



## Accounting

### **Northwest Fitness: An Expansion Opportunity- Featured**

In 2018, the owner of Northwest Fitness, a fitness business in London, Ontario, Canada, was analyzing the business's past year of operations and planning for the future. The company focused on “functional fitness” training to help clients improve aspects of their everyday life. The owner had launched the fitness studio with the help of a bank loan and a line of credit; after three years of success, he wondered if the company was finally in a financial position that would allow him to expand operations. He needed to analyze the past financial performance and project a statement of earnings and a statement of position assuming an expansion was pursued.

### **Speak-On: Projecting Cash Budgets for a New Venture - Featured**

In August 2018, the founder of Speak-On, was finalizing plans for his company's first year of operations. Speak-On was a learning tool used in classrooms to help students improve their communication and public speaking skills. Having worked on developing a prototype all summer with financing from the Government of Ontario, the founder needed to understand the cash needs for his company. He planned to project a cash budget for fiscal year 2018 and do a sensitivity analysis on his projections to determine the amount of additional financing needed. Did Speak-On require external financing, and would the line of credit support the cash needed?

## **Sears: A Struggle for Survival- Featured**

On January 20, 2017, Moody's Investors Service, an American credit rating agency, downgraded the Corporate Family Rating for Sears Holdings Corporation from Caa1 to Caa2, stating that the company did not have enough money to stay in business and was relying on outside funding or sale of assets to sustain operations. The leading US retail chain had a revenue turnover of US\$22.14 billion in Fiscal Year (FY) 2016–17. However, beginning in FY 2011–12, it had suffered losses year after year. Its stock had fallen 38 per cent between April 2016 and April 2017. The retail chain's majority shareholder, chair, and chief executive officer was making some changes, but critics questioned his motives and retail acumen. With falling share prices, continuous losses, decreasing assets, and a decided shift in the industry away from traditional retail, it seemed that it would be only a matter of time before Sears Holdings Corporation reached its end. In light of its poor financial performance and consecutive losses on a yearly basis, a new Master of Business Administration graduate and junior analyst was assigned the task of analyzing the retail chain's financial status and assessing the possibility of its bankruptcy.

## **Bon-Ton: Caught in the Rain of US Retail Bankruptcies- Featured**

In June 2018, an intern at an investment firm was given the task of assessing the financial condition of Bon-Ton Holdings, Inc. (Bon-Ton), a leading US department store chain. In January 2018, it had entered into forbearance agreements with some of its lenders and announced store closures at 42 locations as part of its rationalization program. On February 4, 2018, it filed a voluntary petition for protection against bankruptcy and for reorganization. With the US retail industry already having witnessed more than 15 bankruptcies in 2017—the most in the last six years—would Bon-Ton survive? What measures could the company take to fight bankruptcy? What actions might put the company back on track?

## **Governance Failure at Satyam- Best Seller**

An acquisition decision by Satyam Corporation created discontent among shareholders and led to a series of investigations that revealed fraud of about INR 50 billion, leading to resignations by several board members and the CEO. This episode became a mockery of corporate governance practices, raising questions about the efficacy of well-accepted governance norms. This case covers the events that led to the failure of Satyam. The roles of not only the “promoter” but also other parties, such as the managers, board of directors, auditors and bankers, are discussed in detail. The case draws attention to various corporate governance and ethical issues and provides an opportunity to discuss measures that should be taken by regulators, auditors, and other bodies to prevent fraud.

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## Entrepreneurship

### **Medicloud Singapore: Digital Health Entrepreneurship in an Evolving Industry- New!**

In December 2016, two years after the founding of Medicloud, a Singapore-based start-up that offered a medical appointment-booking application, the founder and chief executive officer recognized that the start-up had yet to monetize. A decision regarding a pivot was imminent. He also recognized that there were new opportunities in the areas of employee benefits and insurance for small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). He needed to answer two pressing questions before the company's initial funding ran out: Should the start-up pivot to serve SMEs? If so, what kind of products and services should it offer to the SMEs?

