

Feasibility Study of Design and Implementation of Marketing Software in Sports Club Services

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Abstract

Background: The purpose of this study was to determine the feasibility of designing and implementing marketing software in sports club services in Ardabil province.

Methods: This study is descriptive and the statistical population is 132 participants of managers and trainers of sports clubs and software designers in Ardabil province. Using a random stratified sampling method, the Cochran formula was used to determine the sample size and 99 participants were selected as samples. To collect information, a researcher-made questionnaire with 40 items and 6 dimensions was used. The validity of the questionnaire was confirmed by several sports management professors. Cronbach's alpha method was used to achieve the reliability of the questionnaire (stability coefficient for technical dimension; 0.81, Legal dimension; 0.87, financial dimension; 0.88, Human dimension; 0.89, operational dimension; 0.91 and for time dimension; 0.87). To test the normal distribution of variables, Skewness and Kurtosis tests and to answer the research questions and to test the hypotheses, One sample T-Test was used using SPSS software version 24. All research hypotheses were analyzed at the significance level of 0.05.

Findings: According to the findings of the research in terms of human and operational dimensions, it is possible to run marketing software in sport club services in Ardabil province, but in terms of technical, legal, time and financial dimensions and legal aspects, it has less possible to run marketing software in the services of sports clubs in the Ardabil province.

Conclusion: The feasibility of designing and implementing of marketing software in sports clubs in Ardabil province is not suggested, due to lack of facilities and technical equipment, and also fewer Internet services, time and financial conditions, lack of specific rules for designing and implementing marketing software at the sport club services. However, it is inevitable that there are skilled persons and operational infrastructures according to the research results.

Keyword: Feasibility study, software design, marketing, sports services

Introduction:

Feasibility studies explore the strengths and weaknesses of an existing business or proposed investment, environmental opportunities and threats, the resources needed to transport objectively and rationally, and ultimately is a vision for success. A proper feasibility study should include a historical background of the project and the business in question, a description of the product or provided services, a description of the calculations, performance details and project management, marketing and security research, financial information, legal requirements and tax liabilities. There are several factors in the process of a feasibility study, such as economic, technical, human, temporal, operational, legal, contractual and political factors (Elahi and Hosseini Moghadam, 2003). In general, a feasibility study aims to assess the feasibility of a program or activity at various levels, and was formed in six basic dimensions in the process of this study:

Technical feasibility study: This evaluation examines the technical knowledge and equipment needed to set it up and considers three important issues: Do we have the technical expertise and knowledge necessary to develop the system? Do we have the needed technology now? Is the proposed technology and solution practical? (Wittney, 2007).

Economic or financial feasibility study: this section, determines the positive economic benefits for the organization, and in general, cost/benefits analysis is followed.

Legal feasibility study: In this part of feasibility studies, it is determined whether the proposed system contradicts the legal requirements.

Operational feasibility study: In this section, issues such as being suitable for project

development in the coming years, culture, environmental issues and future policies of the project are examined.

Timing feasibility study: In some cases, it may take too long to complete the project, and it is practically impossible to achieve the projected benefit from creating a business. To prevent this from happening, timing studies are being conducted.

Human feasibility study: In a project, key human resources play an important role in observing and integrating work opportunities, forcing employees to work, expanding employee capabilities, and creating collaborative teams that take into account the views of partners to turn them into benefits (Rangriz and Azimi, 2006).

On the other hand, organizations, institutions or enterprises that intend to progress and survive competition with their opponents benefit from marketing in their field. Sports organizations are no exception. In recent years, high quality response to customer needs has been one of the factors and strategic issues and one of the success factors of the organization. These issues, as well as developments in, the use of the Internet and software, can help managers to slowly identify the needs of customers and fulfil them well, this enables them to both attract and retain customer loyalty and gain profit in this way. This means that it actually fulfills the customer's expectations with the services, which in turn leads to an increase in benefits as well as an increase in the club's market share in the competitive market. A review of the literature shows that computer use in sports has grown significantly. Advanced software with more options and more complete information registration volume is offered to the market every day (Kashef, 2008). The first sports software was written by Rip and Benjamin in 1968 to collect information about on football. In 1991,

Kashef was the first person to use his software to edit the standard norms of sit-up, horizontal bar, two round trip, 45 meters trip, pair jump, and 540 meters trip around volleyball field on 30,000 girl and boy students ages 9 to 17. Razzaghi et al. (2015) examined the marketing situation of clubs under the web and concluded that they do not have a good situation in the areas of promotion, sales and databases. Although this research has only examined customer relationship in football clubs, it can reveal to some extent the importance of feasibility study of sports marketing software. Nazari and Andalib (2018) also confirmed the impact of marketing and the Internet on increasing the number of customers in private clubs. Jafari et al. (2016) reported the effect of the Internet on the marketing mix of sports clubs' sponsorship services. In general, most research endorses the realization of marketing and using computer technologies but the following questions are raised as whether such a project could be used in sport clubs services or not:

- Is it technically possible to design and implement marketing software in the services sports clubs?
- Is it financially possible to design and implement marketing software in the services of sports clubs?
- Is it legally possible to design and implement marketing software in the services of sports clubs?
- Is it Human feasibility possible to design and implement marketing software in the services of sports clubs?
- Is it operationally possible to design and implement marketing software in the services of sports clubs?
- Is it possible in terms of time to design and implement marketing software in the services of sports clubs?

