

USABILITY OF ONLINE BUSINESS REGISTRATION IMPROVISATION AS CONGO-BRAZZAVILLE RE-BRANDING TOOL

Alain Michael Momo

Cape Peninsula University of Technology
South Africa

Momomike161@gmail.com

Michael Twum-Darko (PhD)

Cape Peninsula University of Technology
South Africa

darkom@cput.ac.za

ABSTRACT

There is growing concern that Congolese business' inability to compete in a fiercely competitive international economy spells ruin. Thus, the study uses bricolage and information systems (IS) improvisation as a lens to explore the use of online business registration as a means to rebrand government services. Building and achieving brand status is challenging, however; public service organisations and country of any size with a name can become high status brands. The research problem is that if sufficient attention is not given to reconcile IS improvisation with other organisational dimensions such as expertise, team work, culture, communication and training in the business registration process, it is a foregone conclusion that the automatic assumption that improvisation alone creates brand image and identify might not yield desired results. The main objective of this study was to determine the role of online business registration in service branding. The overarching research question is (a) how does the DTI Congo-Brazzaville intend to improvise business registration process using e-commerce technology as branding tool? The study is significant in the way that it boosts DTI Congo's brand image; with potentials to improve the country's ranking in terms of ease of doing business; and extends previous research by examining the usability of online business registration system as branding tool in developing countries. The study focused less on merely identifying IS improvisation benefits; or in solving DTI Congo problems. However, the focal point was creating awareness for DTI Congo to weight current study outcomes, available resource and contemporary e-commerce technologies in order to make informed decision in terms of technology adoption.

The investigation was done at the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) in Congo-Brazzaville using a mixed methodology. A survey questionnaire on a sample size of $N = 260$ from a total of 800 DTI full-time employees was used to elicit information by requiring respondents to answer objective questions. A focus group comprising of five full-time employees selected according to their level of IT awareness and position were invited for discussions to gain a broader understanding of the research problem. Observation in the form field work was also done to experience what it is like when there is no other alternative to register a business but to follow the only lengthy and bureaucratic process of traditional business registration. It was evident from the data that 74.2% of respondents agreed that an online business registration system adoption can re-brand the organisation for innovative public service delivery.

KEYWORDS

Online Business Registration, Information Systems Improvisation, Bricolage, Nation Branding, Department of Trade and Industry

1. INTRODUCTION

Congo-Brazzaville is known for being at the bottom of the pile when it comes to the ease of doing business ratings. The situation causes concern especially as there is growing awareness that Congolese business' inability to compete in a fiercely competitive international economy spells ruin (Wasserman, 2001; p. 6).

A study conducted in 2011 about the benefits of online business registration for Congolese immigrants reveals that Information System (IS) improvisation in the process is a catalytic factor for Congolese immigrants to return home (Momo & Ukpere, 2011).

Until recently, the only way to have a business registered at DTI Congo is to travel to Brazzaville, confront bureaucratic procedures and wait one or two months for certificate of incorporation. More than that, even though the Internet has dramatically changed the role of technology in business world, DTI Congo's website <http://www.congo-info.com/minister/35> does not offer any e-commerce tool. Regardless of multiple efforts undertaken to re-brand DTI Congo as the leader of service delivery in the Central Africa region, the country is still ranked 185th out 189 countries for ease of doing business (Doing Business, 2016).

There are two major challenges when registering business offline in Congo-Brazzaville. The first one is the plethora of business registration numbers issued to the applicant and the second is lack of pre-established norms in some economic sectors. Currently, successful applicant would be issued with four numbers namely: merchant number, business number, taxation number and real estate number (Yétéla, 2012). It is agreeable that such plethora can potentially create opportunism and undermine brand image of both DTI and the country. In some instances, entrepreneurs engaged in the process do not know what the requirements for a particular sector of the economy are. For example, the lack of pre-established norms and required documents when applying for an agricultural and marine transport business registration undermines the positioning of the country as investment destination (PMC Cabinet, 2006).

Arguably, branding precedes advertising, marketing, or public relations owing to the fact that one must first create brand, then raises awareness of it. Nation branding is the country's reputation and image among its citizens, potential investors and visitors. Considering that brand name is a perception that resides in the minds of stakeholders, both countries and companies can be branded. Thus, branding a country involves creating mental structures enabling stakeholders to perceive competitive advantage about the country in a way that clarifies their investment decision making and, in the process, adds value to the destination (Heaton, 2017).

Country's first indication of existence is its name. The key to branding a nation as investment destination is that stakeholders perceive attracting differences among nations in the same region. Building and achieving brand status is challenging, however; public service organisations and country of any size with a name can become high status brands (HBS Marketing, 2009).

From the above, research objective was to determine the role of online business registration in service branding. The overarching research question is (a) how does the DTI Congo-Brazzaville intend to improvise business registration process using e-commerce technology as branding tool?

The study is significant in the way that it boosts DTI Congo's brand image; with potentials to improve the country's ranking in terms of ease of doing business; and extends previous research by examining the usability of online business registration system as branding tool in developing countries.

The study focused less on merely identifying IS improvisation benefits; or in solving DTI Congo problems. However, the focal point was creating awareness for DTI Congo to weight current study outcomes, available resource and contemporary e-commerce technologies in order to make informed decision in terms of technology adoption. In line with research objective, question and significance, problem conceptualisation in the lens of IS improvisation in business registration process is discussed next.

2. PROBLEM CONCEPTUALISATION

Bricolage and improvisation as the underpinning concepts were used as a lens through which to understand and interpret the usability of online business registration in service branding at the government Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) of Congo-Brazzaville. Many researchers from Levi-Strauss (1966) to Smith and Blundel (2014); and Molnar (2009) documented the role of improvisation and bricolage in solving different problems in the organisation. Ciborra (1999) enforced that Information Systems (IS) improvisation and bricolage being inter-related; are also another solution for branding contemporary organisations. Indeed, bricolage, comes from Latin “*bricola*”, and was adapted in French and translated in English as “tinkering”, while improvisation being in Latin as “*proviso*”, translated in English as “providing something in advance”. There are numerous applications and meanings of improvisation in different contexts. For example, in the context of firefighting and rescuing car passengers caught in road accident, when being trained, firefighters normally practice cutting cars with old models. However, in real-life scenario, cars are different in models, size and features. Vera and Crossan (2005) recall that in terms of air bags, car manufacturers do not tell firefighters in advance about their new standards so that they can prepare themselves. Hence, a firefighter said that:

“Every time we have people trapped in cars, we have to make a decision in the moment and find a way to get them out of the car”.