### **Boom Technology, Inc.: A Strategic Evaluation of Commercial Supersonic Flight - New!**

with a supersonic aircraft. The company's founder and chief executive officer believed that customers would pay a premium for a flight that could get them to their destination in less than half the time compared to current options. Developing meaningful relationships within this complex web of stakeholders, including large and powerful traditional aircraft makers, regulators, airlines, and end customers, was one of the biggest challenges. In addition, two other start-ups had similar aims and were also developing relationships and alliances with different businesses in the sector. The company's founder was contemplating several key business decisions. Was supersonic flight a technologically possible and economically

viable form of transport? How could the company convince airlines to buy the supersonic aircraft? Was building a supersonic private business jet a safer bet?

### **Project Have Hope: Managing Growth, Commitment, Time, Inventory, and Other Challenges- New!**

Boston-based Project Have Hope was a non-profit social enterprise promoting financial stability for 100 women in Kampala, Uganda, who had been displaced as a result of Uganda's civil war. Established in 2006, Project Have Hope used revenue from the sale of paper bead jewellery and other products made by the women to provide training, loans, and children's tuition. The project faced many challenges over the years, including an unplanned expansion of its beneficiaries, staffing challenges, an oversaturated bead jewellery market, rising costs, and the founder's unsustainable workload. In 2019, Project Have Hope was at a nexus: how could the founder sustain Project Have Hope into the future?

### **Entrepreneurs at Twitter: Building a Brand, a Social Tool or a Tech Powerhouse?- Best Seller**

Twitter has become an incredibly popular micro-blogging service since its launch in 2006. Its founders have ambitious plans for the service, and are backed by hundreds of millions of dollars of venture capital funding, which values the company at \$3.7 billion in 2011. Twitter seems to attract a diverse audience of users, such as political organizers looking to disseminate information to their followers; businesses looking to reach out, in real time, to potential customers; and social users. The company charges consumers nothing for its service. By 2011, competitors have emerged, some of whom are financially strong. It remains unclear - at least to some observers - whether the company will ever make money from its service.

### **Luminar: Leveraging Big Data Using Corporate Entrepreneurship- Featured**

Entravision, a leading Spanish-language broadcasting company in the United States that targets Hispanic Americans, has just set up a digital analytics division called Luminar, which uses Big Data to focus a company's marketing to a particular set of consumers. The idea of launching Luminar has been mooted by an outsider who is a friend and protégé of the company's founding chairman. As the incumbent president of the new division, he is grappling with some major issues. How should he secure the buy-in of line and staff managers at Entravision? How should he find a structural fit between Entravision and Luminar? How should he leverage business opportunities beyond digital analytics? What kind of entry barriers can he build so that Luminar retains its first mover advantage?

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## Finance

### **CS Publishing Inc.: Foreign Exchange Risk Management - New!**

A medium-sized Canadian provider of specialized educational products and services, Canada Specialization Providers, had a subsidiary, CS Publishing Inc. (CSPub), which sold specialty learning materials around the world. Although the company's costs and revenues were almost exclusively in Canadian dollars and its subsidiary, CSPub, had most of its costs in Canadian dollars, this subsidiary also had a large and growing revenue base in other currencies. Upon consolidation, the parent company was exposed to different currencies through CSPub. The foreign currency values were currently relatively minor, but in March 2019, CSPub was in the process of a large global expansion that would expose both the subsidiary and the parent to new sources of currency risk. The director of CSPub needed to clarify the company's current and expected future exposures to currency risk and determine how these exposures might affect the parent company. She also needed to identify the processes that could help manage these future risks and decide which of these processes to implement, if any.

### **The Walt Disney Company's Stock: Buy, Hold, or Sell? - New!**

A portfolio manager at Century 23 Investment Company was considering whether to maintain holdings in The Walt Disney Company (Disney). She was reviewing the recently released fourth quarter and full fiscal year earnings report of Disney and comparing the results against those of key competitors, including Netflix Inc., Comcast Corporation, and Viacom Inc. She examined financial statements, ratios, valuation metrics, and financial forecasts, to find a potential connection between financial performance and stock prices.

After considering the investment strategy adopted by her investment company—identifying and investing in stocks that showed consistent earnings growth above broad market levels while also trading at a reasonable price—the investment manager had to decide whether or not to maintain the holdings.

