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Outsourcing: concept, objectives, and tasks, experience of implementing outsourcing in railway transport

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Abstract: Uzbekistan Railways JSC, taking into account the scale of its operations, has consolidated various competencies that exert influence at different levels in the implementation of its development strategy. Business processes that do not possess strategic significance should be considered as potential candidates for outsourcing. At present, the services market widely encompasses cleaning services, heat and water supply, maintenance of buildings and facilities, information technologies, and a range of other business processes. Intense competition enables the formation of appropriate benefits and advantages associated with delegating these functions to external execution.

Keywords: outsourcing, problems of the transport and freight services market, corporate outsourcing statistics

1. Introduction

Contemporary market conditions, environmental challenges, and the constant need to enhance the efficiency of Uzbekistan Railways JSC require not only the rational use of resources but also the restructuring of business processes. Taking into account the scale of its operations, the company has consolidated various competencies that influence the implementation of its development strategy at different levels. Business processes that do not possess strategic importance should be regarded as potential candidates for outsourcing.

Today, the service market widely applies outsourcing in areas such as cleaning services, heating and water supply, maintenance of buildings and facilities, information technologies, and other auxiliary business processes. Intense competition enables the identification of benefits associated with delegating such functions to external providers, thereby forming advantages in efficiency and cost reduction.

The relevance of the study The relevance of this research is associated with the insufficient examination of the issue of transferring non strategic, auxiliary functions to outsourcing. Such an approach makes it possible to concentrate attention on the core competencies that exert a decisive influence on achieving the main strategic objectives.

2. Methodology

Outsourcing: Concept, Objectives, and Tasks.

Outsourcing (from English outsourcing – use of external resources) is the transfer of functions or business processes, previously performed independently by a company, to third-party organizations. The essence of outsourcing can be examined both from the perspective of the outsourcing provider and from that of the client.



Outsourcing is a specialized third-party organization that undertakes the obligation to perform individual functions or business processes within the timeframes specified in the outsourcing contract concluded with the client.




The client is a company that transfers the right to perform certain functions or business processes to the outsourcer.

For the client, outsourcing is an approach to business management: the company decides to cease performing specific functions (business processes) internally and instead acquires them externally. In this way, it directs its activities toward utilizing the resources of a third-party organization rather than developing them within its own business.


For the outsourcer, outsourcing represents the primary type of specialized activity, supported by all the necessary resources to provide high-quality services to clients.

Outsourcing is based on the following principles:

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•Principle of division of labor – each participant specializes in specific functions, thereby ensuring higher quality of execution.

•Efficiency and competitiveness – functions should be transferred to those who are capable of performing them more effectively.

•Cost optimization – separation of functions reduces the expenses of the client company while increasing the revenues of specialized firms.

•With respect to the client, outsourcing is divided into internal and external:

•Internal outsourcing implies the transformation of a company's internal division into a subsidiary that subsequently performs the outsourced individual functions (business processes).

•External outsourcing refers to the transfer of functions (business processes) to independent third party organizations.

•According to the principle of responsibility distribution, outsourcing may be classified as partial or full.

Partial outsourcing – refers to the transfer of certain functions or parts of a business process of the client company to external execution. The use of partial outsourcing does not imply that the client company completely ceases performing these functions. The outsourcer carries out only those tasks specified in the contract with the client, while management and control remain with the client. In this case, the advantage for the company lies in the ability to utilize external resources, including the latest developments and technologies, while simultaneously maintaining independence and reducing risks. For the outsourcer, partial outsourcing serves as a means of developing its activities and gaining market share. From an economic perspective, partial outsourcing facilitates the growth of small and medium-sized enterprises, as smaller firms may operate as specialized organizations performing specific functions.

Full outsourcing – is characterized by the transfer of the client company's functions, business processes, or specific types of activities entirely to the outsourcer. In this case, the degree of dependence of the client company's business on the outsourcer's work increases, since the outsourcer assumes full responsibility for the efficiency of the entire business process. For the client, full outsourcing represents a method of optimizing the company's management system and reducing its costs.