In that context, firefighters came up with a non-conventional instrument to save the life of a heavy person caught in road accident and unable to come out of the car. That is improvisation. Smith and Blundel (2014) argue from the above-mentioned example that improvisation is “*the inverse of foresight and planning*”. In the same way, one agrees that improvisation means “*without previous planning*”; and Ciborra (1999) alludes that improvisation also means “*not seen ahead of time*”.

Thus, the research problem is that if sufficient attention is not given to reconcile IS improvisation with other organisational dimensions such as expertise, team work, culture, communication and training in the business registration process, it is a foregone conclusion that the automatic assumption that improvisation alone creates brand image and identify might not yield desired results.

Figure 1 depicts how the lens of improvisation and bricolage were used to study the social phenomenon based on the awareness from Jazz in order to frame the research problem. This theory increased researcher’s awareness for interconnections and of the broader significance of data; and enabled the researchers to see the forest, not just a single tree.

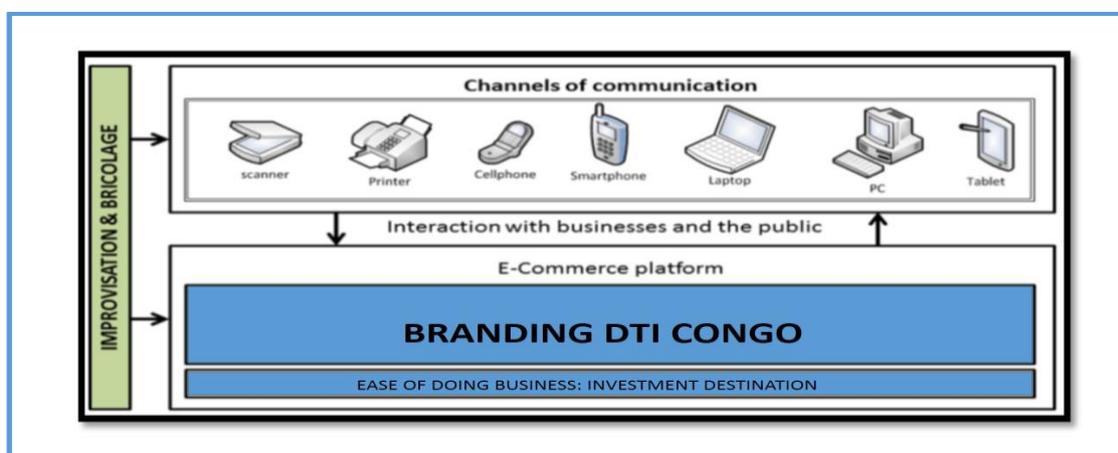


Figure 1: Problem Conceptualisation of IS Improvisation as Congo Branding Tool

3. LITERATURE REVIEW

Currently, there is a limited literature combining IS improvisation, branding and advertising to re-brand Congolese service organisations (Ramnarain & Govender, 2013). Nneka (2015; p. 17) argues that this limitation could be due to inadequate expertise and creativity from the improviser to react swiftly in the process.

However, a study conducted by IZF (2015) indicates there are only five marketing firms in Congo-Brazzaville. Momo (2016) argues that companies and DTI Congo should invest in the area of digital marketing to promote corporate brand image and identity.

Considering the increased Internet usage in Congo-Brazzaville from 1.9 % in 2008 to 6.6 % in 2015 (The World Bank, 2008; The World Bank, 2015), Koko and Koelane (2013) argue that IS improvisation could be catalytic to the spread of electronic Word of Mouth (e-WoM) and enable organisations to migrate from paid media to earn media. Indeed that e-WoM would resonate with new product launch information, for instance in the Congo, owing to the fact that the link for such information would come from a trusted source, which could be DTI Congo's e-commerce Website.

Even though talented musicians from Olomide to Wemba of Congo emerged from improvisation on the stage (Congo Vision, 2015); it is arguable that IS improvisation is not to be assumed to be automatically associated with innovation and performance (Radio France International, 2015). Should there be, such direct transposition may rely heavily on descriptions of improvisation, which is termed as improvisation metaphor (Chelariu et al., 2002). Arguably, improvisation alone does not necessarily generate innovative results in the organisation. However, there are other managerial dimensions to consider for the effectiveness of improvisation (Teo & Pian, 2003; p. 79).

3.1. Managerial Dimensions for Effective IS Improvisation

The first dimension to consider for the effectiveness of IS improvisation is *team expertise*. Faraj and Sproull (2000) argue that expertise encompasses specialised skills and knowledge that team members bring to the team work. Similarly, Nacioglu (2016) posits that field-relevance and job-related critical skill rely on team members' reasoning, perception, experience and education. Using musical concert as an example to explain team expertise, experienced musicians like Wemba and Olomide on the stage create a perception that improvisation is easy owing to the fact that they dedicate long hours of rehearsal before performing (Vukasovic, 2013; p. 57).

The second dimension of effective IS improvisation is *team work*. Although improvisation is unlikely, it still requires infrastructure, practice, expertise, and knowledge of the rules of collaboration. Team improvisation is not just a function of having the "right" expertise on the team. Rather, expertise must be coordinated within the team and its interdependencies must be managed effectively. The success of Koffi Olomide's improvisational performances depended on good team spirit of the entire orchestra because choreography performance depends on the interdependent work of other musicians and dancers (Secchi et al., 2016). When Olomide performs on the stage, every musician from the orchestra is responsible for the other; musicians look after one another and take the pressure off each other rather than increase it. A successful performance of Olomide is a collaborative creation that cannot be understood by simply analysing every musician of the orchestra individually. Similarly, teamwork skills of team members in the organisation associated with quality improvisation include trust among members, a common goal, a shared responsibility, a common vocabulary, and the ability both to lead and to follow (Molnar, 2009).