### **The Grasim Industries–Aditya Birla Nuvo Limited Merger: Wealth Creation?- New!**

On August 11, 2016, the chairman of Aditya Birla Group (ABG) announced that ABG would merge Aditya Birla Nuvo Limited (ABNL) with Grasim Industries Limited (Grasim). ABG's board also proposed to demerge Aditya Birla Financial Services Limited, a subsidiary of ABNL, from the newly merged Grasim. Financial analysts speculated that the merger was planned to fund ABNL's telecommunication business before an upcoming spectrum sale and the launch of a strong, competing telecommunication company. The investor community, particularly minority shareholders, were concerned about the merger and felt that ABG's main motive for the merger was to increase its stake in Grasim. What were the rationales for the merger? Would the promoter's holding increase after the merger, as the shareholders perceived? Was the share swap ratio between ABNL and Grasim justified? Would there be a post-merger synergy creation, and which of the two companies would transfer wealth to the other? Should the shareholders vote in favour of the merger?

### **Alex Sharpe's Portfolio- Best Seller**

Alex Sharpe's Portfolio provides an introduction to the Capital Asset Pricing Model (CAPM), portfolio diversification and risk management. Sharpe currently holds the Vanguard 500 Index Fund, but is considering a more active management strategy. Students must assess the risk of the two stocks she is considering adding to her portfolio. Students are provided with monthly stock returns and must calculate the standard deviations of the individual stocks and of the portfolios when one of the stocks is added to it. Students must calculate the stock's beta using regression and will learn that beta is the appropriate measure of risk to use in decision making since risk-averse investors do not hold stocks in isolation.

### **Shakey's Initial Public Offering: The Dilemma of Investing - Featured**

In early December 2016, a student member of the Philippine Fund of the finance lab at the Asian Institute of Management was wondering whether to invest in the initial public offering (IPO) of Shakey's Pizza Asia Ventures Inc. (Shakey's). Shakey's was the market leader in the full-service chain restaurants industry in the Philippines and would be the fourth company to be listed in the Philippine Stock Exchange. The IPO period was from December 2 to December 8, 2016, and the company was offering a total of 306 million



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shares. The student member must decide whether to buy Shakey's stock based on her estimate of the intrinsic value of Shakey's relative to the IPO price, Shakey's strategy and prior performance, and the attractiveness of the food service and restaurant industry.

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## Information Systems

### Ultrabrand's Journey to a Smarter Web Analytics Product Offering- Featured

In October 2014, the chief executive officer (CEO) of a high-end, invite-only digital branding firm was contemplating which (if any) web analytics service the company should offer to its clients. The CEO knew that in order to justify the high price his firm charged its executive and celebrity clientele, all ancillary services like web analytics reporting would have to be just as extravagant and just as functional as the core product—branded website design. With three web analytics options on the table, all with relatively similar characteristics yet vastly different price points, the firm had to identify the differentiated advantages of each option.

### Cloud Syzygy Technologies: Cloud-Based Computing- Featured

The president of Cloud Syzygy Technologies (CST) had recently returned from the Pacific Telecommunications Council conference, where he discussed ways in which cloud computing had transformed industries. He knew that in the future, the real opportunities lay in the cloud and not in traditional internal IT solutions. As the executive in charge of CST, he wished to develop a plan to grow the business, which would include a clear message to his customers about the merits of cloud computing. He recognized that cloud computing provided many opportunities and risks for corporations seeking to take advantage of new and innovative technologies. He was tasked with presenting a ranking and assessment of CST's new products to the board at the next meeting.

## **Xbed: The Dual-Sharing Platform Disrupting China's Hospitality Industry- [Featured](#)**

Xbed Technology Group (Xbed), a start-up that branded itself as an online hotel platform, was founded in 2015 with the aim of addressing the changing landscape of China's hospitality industry while coping with issues related to a customer-to-customer sharing economy model. By employing a dual-sharing model and utilizing state-of-the-art digital technologies, the company emerged as a disruptor in the market and expanded to 44 cities in China in just two years of development. As Xbed grew, it faced many challenges, including intense competition from both sharing economy players and traditional hotels. In 2017, as the company looked toward the future, its founder wondered about the future of hospitality services in China and what the company's strategic focus should be as it pursued its next phase of growth.

## **Google in China- [Best Seller](#)**

The case describes the circumstances surrounding the introduction of www.google.cn. In order to comply with Chinese government requirements, google.cn censors web results. This appears to contradict Google's stated philosophy and its mission to organize and make accessible the world's information. A public outcry ensues and Google is forced to defend its controversial decision. The case presents both sides of the debate and asks students to consider what they feel is right.

