through the various sources;
- 4) Compilation of well-thought-out and sound business strategy;
- 5) Using the available means of the state support of business;
- 6) Using the services of business consultants;
- 7) Active using the information technologies including using the cloud services.

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