The third dimension of effective IS improvisation is *experimental culture*. The improvisational process in teams developing a new product requires a context that supports team members' creative and spontaneous nature (Vera & Crossan, 2005; p. 209). For

example if managers want team members to free-associate and embrace improvisation in new product development, then they have to create an environment in which employees are not going to be punished for mistakes made when trying to develop new products. To ensure this environment, team members would rely on the principle of “agree, accept, and add” and to “make do” with whatever they have at hand (Vera & Crossan, 2005; p. 209). Similarly, Secchi et al. (2016) argue that blocking team members’ ideas is a denial of the possibility of encounter. Hence, the rule of agreement creates a context in which team members improvising are required to accept, support, and enhance the ideas expressed by others. It can be argued that blocking the ideas of other team members could be considered as form of aggression because answering “no” to new ideas erases any possibility of new products to be developed (Vera & Crossan, 2005; p. 209).

The fourth dimension of effective IS improvisation is *real-time information and communication*. A basic rule of improvisation in music performance on the stage requires musicians to be attentive to what is happening around them, meaning to be “present” and alert (Secchi et al., 2016). When Koffi Olomide’s choreographers perform a common move based on the song rhythms in the moment, insufficient attention and alertness to the rhythms coming from fellow choreographers leads to contradictory moves; creates conflict and frustration of both the performers and the audience. If one choreographer is planning ahead and thinking about the next direction to go, and is not paying attention to what is going on in the moment, he will miss opportunities for discovery. Similarly, organisations and work teams that want to become more improvisational need to learn to be attentive and alert to what is happening in the *now* of the firm. However, this requires infrastructures that provide teams with relevant real-time information in the context of market dynamics. Vera and Crossan (2005; p. 208) define real-time information as available business data for which there is no fall back time between facts and reporting.

The fifth and last dimension of successful IS improvisation is *training*. Based on the practice of Congolese musicians and choreographers, the last dimension is that team members in an organisation cannot only learn from the principles of Olomide’s choreographers and translate them to organisational business operations; they rather need to improve the effectiveness of their improvisational process through training that addresses the elements needed to improvise (Vera & Crossan, 2005; p. 209). Given the above, one can argue that training not only has the capacity to increase employees’ creativity, spontaneity, expertise, and teamwork quality; but also creates the context that supports improvisation, namely experimental culture, real-time information, communication, and transactive memory. Vera and Crossan (2005; p. 209) emphasise that training in improvisation needs to start by developing an understanding of what improvisation is and positioning it as a recommended choice when facing circumstances of urgency and uncertainty in the new product development process. Indeed, training is positively related to the incidence of improvisation. Furthermore, it is arguable that the applicability of improvisation theory in the organisation correlates with e-commerce implementation.

3.2. Online Business Registration and Organisation Branding

Branding is regarded as a promise of quality service delivery for distinctive product or service (Momo, 2017). Arguably, online business registration adoption at the government department of trade and industry could be perceived as brand identity for the department, promoting product’s personality by using IS improvisation to instil brand loyalty amongst entrepreneurs.

Organisations and countries with strong brand built familiarity between product or service and customers, which makes selling easier. Thus, customers are more likely to buy Coca cola drinks in supermarket, and tourists would easily choose South Africa as holiday

destination in Africa. One of the reasons is that both Coca cola and South Africa have invested extensively in the development of latest IS infrastructure; and constantly innovating. In this context, it is arguable that branding can be perceived as strategic investment. Thus, branding leads to improved communication when engaging with customers, and promote internationalisation of organisation vision and mission (PwC, 2012).

Internalisation and integration of country as brand leads to the brand promise being lived by government employees of that country, and being upheld at all points of contact for better service delivery to customers (Browning, 2016). A country's IS infrastructure development at the DTI has the potentials to enable both customers and the DTI employees to live the brand as illustrated in Figure 2.

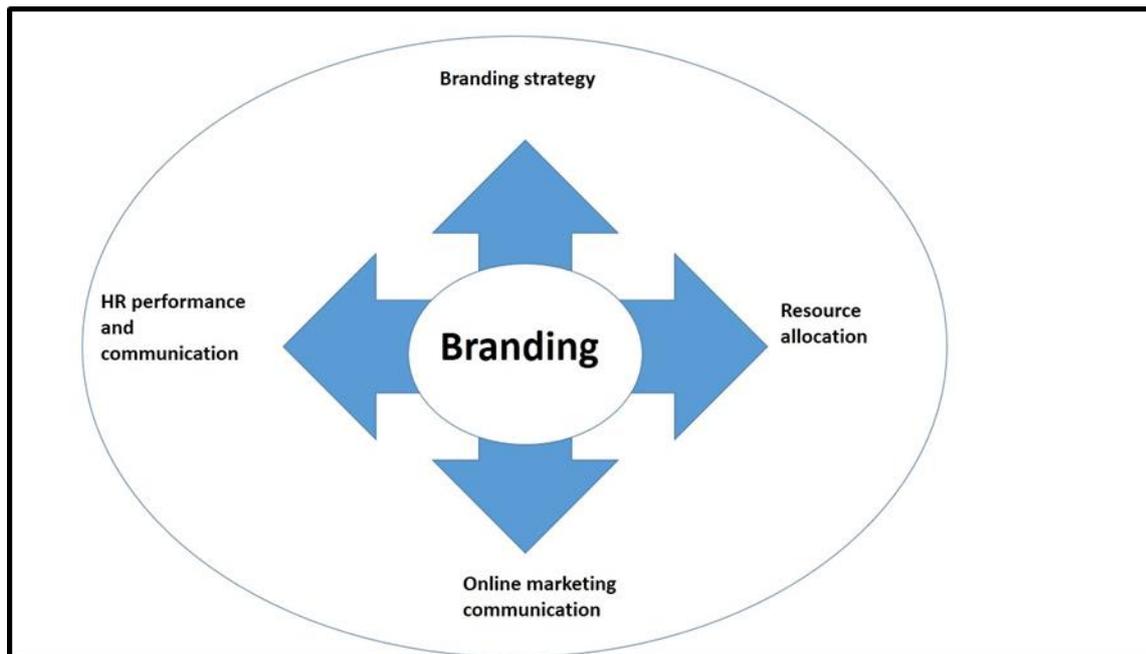


Figure 2: Branding Service Organisation

From Figure 2 it is arguable that branding can be central to the organisation or country strategic planning because it creates various benefits in areas such as online marketing communication, improvisational resource allocation, human resource performance and branding strategy, reflecting in brand promise (Andreasen & Kotler, 2003).