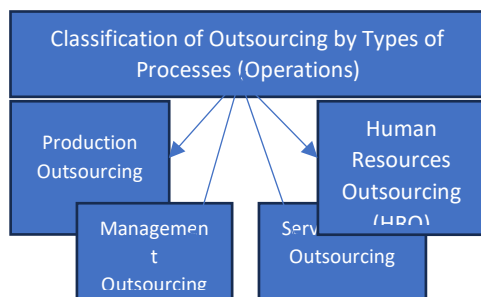


Fig. 1. Classification of Outsourcing by Type of Business Processes and Operations

Production outsourcing involves the transfer of certain production functions, a segment of the production chain, or the entire execution of the production chain to a third party. Depending on the type of production operation being outsourced, it may be applied either in core production or in auxiliary production.

Outsourcing in core production is characterized by the performance of a primary production function—directly related to the company's main activity—by a specialized organization. For example, specialized companies may engage in casting spare parts for automobile corporations, while the corporations themselves focus solely on designing and assembling vehicles.

Outsourcing in auxiliary production refers to the transfer of secondary, non core functions or operations that support the main production process to a third party. This enables the company to concentrate its efforts and resources on its core activities and achieve greater results.

The advantages of outsourcing include:

•The opportunity to utilize the experience and achievements of other organizations to improve efficiency.

•The ability to redirect resources toward developing competitive advantages.

•Enhancement of the quality of products, works, or services offered by the company in the market.

•Optimization of company expenses.

•Concentration on priority areas of activity.

•Access to new technologies.

•Risk sharing.

•Increase in working capital.

•Reduction of operational costs.

•Access to resources not available within the company itself.

Thus, outsourcing represents one of the modern approaches to conducting business, upon which the success, efficiency, competitiveness, and business reputation of a company depend.



Fig. 2. Global it outsourcing market growth

In the United States, 92 percent of small and medium-sized businesses use accounting outsourcing services, while in Western Europe this figure amounts to 86 percent. An analysis of the level of outsourcing service utilization in different countries demonstrates the validity of this approach. For instance, in Kazakhstan, in order to analyze and evaluate the quality of outsourcing services, ANKOR employees conducted a study five years ago among managers of various levels under the theme "The Evolution of Outsourcing in Kazakhstan." At that time, the most popular functions outsourced by companies were HR, IT, and accounting.

When analyzing Russia, the most common outsourcing object among Russian companies is payroll preparation. Several years ago, the development of this type of financial outsourcing was limited by the fact that the majority of the population received hidden wages (in 2004, only 15 percent of 50 million employees received official salaries), while outsourcing companies worked exclusively with official payroll. Currently, the situation is improving: 85 percent of the population now receives official wages (according to



data from the Russian Public Opinion Research Center), which significantly expands the opportunities for outsourcing.



Fig. 3. Types of outsourcing

There are five types of outsourcing services.

Insourcing – the creation of a separate business unit that provides services both to the company's internal departments and to external users

Cosourcing – the execution of specific activities through the combined efforts of the company's own employees and external contractors.

Offshoring (or offshore outsourcing) – the transfer of non-essential business processes to contractor companies located in other geographical regions.

Multisourcing – the distribution of work among several outsourcing providers, each of which is universal.

Outstaffing – formed on the basis of hiring temporary (seasonal) employees to perform various tasks.

Each outsourcing direction is selected based on the company's or corporation's chosen strategy and the desired outcomes to be achieved.

The practice of implementing outsourcing in railway transport operations.

The continuous growth in freight volumes along the Eurasian railway corridor has significantly increased the load on the 1520 mm gauge infrastructure, which has affected such indicators as container transportation speed and average travel time. One of the reasons for this is the insufficient capacity at locations where cargo containers are re-gauged, including the lack of adequate infrastructure and freight handling facilities along the route.