## **Drinks-Up! The Pitfalls of Digital Innovation- [Featured](#)**

In July 2016, in Philadelphia, a group of aspiring entrepreneurs had developed a proof-of-concept prototype for the Drinks-Up! mobile drinks-ordering app, a digital innovation designed to provide a better bar experience. The team had received an investment proposal that included a plan for app development and a partnership opportunity from the potential investor's company, and they were facing an investment decision: Was an agreement that would see the investor develop the app the right option to develop Drinks-Up!? If not, how much time and sweat equity was this really going to take? Was Drinks-Up! truly a disruptive innovation that was worth the risk?

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## Marketing

### **Exotic Expeditions Tanzania Ltd.: Competing in Highly Saturated Markets- New!**

Based in Mwanza, Tanzania, family-owned and operated Exotic Expeditions Tanzania Ltd. was a leading tour operator in East Africa. The company was purchased in December 2014 and experienced considerable success the following year. The owners felt that there was an opportunity for growth within the company and believed that the best way to realize this growth was to improve their marketing efforts and service offerings. The family wanted to remain profitable and reach the company's goal of offering the best service in the industry while increasing revenue by 25 per cent within the next three years. To do this, the owners had to reach a consensus on the best marketing plan to help them differentiate against numerous competitors and continue to deliver optimal service offerings.

### **Ippudo: Bringing Japan To Paris In a Bowl - New!**

In early January 2016, the chief strategy officer and his team at Ippudo, an expanding ramen restaurant operation, were tasked to formulate both marketing and customer service management strategies for the company's first ramen shop in France, which was due to open in Paris in late 2016. Ippudo, a famous ramen brand in Japan, started its global expansion in 2008, when it successfully established its presence in New York City. When it entered the US market, Ippudo changed its marketing mix and customer service approach to follow a strategy that incorporated Ippudo's corporate values with both Japanese and New York culture and norms. Moving forward, how should Ippudo's chief strategy officer position the new ramen restaurant in Paris? What marketing mix should Ippudo pursue? Should Ippudo change its product offerings to appeal to Parisians? And should Ippudo France's website follow the same concept used in New York, where the website served only to convey information?

### **SmartMoney: Digital Payments Strategy in India - New!**

On March 25, 2019, the head of business growth for SmartMoney, owned by the Indian conglomerate Smart Industries Limited, was expected by his company's management team to propose a strategy for capturing 10 per cent of India's digital payments market in financial year 2019–20. He knew that the

market was vast and fragmented and that he was working with a platform business, where fast mobilization was a key factor. SmartMoney already had market presence, resources, and the required expertise to be competitive on the merchant side of the industry over the long term. Therefore, the immediate and considerable challenge was how to mobilize the consumer side, where the company faced various well-established and aggressive incumbents. To thoroughly assess the market, the head of business growth had to integrate a great deal of available information. He would need to select the right entry strategy and target a consumer segment, offering appropriate incentive schemes to attract business. His challenge was to devise a strategy and build a stable, substantial customer base that would deliver the desired results to sustain long-term growth for both SmartMoney and its parent company.

### **Ather Energy: Motivating India for Smart Electric Scooters- New!**

In April 2019, Carl's Jr. Restaurants LLC (Carl's Jr.), an American fast-food restaurant chain, faced an important decision. The company was up against strong competition from both traditional players in the fast-food market and newer competitors in the fast-casual dining market. In 2017, Carl's Jr. had stopped using the provocative ads it had become known for, and in 2018, the company ended a long co-branding relationship with Hardee's Restaurants LLC. Due in part to these changes, the company was struggling to form its own identity. Carl's Jr.'s chief executive officer needed to develop a sustainable competitive advantage in order to make the company relevant again in the minds of consumers.

### **Prosper: Marketing Fit - New!**

The co-founders of Prosper, an early-stage start-up offering a mobile application-based interview preparation and coaching service, were preparing a report for an upcoming meeting with private equity investors. The co-founders sought a CA\$1 million seed investment and had to choose where to allocate marketing funds. Should they bias the marketing mix toward students reached via educational institutions or families, or toward professionals making a career switch? They knew that success or failure would depend on their ability to craft a compelling narrative and lay out a realistic marketing plan that would lead to an increased user base and greater revenue growth.