According to Kotler and Lee (2007), with the use of the internet, branding provides greater leverage of marketing resources for the organisation owing to the fact that branding strategies are not restricted to advertising. Indeed a strong brand can spend less on marketing and save in operating costs. Similarly, whether in the public or not-for-profit sectors it is not uncommon for the product offering to be an idea, a cause, or a service. Using the Internet to promote these intangible offerings can often be challenging. However, branding enables both sectors to make intangible product or service more tangible, thus easier to differentiate from competition and communicate with your target audience. More than that, branding can enable organisations to move into new product lines. Arguably, the use of existing brand as a platform for new products or services brings expectations and value to the new products because of the equity established and the positive association between the established brand and new product line. Another positive aspect of branding in the organisation is that any product or service being offered can ultimately be copied, but a brand cannot. Competitors' inability to recreate a brand increases the organisation's long-term sustainability and enables brand equity; therefore, effective brand equity would lead to high brand loyalty and identity.

Building and implementing brand name can be lengthy process. It is agreeable that brand identity efforts start with the development of a business model that takes into account the organisation's mission, vision, employees and customers' input. An organisation's brand identity process would consider internal and external research, the development of potential branding models, validation of proposed model, timeframe period of implementation (Pisano, 2016).

Whether public or private organisation, building brand identity would request internal assessment of brand's present position and that of competitors. Private organisation competes with firms offering similar products and targeting same market niche, however, government department would compete with other departments in terms of quality service delivery. For example, in South Africa Woolworth competes with Shoprite, Checkers, Spar and Pick n Pay in the retail while government department such as the enforcement competes with the home affairs in terms of quality service delivery to citizens (Pisano, 2016).

The process of building and implementing brand identity requests that organisations conduct brand identity assessment. The assessment would indicate the existing state, gaps and future desire state of the brand. Brand identity assessment would also determine where the brand stands in the mind of the target audience. The argument in Figure 3 suggests that only once the existing state of brand is determined, that the organisation would make decisions about where the brand should be, and how to get there (Pisano, 2016).

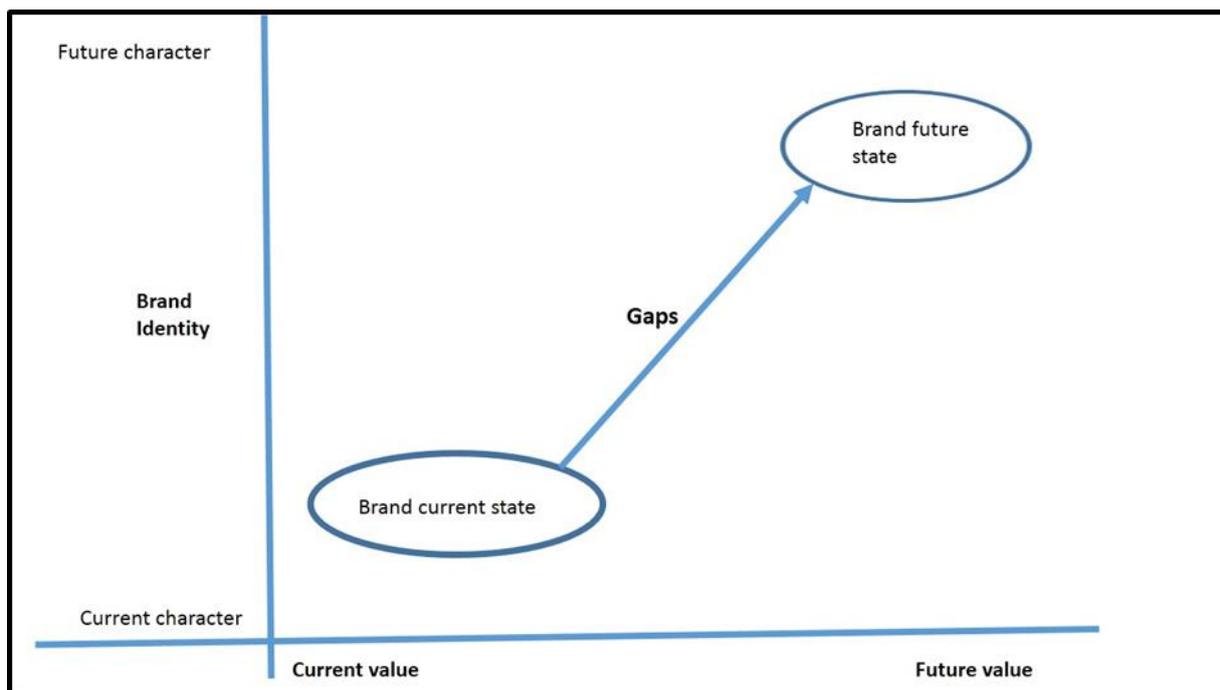


Figure 3: Brand Identity

Figure 3 articulates organisation's brand desired identity which translates the way the target audience would think, feel, and react when they are exposed to the brand. Arguably, Figure 3 illustrates organisation's opportunity to envision the target audience's response. Thus, the path of brand identity requires that managers in the organisation identify gaps between the reality and the ideal situations. More than that, the success of a brand is positively related to the inclusion of all stakeholders who believe in the building process. Senior, middle and lower managers, full-time, part-time employees and contractors including volunteers should live integrated brand promise in the organisation's culture. Arguably, the buy-in from all stakeholders relies on an investment in hiring and training; which plays a key

role in the implementation of the branding identity. According to Andreasen and Kotler (2003), this task should never be neglected because staff in improvisational organisations are the ones who carry out the positioning and therefore can easily undermine even the best branding initiative. Furthermore, it is argued that getting the buy-in from all stakeholders (internal and external) in the process of building brand identity differentiates an average brand and a great one.

Brand translates meaning about organisation's offerings. Thus, all the stakeholders should support and integrate the brand. For example, if a government department would like to brand themselves as tech savvy and convey to clients that they deliver services electronically, therefore, everything from letter heads to website should reflect that they are tech savvy; yet staff to support and emulate such image.