Materials and Methods

Given that the purpose of the research was to evaluate the feasibility of designing and implementing marketing software, the research method is descriptive and practical and is field research in terms of the type of data collection. The statistical population of this study includes managers, coaches, and software designers of Ardabil province. The number of managers and coaches of existing clubs was 114 and the number of software designers was 18 people. Using a random stratified sampling method and according to Cochran's table, the sample size for clubs' managers and coaches was 86 people and for software, designers were 13 people. According to the research objectives, a researcher-made questionnaire with acceptable validity and reliability was used to collect data. The questionnaire includes 40 questions in six dimensions: technical (1-5), financial (6-11), legal (12-16), human (17-26), operational (27-35) and time (36-40). All questions were ranged with a 5-point Likert from very low to very high. Formal and content validity was approved by five professors in the field of sports management, and Cronbach's alpha method was used by SPSS software version 24 in order to determine the reliability of the questionnaire. The alpha numbers were separate as 0.81 for technical, 0.88 for financial, 0.87 for Legal, 0.89 for human, 0.91 for operational, 0.87 for time factors. In order to check the normality of the data, Skewness and Kurtosis tests were used and in the hypotheses test section, one samples T Test was used using SPSS software version 24. All research hypotheses were analyzed at the significance level of 0.05.

Results

In terms of gender, 47 people (47.5%) were male and 52 (52.5%) were female. In addition, 32 respondents (35.2%) had physical education and sport science degree and 59 (64.8%) were not related to physical education.

According to Table 1, the amount of skewness and Kurtosis for the feasibility study dimensions is between -2 and +2. Therefore, the distribution of variables is normal and parametric tests can be used

Table 1. examines the normality of the distribution of research variables

Variable	Mean	Standard deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis
Technical	3.09	0.84	-0.06	-0.37
Financial	3.04	0.97	0.29	-0.74
Legal	3.05	0.88	-0.34	-0.21
Human	3.23	0.80	-0.34	-0.23
Operational	3.17	0.85	-0.04	-0.57
Time	3.07	0.81	-0.41	-0.18

According to Table 2, to test this hypothesis, a one-sample t-test was used and the results showed that the average total score of feasibility study of designing and implementation of marketing in sports services is evaluated

positively in human and operational components, but the technical, financial, legal and time components are significantly inversely related to the standard number.

Table 2. Comparison of the average score of the feasibility study of designing and implementation of marketing software in sports services (standard score =3)

Variable	Mean	Standard deviation	n	df	T	p.value
Technical	3.09	0.84	98	97	1.10	0.27
Financial	3.04	0.97	98	97	1.10	0.61
Legal	3.05	0.88	98	97	0.53	0.60
Human	3.23	0.80	98	97	2.86	0.005
Operational	3.17	0.85	98	97	2.04	0.044
Time	3.07	0.81	98	97	0.89	0.38

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to evaluate the feasibility of designing and implementing sports services marketing software in clubs in Ardabil province to examine the extent to which this type of project is applicable in Ardabil province. According to the research findings on technical feasibility study, due to the lack of required infrastructure, existing networks and Internet systems, as well as the lack of hardware and software equipment and communications required for system development, the possibility of designing and implementing of sports services marketing software is not confirmed. This finding is in line with the results of research done by Sarrafzadeh and Alipour (2011) and Pourfaraj et al. (2012). The results of the present study are also in line with the research of Salehi (2005) and Martines (1997) regarding the financial component. It seems that the cost constraints, a lack of financial resources, a lack of investors or sponsors, a lack of proper field for investors, the cost of providing software and limited government attention to the provinces affect the possibility of designing and implementing a software marketing software. The economic power of the people of the society can also affect such activities by affecting the sports market. Despite obtaining these results, we should note that paying attention to the use of the Internet will automatically improve the sponsorship services of clubs (Jafari et al., 2016) and increase customers (Nazari and Andalib, 2018).

The results of the present study regarding the legal dimension are not consistent with the research of Arabsalehi and Hatampour (2015), Moradi et al. (2012), while they are in line with the findings of Sarfizadeh and Alipour (2011). The existence of codified rules and regulations in the use of software

facilities in the process of granting licenses or even ranking clubs, as well as granting legal incentives can facilitate the positive results of the feasibility study of this issue.

With regard to the human component, due to sufficient training, the presence of experts and knowledgeable human resources in related fields, there is the possibility of supporting senior managers, the possibility of supporting training units in Ardabil, the possibility of designing and implementing marketing software in sports club services which do not agree with the research of Arab Salehi and Hatampour (2015) and Moradi et al. (2012). We need to consider that having these resources is enough in the issue of manpower, and these forces migrate after a while, due to better work and living conditions in other provinces and even other countries. The following factors were found to be influential regarding the component of being operational: the compatibility with the community environment and clubs, having a plan to attract the support of employees, committees and decision-making councils of this software and the existence of commitment to implement and relevant training. On the other hand, it seems that the existence of similar activities and processes in most clubs and the influence of the Internet and smartphones among the people create a favourable operating environment for these types of projects. In the timing component, the results of the present study tentatively confirm the feasibility of the mentioned software. This means that it is possible to phase and schedule according to the obtained average. However, it is best to start this type of project with caution before taking any action in a variety of ways, such as setting time tables, implementation simulations, and other methods. Because the

measures of information technology are limited in sports and no basic measures have been taken in the field of sales and promotion at the clubs level based on the findings of Razzaghi et al (2018).

Conclusion

In general, moving to the use of Internet and marketing methods is inevitable for sports clubs. However, starting it in this province requires special validation measurements, and the designers and users of these results should do so with a broad perspective and the national market. Because manpower was significantly, higher than the standard number, it was a key and operational resource for the project. Other factors in feasibility study can be improved by changing markets, using technical facilities in other areas, improving rules and related plans.

Disclosure

All authors declare no conflicts of interest in this work.

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