The analysis of trends in the transport and freight services market demonstrates the existence of these problems, as illustrated in Figure 1.2.

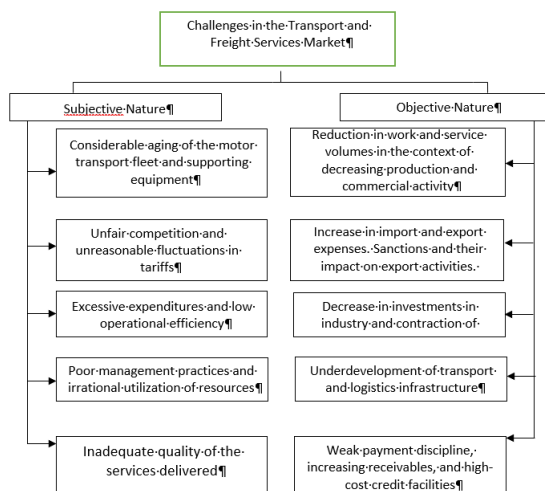


Fig. 4. Challenges in the transport and freight services market

The advantages of outsourcing include:

- the opportunity to utilize the experience and achievements of other organizations to improve company performance;
- the ability to direct resources toward the development of competitive advantages;
- enhancement of the quality of products (works, services) offered by the company in the market;
- optimization of company expenditures;
- concentration on priority areas of activity;
- access to and use of new technologies;
- risk sharing;
- increase in working capital;
- reduction of operational costs;
- the possibility of using resources not available within the company, thereby providing partial solutions to the aforementioned problems.



The implementation of outsourcing will undoubtedly contribute to reducing negative indicators, improving railway infrastructure, preventing resource shortages, and, most importantly, fostering higher efficiency and the development of transport technologies.

Gebrüder Weiss Outsourcing Company

With its long-standing experience and strong international team, Gebrüder Weiss operates worldwide, transporting goods to all destinations using any mode of transport. In addition, our specialists develop mobility and logistics solutions that integrate production, business, and transport processes, thereby perfectly meeting the needs of our clients. As a result, we increase efficiency, reduce customer costs, and help them achieve competitive advantages. For the strength of wire fastenings, the ends of the wire are looped around the bracket and other details of the wagon or cargo 2-3 times, and then at least three times around the tensioners (ties). Ties are also made of steel tunics using tightening devices. Such ties should not touch the platform boards.

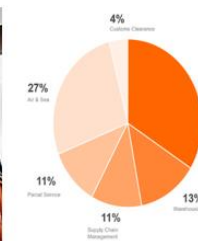


Fig. 4. Integrated Mobility and Logistics Solutions by Gebrüder Weiss

The company engages in both land and river transportation and is specialized as an outsourcing provider in warehousing operations. It conducts its activities on a



global scale, with offices established in numerous countries around the world.



Fig. 5. SBH outsourcing company

The current situation requires every economic entity to ensure conditions for economic growth. In “Uzbekistan Railways” JSC, the largest transport company in the field of freight and passenger transportation, the use of outsourcing makes it possible to optimize operations by transferring non-core, auxiliary functions under contract to other organizations acting as outsourcers.

At present, the practice of outsourcing in “Uzbekistan Railways” JSC is only at an initial stage. The use of outsourcing in a transport company engaged in freight and passenger transportation must take into account specific nuances related to the organization of railway transport processes and the need to ensure their safety and stability. As a rule, certain technological processes or types of operations are outsourced. In addition, outsourcing can be used to meet the demand for seasonal labor. When transferring individual tasks or processes under contract to specialized organizations (outsourcers), two types are distinguished:

- an outsourcer organization (individual entrepreneur) for small-scale work;
- a communication outsourcer performing more than 75% of outsourcing work.