Currently, managers can utilise the advantages of the Internet to brand public and non-for profit organisations. Great brand associates name, slogan, logo and colours with consistent use of characters, music, signage or packaging as core elements of the brand. Andreasen and Kotler (2003) argue that the Internet has the potentials to promote the six factors guiding the selection of strong brand: memorable, meaningful, likeable, transferable, adaptable and protectable.

Memorable brand is easily recalled or recognised. For example, short and catchy brand names and phrases such as Click It or Ticket are easily recalled. Marketers can index brand name in search engine such as Google for consumers to recover it, should they spontaneously forget. *Meaningful* brand announces the product or service to the target audience. Internet has the potentials to timeously provide relevant information intended to invite the audience to accept or reject the product. *Likeable brand* has aesthetic and design appeal. Brand's website has the potential to propose brand elements both virtually and verbally; thus making it likeable. It is agreeable that Internet has potentials to make brands transferable. Arguably, *transferable* brands are able to use brand elements under consideration to introduce new products or service in the same or different categories (Pisano, 2016). For example, a government department might introduce online business registration system; and further introduce another service such as online tax declaration. *Adaptable brands* remain updatable in the long run. The association of the Internet and branding has the potentials to combine all brand elements and make it relevant in future. *Protectable* brands would be legally protected inside and outside of country jurisdiction. The use of the Internet creates brand awareness worldwide. As such, brand would be known and competitors would avoid duplicating it. Generic brand can be used by anyone; however, some brand names: Kleenex, Xerox, and Jell-O retained their trademark rights and never became generic.

In general, any organisation either governmental or non-governmental needs branding. However, both governmental and non-governmental agencies face shared across and specific challenges when implementing a branding strategy. Branding is senior management team initiative. However, in some organisations, branding fall under marketing and communications functions. In such case, when marketers leave the organisation, the branding initiative would lose momentum because the senior management team had not bought into the branding initiative. Andreasen and Kotler (2003) share the view that momentum in branding should start from senior managers. The rationale is to keep enthusiasm and support of branding strategy even when marketers leave the organisation. Arguably, not only does senior management play a key role in branding strategy, they also need to be made aware and understand that branding is a long term process that requires long term commitment.

Developing and implementing e-commerce system which integrates branding strategy and IS improvisation would be much easier when employees are committed to the goals of the organisation. A study conducted by Centre of Excellence for Public Sector Marketing

(2009) in Canada about public sector branding reveals that Parks Canada employees and the Canadian Blood Services employees were much involved in branding efforts than Canada Post Corporation employees. The main reason was that employees at Parks Canada and the Canadian Blood Services were involved daily in branding efforts compared to Canada Post Corporation employees who were being briefed monthly about branding strategy.

Parks Canada and the Canadian Blood Services implemented a strategy to motivate employees, which aligned rewards systems, level of involvement in the brand building process, hiring and training practices according to brand promise. Organisation nature and employees status have the potentials to challenge branding strategy. Arguably, part-time and contractual employees would be difficult to motivate to live brand promise because of their temporary commitment to the organisation (Pisano, 2016). Thus, involving part-time and contractual employees in the early stage would be critical to the success of branding initiative. Further, organisational focus can represent a challenge in branding initiative. It is in the views of Andreasen and Kotler (2003) that every operations and finance driven organisation can impede branding strategy than marketing driven one. Therefore, seeking senior management involvement at early stage is crucial because early involvement of internal stakeholders is an opportunity for the organisation to gain a wide range of ideas and perspectives; as well as give employees a sense of ownership to the brand.

Government department and not-for profit organisation with strong corporate culture that need to change their image in terms of service delivery may find it challenging to reposition. It is difficult to establish a new brand when the organisation is strongly linked to a previous one. For example, the Red Cross, Canadian Blood Service, South African Revenue Service (SARS) and the DTI are illustrations of organisations that have a strong link to a brand that could be hard to disassociate with. Brand repositioning strategies would require more resource allocation in order to engrave new image in the mind of customers. Similarly, government legislation, bureaucracy and organisation shortcomings create new challenges for public sector branding.

3.3. Challenges of Service Branding at DTI Congo

The first service branding challenge at DTI Congo-Brazzaville is *the plethora of registration numbers for one registered business*. The applicant is issued with four registration numbers namely: merchant's number, business number, taxation number and real estate number (Yétéla, 2012). The lengthy process for each registration number is time consuming the waiting time-frame often frustrates entrepreneurs. Further, attribution of four registration numbers to one business creates confusion and opportunistic behaviour; hence erodes relational norms in the value chain.

The second challenge is that *entrepreneurs engaged in the business registration process do not always know what the requirements are in some sectors of the economy*. For example, it is not known with precision how much one should pay to register business when applying for an agricultural and marine transport business. As such potential businesses would find it difficult to anticipate cost and achieve competitive advantage (Siemens, 2017).

Either Close Corporation or Proprietary Limited Company (Pty), operations requirements including business registration, product design, production, marketing, delivery and customer support constitute cost position strategy (Siemens, 2017). DTI Congo fails to create cost advantage for its customers, which should derive from its potential centralised e-commerce systems.

More than that, from Figure 4 one can argue that a SMEs' value chain process is divided into two main activities namely primary and support (Fundacio Bit, 2016). Value chain process comprises primary and support activities. Inbound logistics, operations,

outbound, marketing, and service fall under primary while infrastructure, human resource management, technology, and procurement represent support activities.