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## Organizational Behaviour & Leadership

### **Comair South Africa: Team Coaching Taking Off- New!**

In May 2019, the head of Organizational Development and Talent for Comair Limited (Comair), was contemplating the dilemma of stimulating higher buy-in for team coaching—a program in formal leadership development emphasizing collaboration and shared responsibility. The long-standing chief executive officer (CEO) had just resigned. He had focused over the last few years on enabling a leadership style of collaboration where departmental silos would be removed and management structures would evolve to reflect a new way of working along functional rather than departmental lines. The head wondered how she could promote team coaching to a new CEO, and specifically, how she could help stimulate more interest and buy-in for team coaching. What could be done to help the teams that had undergone team coaching to sustain the newly learned behaviours, especially when the pressure was high?

### **Note on Leader Character and Organizational Culture- New!**

This note describes what leader character is, how leader character differs from leaders' personality traits and universal values, and how leader character relates to an organization's culture. Using Schein's classic definition of organizational culture, the note explains how leaders' strength of character can help to shape a culture of excellence. The note also follows Galbraith's model of organizational design to relate leaders' character to organizational-level constructs, such as strategy, structure, people, rewards, and processes.

## **Banishing Performance Ratings at iQmetrix- New!**

In 2018, Software development corporation iQmetrix Software Development Corp. (iQmetrix), headquartered in Vancouver, Canada, had experienced exponential growth and success over the past two decades. The company's head of People and Culture, was interested in the debate over the ideal performance appraisal process. After reading a few articles in the Harvard Business Review, she was considering dropping traditional performance appraisals and replacing them with written feedback only. To make an informed decision, she conducted a quasi-experiment by assigning employees to different performance evaluation conditions and then examined employee perceptions six months later to determine which evaluation format she should adopt company-wide.

## **Dolce & Gabbana: Racism, Stereotypes, or Being Funny?- New!**

On November 21, 2018, the Italian luxury fashion brand Dolce & Gabbana (D&G) cancelled a show that was scheduled to take place in Shanghai, China, after controversial video advertisements and private Instagram messages, allegedly sent by Stefano Gabbana himself, went viral. The videos were seen by many to be racist, and they resulted in subsequent boycotts by Chinese celebrities and consumers. As D&G struggled to regain market share in China and suffered huge financial losses, major Chinese e-commerce companies such as Alibaba Group Holding Limited and JD.com Inc. joined the boycott by dropping the brand from their platforms. The Chinese luxury market was large and growing, and experts warned that the brand's profits would suffer from this mistake. What mitigation strategy or actions could D&G undertake to repair the damage done to its reputation, especially in China?

## **Australia and New Zealand Banking Group: The Agile Transformation- New!**

In May 2019, Australia and New Zealand Banking Group (ANZ) had paused rapid expansion of its massive agile organizational transformation, trying to make the existing program work better. ANZ announced the decision to take the bank agile in May 2017, moving from the traditional command-and-control, risk-based, and process-driven hierarchy to collaborative teamwork. Such decisions came after not only competitive pressures from the disruptive entry of financial technology companies but also a series of internal scandals. Would the agile transformation be a solution for ANZ to respond to these external and internal challenges? How could ANZ be successfully transformed, given its corporate culture that had been deeply rooted for over 180 years?

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## Operations Management

### **Huawei: Struggling to Develop a More Sustainable Supply Network- New!**

From 2000 to 2019, the department of corporate social responsibility and global supplier management at Huawei Technologies Company Limited had been trying to engage hundreds of Chinese suppliers on sustainability. The department's effort included orchestrating multiple, diverse, sustainability initiatives, from auditing to contributing to the rollout of a self-assessment tool launched in 2012 by the British Telecom Group (BT). However, the auditing, even when delivered through a joint initiative established by international communications tech companies in 2013, seemed unlikely to cause pathbreaking development in Huawei's large and fragmented supply network. Initial experiences with the self-assessment tool were proving equally unsuccessful in introducing suppliers to more sustainable products and operations and stimulating engagement among them. Why were these initiatives failing to produce improvement? What else could be done to effectively and efficiently engage hundreds of Chinese suppliers on sustainability?

### **Project Destiny - Featured**

The president and chief executive officer of Romet Limited, was preparing for a project team meeting that would start at 1:00 p.m. that afternoon. It was Friday April 27, 2018, and he had just finalized the architectural design and layout for the company's new plant. The lease for the current plant would expire at the end of that year, and he was reviewing the activities required to complete the facility relocation project. The plant relocation was named "Project Destiny." Recognizing that extending the completion beyond the end of the lease was impossible, he was concerned about being able to complete the project on schedule without increasing costs.