The most important task in implementing outsourcing is the selection of the outsourcing organization. To ensure effective performance, “Uzbekistan Railways” JSC seeks to reduce the number of outsourcers with whom contracts are concluded. The requirements for selecting an outsourcer include low cost, high quality of work, and experience in cooperation with railway enterprises. However, it is necessary to avoid monopolization, since in this case “Uzbekistan Railways” JSC may become dependent on the outsourcer, including in terms of pricing and quality of work performed.

Thus, strengthening competition among outsourcers is fundamental in the use of outsourcing. If there are enterprises capable of performing processes and functions effectively and with sufficient quality, outsourcing can help reduce losses in railway transport. Transition to outsourcing introduces a new level of management in railway transport — from “instruction-based” management to “indicator-based” management — which reduces the cost of managerial labor.

Potential outsourcing processes may include non-strategic activities such as cleaning services, maintenance of buildings and structures, transport services, repair works, and others.

Among the logistics functions most often proposed for outsourcing are:

- provision of information on transport management and cargo tracking;
- customs declaration and clearance of goods;
- preparation of export-import and freight documentation;

- verification of freight invoices;
- organization of cargo transportation to and from ports;
- warehousing;
- coordination of local transport (according to the consignor’s conditions);
- negotiation of transport tariffs;
- loading, unloading, stacking, labeling, and other related operations;
- technical maintenance of wagons.

As a rule, companies refuse outsourcing for the following reasons:

- considering outsourcing to be expensive;
- lack of simple outsourcing service providers;
- satisfaction with the current situation;
- company policy of performing all tasks independently.

In “Uzbekistan Railways,” after the first introduction of outsourcing in the warehouse system, analysis of company performance is expected to yield positive results. Specifically, the number of warehouse employees will be reduced by 20% (by outsourcing 40% of the assortment of necessary material and technical resources). Depreciation costs for maintaining warehouse areas will decrease by 5%. Inventory balances will be reduced twofold. The turnover periods of inventory assets in warehouses, in transit, and in the supply system will be significantly shortened.



Fig. 6. Container Loading and Unloading at a Railway Logistics Hub

Transferring loading and unloading operations, as well as post-unloading cleaning, to specialized outsourcing companies provides a number of advantages:

- prevention of potential cargo damage by ensuring stacking in accordance with established regulations and rules;
- time savings due to the use of companies equipped with technical means for loading and unloading operations;
- elimination of the need to hire seasonal workers and reduction of costs;
- use of fixed low prices;
- timely return of empty wagons in clean condition to the railway without delay.

Outsourcing the sale of passenger tickets also opens up a number of benefits and conveniences. For example:

- prevention of corruption cases in the railway sector;
- enabling the railway to focus more attention on important tasks such as increasing freight turnover and strengthening safety measures.

3. Conclusion

In Uzbekistan, the use of outsourcing has become a requirement of the times and is regulated by a number of normative legal documents, including Presidential Decree No. PF-5185 of September 8, 2017 "On Approval of the Concept of Administrative Reforms in the Republic of Uzbekistan" and Presidential Decree No. PF-5264 of November 29, 2017 "On Establishing the Ministry of Innovative Development of the Republic of Uzbekistan."

Considering that "Uzbekistan Railways" JSC relies on the company's regulatory documents to systematize the use of this mechanism, it is recommended that Uzbekistan also develop a certification system for outsourcing organizations in transport similar to that of Russian Railways JSC, as well as an algorithm for calculating outsourcing technological processes. This would allow assessment of the economic efficiency of outsourcing for certain types of work (services) and ensure coverage of outsourcing costs for "Uzbekistan Railways" JSC.

Furthermore, rules and procedures should be developed for transferring non-core functions performed by production units of "Uzbekistan Railways" JSC to external specialized structures. This document would define the process of interaction between "Uzbekistan Railways" and outsourcing organizations, as well as the sequence of operations when outsourcing is applied

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