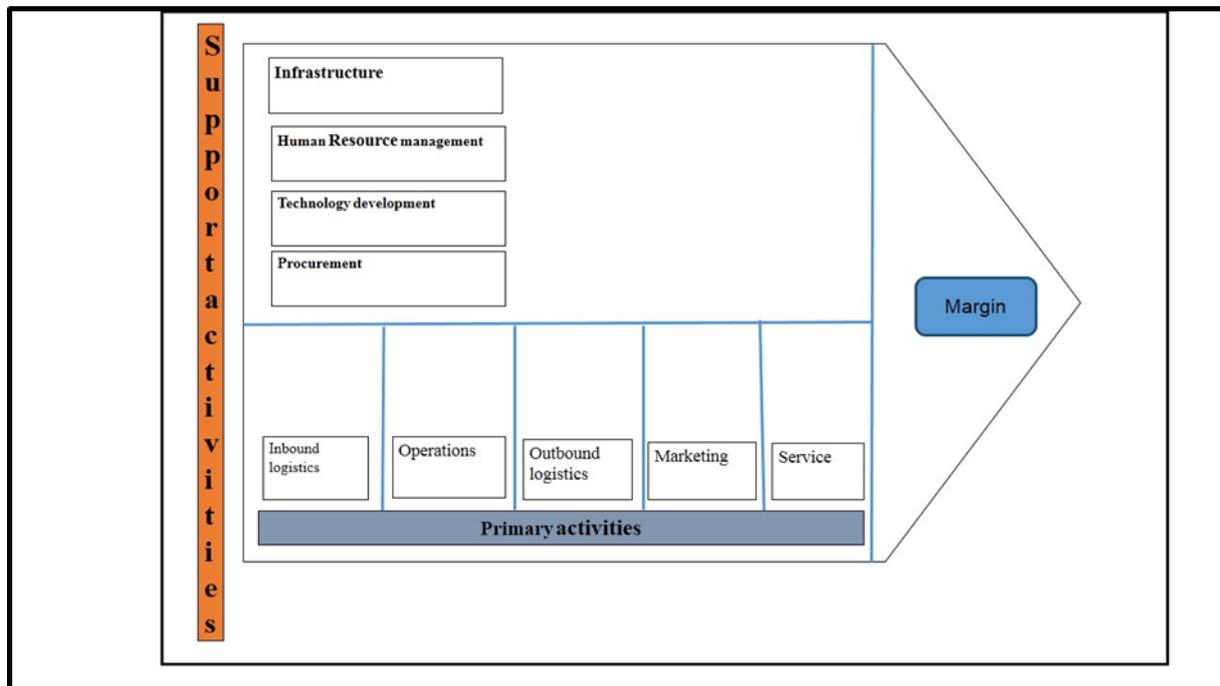


Figure 4: Online Business Registration Value Chain

The third service branding challenge is *DTI Congo's inability to introduce innovative product and influence customers in the supply chain at large scale*. DTI Congo's value chain system starts with business registration service. The service should be accessed electronically via an e-commerce package that could be considered as product. As such, the registration office represents upstream value chain with potentials to add value and deliver quality service to the SMEs. The Registrar not only would deliver service but could influence SMEs performance if its service comes in innovative way. From the above, Congo-Brazzaville government was heavily criticised recently for introducing drastic measures against foreign owned businesses (Congo Liberty, 2014). The reports criticised the reforms, which fuelled resentment against foreign owned businesses. Arguably, simply enforcing drastic measures against foreign own businesses would not enable local SMEs to create competitive advantage. Responding to critics, Yétéla (2012) indicated that

“SMEs in developing countries would only acquire sustained competitive advantage if governmental agencies re-brand themselves and offer extensive support that conveys innovation because drastic measures will only create competitive convergence amongst local SMEs instead of competitive advantage”

The fourth challenge is *lack of automated application dissemination in the primary activities of value chain*. The first step of DTI Congo value chain is inbound logistics; which is associated with the receipt and dissemination of business registration application submitted by the customer (entrepreneurs). The second step within inbound logistics is business operations, where the relevant directorate in the registrar office is concerned with inputs evaluation, which would determine whether the output is satisfactory, or not. The third step reflects outbound logistics, which consists of storing and distributing granted business permits and outcomes. The fourth step, which is related to marketing activities of the

registrar, would be associated with availability of front office staff to help customers in collecting the outcomes. When customers come to enquire for the outcomes, front office staff inform applicants whether the permit has been granted or not. If it was denied, they friendly explain the appeal process and the way in which customers could acquire the product (business permit). *The fifth and final step* of primary activities refers to service. It is the total productivity training associated with rendering of service in order to enhance and maintain the value of the service and the image of the registrar.

The fifth and last challenge of service branding at DTI Congo is *lack of efficient internal linkage between primary and support activities in the value chain*. Croom et al. (2000; p. 68-69) argue that business registration in developing countries is not merely a set of independent activities, rather a collection of interdependent ones. Such interdependence could be in the primary-primary level, e.g. inter-sectional and co-ordination; or in the primary-support level, e.g. data capturing and business support (Fundacio Bit, 2016). From the above analysis of SMEs' value chain and cost leadership strategy in developing countries, it is agreeable that internal linkage between primary and support activities would not be efficient. The reason is that within primary activities; customers should not only be satisfied but also be able to derive value from the manner in which business registration service has been rendered. That meant in the Congolese city of Pointe-Noire, where literally the concept of physical address is not enforced, the choice of the Internet to deliver electronically business permit to the applicants via their e-mails becomes an ideal alternative.

4. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

The nature of research dictated a mixed method where quantitative and qualitative methodologies were used (Leedy, 1989; p. 140). A focus group comprising of five (5) DTI Congo full-time employees selected according to their level of IT awareness and service branding were invited for discussion to gain a broader understanding of the research problem (Brace, 2004; p. 5). The outcome of the discussions was themes that informed the questionnaire and the sampling. The targeted population comprised of 800 DTI Congo full-time employees who live in Brazzaville and Pointe-Noire, including males and females. For efficiency purposes, this study stratified DTI Congo full-time employees from the part-time and sub-contractors as indicated in Figure 5. According to Struwig and Stead (2001; p. 122), stratified sampling technique enabled the possibility to divide members of the population into homogeneous subgroups (strata) before sampling. The rationale was to improve the representativeness of the sample by reducing sampling error. A sample size of N = 260 DTI Congo full-time employees from the total of 800 was used (Stat Trek, 2017). The study used survey questionnaire to elicit information by requiring respondents to answer objective questions (Brace, 2004; p. 9). Observation technique was also applied in the form of field work in Brazzaville and Pointe-Noire to experience what it is like when there is no other alternative to register a business but to follow the only lengthy and bureaucratic process of traditional business registration.