### **World Tailors: Stitching Together a Plan for Growth- Featured**

The director of World Tailors, a small Canadian manufacturer that employed immigrant and refugee women to sew high-quality aprons, napkins, and market bags, wondered how all of the needed products would be completed for the 2017 December holiday season. During the past seven years, demand for

World Tailor products had steadily increased from craft markets, online orders, and retail stores. How could the capacity of its current operations be better managed and expanded? World Tailors was more than a local manufacturer: it supported courageous women, who had recently arrived in Canada as refugees and immigrants, to integrate into the community. Would reorganizing as a business co-operative better balance the unique social mission of the organization?

## **Half a Century of Supply Chain Management at Wal-Mart-Best Seller**

In 2012, a stock analyst was preparing a recommendation on what his firm, a large U.S. investment house, should do with its stake in Wal-Mart Stores, Inc. Wal-Mart, the world's largest retailer, was trying to recover from a series of missteps that had seen competitors such as dollar stores and Amazon.com close the performance gap. Competitors had copied many aspects of Wal-Mart's distribution system, including cross-docking products, eliminating storage time in warehouses, positioning stores around distribution centres, and widespread adoption of electronic data interchange (EDI), as well as ordering and shipping from suppliers.

## **Kamaths Ourtimes Ice Creams: Eliminating the Bottleneck Effect - Featured**

Kamaths Ourtimes Ice Creams Pvt. Ltd., a company located in Mumbai, India, manufactured and distributed ice cream under the brand Natural Ice Cream. The company specialized in using natural flavours in its products, a fact that helped it carve a niche for itself among health-conscious customers. In April 2017, after witnessing great demand for its ice cream across the country, the company's board of directors asked the director of operations to draft a plan to expand manufacturing capacity. As his first step towards this expansion, the director wanted to study the current operations and address any inefficiencies. One aspect that caught his attention was the recent delay in product delivery. Based on his experience, he did not see the company's capacity to fulfill current orders as the reason for delays. Therefore, he decided that the problem was related to the process flow. He would have to find ways to streamline the process to reduce or eliminate all delays in delivery.

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## General Management and Strategy

### **Amazon Marketplace: Sustaining Strategic Innovation- [New!](#)**

The vice-president of new product development for Amazon Marketplace was preparing to propose the Seller Fulfilled Prime (SFP) initiative at Amazon.com Inc. (Amazon)'s three-year planning session. The SFP would allow Amazon Marketplace sellers who had proven their ability to meet Prime customers' expectations for exceptional service to provide Prime shipping benefits for products that the sellers fulfilled themselves rather than through the Fulfillment by Amazon process. Because the vice-president did not yet have extensive data on the effects of his proposal, he had to work with an interdisciplinary team to determine the potential benefits and challenges associated with this initiative.

### **Daimler: Motoring at the Speed of China- [New!](#)**

This case is set in 2018 in China and follows Daimler's efforts to compete in the Chinese automotive market amidst fast paced changes which are underpinned by state driven efforts at fostering innovation. Testing its leverage as the world's largest and most profitable auto market, China is aggressively pushing foreign and domestic auto manufacturers towards new and ambitious targets for electrification. At the same time, Daimler has to be responsive to the particular tastes of auto consumers in China, especially their preferences for on-line connectivity which are creating space for players like Tencent, Alibaba, and Baidu to become real competition, threatening traditional car companies' ability to control the car interface.

### **Nashwork: How to Solve the Equilibrium Problem - [New!](#)**

Nashwork was founded in July 2013 in Beijing and developed into the largest co-working space company in China by focusing on rapid expansion and internal growth. Nashwork received A-round financing, which was followed by B-round financing one year later, before a series of problems surfaced in the basic operations of the company. By 2017, after three rough years building its customer base and occupancy, the main problem facing Nashwork

was its dated and incompatible internal operations system. The company had to resolve issues with the company's organizational structure, staff, and skill sets to support the company's strategic transformation.