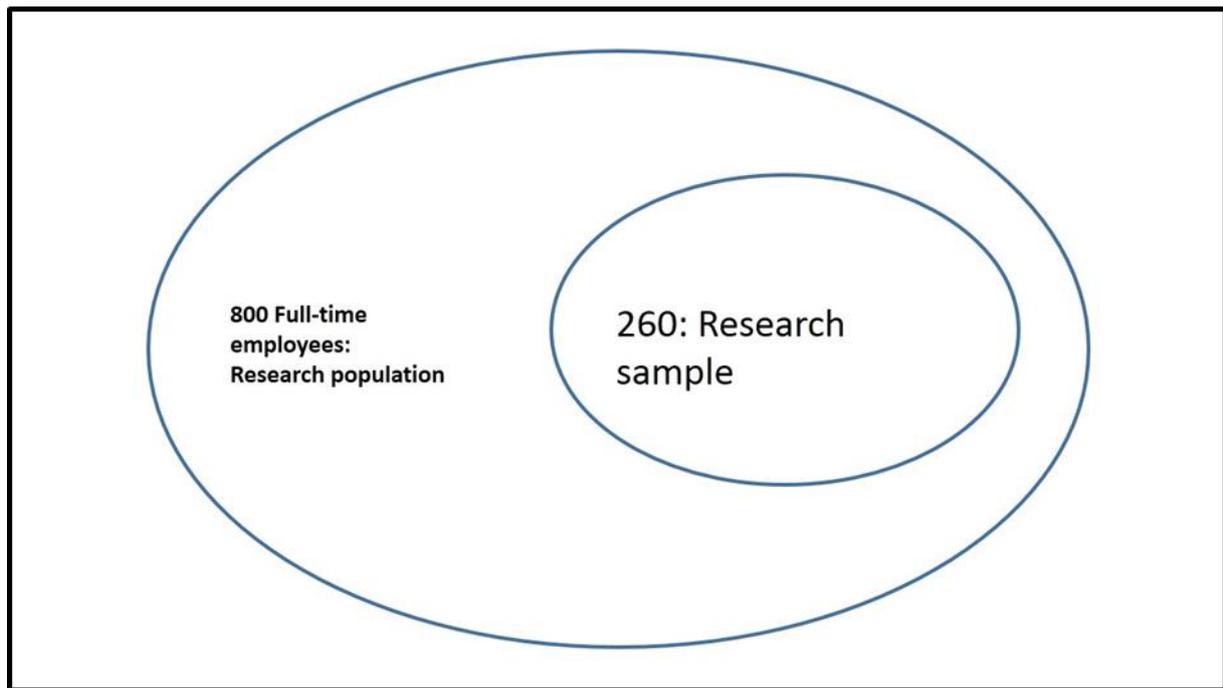


Figure 5: Sampling

Regarding the method for analysing the questionnaire, after data collection, the researcher processed the questionnaires by coding, which consisted of assigning each research variable a value and a label in an SPSS 22 database. Hence, it was necessary to identify the e-commerce value chain factors before analysis. During the data analysis, each variable category was given a numerical code, which represents answers given to each question. However, the questions, which used “yes” and “no” answers were assigned numbers (1=yes and 2=no); whereas statement questions, which used a four-point Likert scale, were assigned numbers of (1-strongly agree, 2-agree, 3-disagree, 4-strongly disagree) to collect data on research variables that were processed in SPSS 22.

The use of SPSS 22 has been affected by a number of considerations. Firstly, SPSS software is distributed free from the IBM website (SPSS, 2010). Moreover, it is arguably the most widely-used statistical software in scientific research (IS City, 2010). Further, SPSS has a long development history and runs on the Microsoft Windows Operating System, with which the researcher is familiar.

5. DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

The research questions were inspired by literature study, discussions with industry practitioners and selected numbers of academics. The literature survey informed the underpinning theory and the discussions yielded useful information used to understand that there was indeed a lack of adequate understanding the usability of online business system as branding tool for DTI Congo. Thus, the research questionnaire for this study was developed from the main research question (a) how does DTI Congo-Brazzaville intend to improvise business registration process using e-commerce technology as branding tool?

For a sample size $N = 260$, the researcher printed 260 questionnaires, which were distributed to respondents at DTI Congo’s CFBAP offices. The response rate was 61 % because some respondents living in the city of Pointe-Noire were unable to return the questionnaire at work. However, the researcher attempted to trace their homes to collect the questionnaires. Unfortunately, that was not possible owing to the lack of proper street names and house numbers in the city of Pointe-Noire. Nevertheless, participating in this study

represented national pride for the majority of respondents, who wish to support more Congolese researchers addressing local problems.

For purposes of the research, closed-ended questions were utilised. The rationale is that they were more easily analysed. Moreover, closed-ended questions are also known to be more specific, thus more likely to communicate similar meanings compared to open-ended questions, which enable respondents to use their own words, making it difficult to compare meanings of the responses (Lauren, 2017). Finally, closed-ended questions were efficient as they took less time from respondents to answer. However, to answer the research questions, closed-ended questions related to respondents' gender and education level were analysed and discussed under the demographic data section.

Table 1: Respondents' Gender Representation

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Male	120	75.5	75.5	75.5
Valid Female	39	24.5	24.5	100.0
Total	159	100.0	100.0	

(N=159)

The rationale for this information was to evaluate DTI Congo employees' IS improvisation mindsets by gender gap. The results in Table 1 reveal that among 159 respondents, 75% were male and 25% female. This shows that male respondents were dominant in this sample. Further scrutiny in this variable leads to a conclusion that intention to adopt an online business registration system for re-branding DTI Congo is largely based on male employees' favourable attitudes towards e-commerce. One can interpret that the belief has two components: belief about online business registration system adoption and belief in the self. Belief in online business registration system meant trusting that implementing business registration at the DTI Congo will enable local SMEs to gain a competitive advantage. Furthermore, belief in the self refers to DTI Congo male employees' capacity to improvise with resource at hand in line with five managerial dimensions of improvisation namely team expertise, team work, experimental culture, real-time information and communication; and training.

For content data collection method assessment, accuracy, precision, and reliability provide a springboard for data validity. Joppe (2000; p. 1) argues that the extent to which research results are consistent over time is referred to as reliability, and if the study can yield the same results under a similar methodology, then the research instrument is considered to be reliable. Currently, one of the concerns is the reliability and validity of data. Critics argue that when judged by the standards of reliability, qualitative research is often criticized both for lacking structure and system, and for an inability of the researcher that uses this approach to generalise beyond a small number of cases (Henn et al., 2009; p. 209). Similarly, Golafshani (2003; p. 597-599) argues that validity determines whether the research truly measures that which it was intended to measure, or how truthful the research results are.