### **JD.Com: Responding to a CEO Crisis - New!**

In August 2018, the founder and chief executive officer of JD.com, one of China's largest e-commerce sites, was accused of sexual assault and was arrested. He denied wrongdoing and was released less than a day later. One week after his return to China, JD.com's share value hit a 19-month low. In November 2018, the company announced that its customer base had shrunk for the first time since 2014. The impact from the investigation into the alleged assault was unclear. However, the incident took place against the backdrop of the Me Too movement, a time when both traditional and social media were used to publicly launch accusations of sexual harassment and abuse, often against powerful celebrities. The sexual assault accusation complicated the almost singular level of power the founder had over his organization. According to JD.com's corporate bylaws, no board meetings could take place without his presence. What options did the company have to regain market confidence? What strategies could JD.com adopt to minimize impact from the incident? With the founder at the centre of an international scandal, who was responsible to oversee crisis management at JD.com?

### **Virgin Galactic: Diffusion of Innovation in Space Tourism?- New!**

In December 2018, US-based Virgin Galactic LLC (Virgin Galactic), a commercial space tourism company founded by Sir Richard Branson, launched its first successful crewed test spacecraft. The company's goal was to launch suborbital space tourism in 2019. However, experts and critics voiced concerns that Virgin Galactic's space tourism program could have adverse environmental and health effects. A prominent astronaut also considered Branson's space program to be a marketing gimmick aimed at ultra-rich consumers. Branson believed that Virgin Galactic caused less environmental pollution than conventional air travel and with time would become affordable. Could Branson make space tourism a feasible reality in the long term? Was Branson right to claim that space tourism would become affordable over time? Should he pursue multiple business opportunities, such as intercontinental space travel and supporting research and development projects, along with space tourism?

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## Management Science

### **Glitz Investments- New!**

An investment manager at Glitz Investments, a firm based in the United States with a focus on the entertainment industry, wanted to identify potential blockbuster movies in the Indian film industry for the firm's potential investment purposes. The investment manager received a report compiled by analysts at the firm indicating that Bollywood would be an attractive industry for investment. The firm's analysts had collected data but could the manager determine a quantitative relationship between box office performance and the factors the team had identified? Could Glitz Investments choose movies based on this analysis alone? The investment manager's boss was looking for more specific data on which to base the firm's investment decisions.

### **Manipal Power Laundry: Washing Out of Business- New!**

The owner of Manipal Power Laundry asked his nephew, an MBA student, for advice on the business. The company's operational inefficiencies had led to high operating costs over time. Coupled with regulatory price caps, the situation made the business unsustainable. The owner asked his nephew to provide a solution that would benefit the company both in the short term and over the long term. After observing the various processes, collecting data, and interviewing employees, the nephew decided to use process flow analysis to help the company optimize its operations.

### **Predicting Automobile Prices Using Neural Networks- New!**

The chief marketing officer (CMO) at an automobile agency was looking at a list of car model features, which he had received from the manufacturing plant. He was expected to provide the manufacturer's suggested retail prices of the cars to dealers the following week and had to decide on the base prices. The CMO asked a data scientist at the research lab to predict prices using the data of past car models. Each car model had different features that could affect the price. The data scientist decided to use feed-forward neural networks as a tool for predicting the prices of new models. After comparing different prediction models, he also wanted to determine which prediction model was suitable for car manufacturing plants.

### **RBC: Social Network Analysis- Featured**

In October 2013, the Royal Bank of Canada (RBC), Canada's largest bank, hired a new head of Enterprise Fraud Strategy, a department tasked with protecting RBC's global customers from fraud. The department head's immediate priority was to prevent fraudulent transactions by RBC's own customers—a phenomenon called first-party fraud—by implementing a burgeoning technology called social network analysis (SNA). The technology used predictive analytics and big data to forecast the occurrence of first-party fraud. The head of Enterprise Fraud Strategy had three primary questions: First, how should SNA be used to bring down the ratio of fraud alerts to actual fraud at RBC? Second, how should the cost of maintaining SNA protocols be reduced? Finally, how should the issues around systemic performance of SNA be resolved?

### **Sika: Optimizing The APAC Epoxy Flooring Supply Chain- Featured**

In mid-2017, the regional head of Operations and Supply Chain at Sika AG, a Swiss specialty chemicals leader that developed solutions for building and automotive industries, faced a new challenge in the company's epoxy flooring supply chain. She was tasked with identifying a robust solution that would both satisfy a shortened lead time and provide spare capacity to accommodate future growth. How should she proceed with these tasks?

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