In the other hand, the researcher underscored that the definitions of reliability and validity in quantitative research reveal two strands: firstly, with regard to reliability, whether the result from the study is replicable, and secondly, with regard to validity, whether the means of measurement are accurate and whether they are actually measuring what they are intended to measure. Hence, to maintain reliability, accuracy and to ensure validity of data, the same set of questions was asked and discussed in a focus group meeting, which was held via Skype. Finally, the correct sampling techniques and procedures were used to ensure that valid data was collected in order to achieve valid results.

In order to address the research problem that was identified, the researchers proceeded with online business registration improvisation and service branding as main theme in mind as indicated in Table 1. The rationale of the analysis was first to evaluate how DTI Congo employees could possibly combine their expertise and creativity to react swiftly in the product process; and secondly correlate whether online business registration has the potentials to re-brand service delivery at DTI Congo; and brand Congo-Brazzaville as investment destination.

Table 2: Can Online Business Registration Re-Brand Service Delivery at DTI Congo?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly agree	79	49.7	49.7	49.7
Agree	51	32.1	32.1	81.8
Valid Disagree	9	5.7	5.7	87.4
Strongly disagree	20	12.6	12.6	100.0
Total	159	100.0	100.0	

Data in Table 2 reflects that 49.7% of respondents strongly agreed; and 32.1% agreed; which totals 81.8% (49.7% plus 32.1%) who believe that online business registration improvisation at DTI Congo is possible. However, 5.7% disagreed and 12.6% strongly disagreed, which totals 18.3% (12.6% plus 5.7%) who do not believe this. The marketing connotation of the above assertions imply that the e-commerce improvisation as perceived will close the gaps between the growing usage of e-commerce in the business world and the current total vacuum of it at DTI Congo. One can interpret that such limitation is due to lack of expertise and, yet creativity will be required from improvisers to react swiftly in the business process. Shemi (2012) and Garud and Karnøe (2003, p. 277) share the opinion that online business improvisation at DTI Congo will be a “deliberate and substantive fusion of the Website design appeal and its functionality enabling the institution to operate dynamically online 24/7”.

Thus, the degree of online business improvisation will depend on the substantive convergence between the organisation’s Website planning, designing and implementation activities. Indeed, the more improvisational an activity in business registration process, the narrower the time gap between planning, designing, and implementing will be. Considering that online business improvisation is a creative process; spontaneity and extemporaneity will be required from DTI Congo employees.

Despite the fact that online business improvisation might arise because of serendipitous events in the product development value chain; it will likely be an intentional process involving consciousness of employees’ action. Indeed, when employees act by improvisation, the organisation’s online business Website planning, design, and implementation phases will converge.

Such convergence will be an ongoing process to obtain a novel outcome, namely the online business permit. The quality of that outcome will influence the organisation and *vice-versa*. The novelty of the outcome will highlight the change in terms of service delivery mode without modifying the essence of what is being delivered. Lévi-Strauss (1966) argues that e-business improvisation in the organisation requires the use of resources at hand. In that context, it is akin to bricolage but still requests the fulfilment of its fundamental dimensions such as creativity, novelty, intuition, substantial convergence, extemporaneous and absence of plan in the action. Similarly, Ciborra (1999) correlates scenarios applicable in Congo-Brazzaville where the merit of online business bricolage underscores the transformation of organisations from self-centred to market-driven, promoting lifelong learning.

Correlation analysis was used to measure the strength of five numerically measured variables namely *online business registration, safety of business data, service branding at DTI Congo, ease of doing business in Congo-Brazzaville* and *electronic word of mouth*. The purpose of correlation analysis was to determine whether online business registration system at DTI Congo-Brazzaville could have significant impact on the brand image of the organisation in terms of public service delivery. Table 3 reflects how computed data in SPSS 22 generated the level of relationships, which could be negative or positive.

Table 3: Correlations Between Online Business Registration, Safety of Business Data, DTI Congo Branding, Ease of Doing Business and Electronic Word of Mouth

	User_Data	Ease_doing_business	Word_mouth
E_Commerce_Platform_DTI_Congo Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	+1	.748** .000	+1
N	159	159	159
DTI_Congo_Branding	.748** .000 159	+1 159	.674** .000 159

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
(N=159)

Data from Table 3 indicates that there is a correlation of +1 between *the potential e-commerce platform of DTI Congo* and *online business data safety*. Indeed both variables move into the same direction together. On one hand, DTI Congo will be concerned with attracting and securing online business permit applicants. On the other side, online business permit applicants will rate DTI Congo's online business registration system for its security and privacy features in the information phase, negotiation phase, payment phase and delivery phase. The interpretations of both variables moving towards the same direction initially means that computer systems at DTI Congo will be free of viruses in each phase of the business registration process because viruses will be a nuisance threat for online applicants. Computer viruses will disrupt online business registration operations and become a Denial of Service (DoS) tool. Virus threats and other high alert awareness of online customers about the threats of performing electronic transactions made it difficult for an online business system to be established at DTI Congo. In return, many Congolese potential online consumers will refrain from performing simple electronic transactions owing to the lack of trust and fear for their personal information to fall in the hands of Internet criminals.

There is positive correlation of + 1 between *the potential e-commerce platform of DTI Congo* and *electronic word of mouth (e_wom)*. This positive correlation indicates that DTI Congo's e-commerce website is the main catalytic factor to spread electronically word of mouth in social media and mark the era of economic digitalisation in Congo-Brazzaville. Digitalisation of the economy in Congo-Brazzaville will bring transparency of prices and make it easier for Congolese online consumers with a computer or mobile device to find quickly the lowest price for any product or service. Online consumers will focus on price comparison, online coupons, discounts, free shipping offers, daily deals, *Wikideals* and some other incentive that will reduce the price. In that context, the role of advertising will become not just a demand driver but also a counterbalancing force to price as the main determinant of Congolese consumer choice. From the above analysis, results indicate that online business registration is positively related to online consumer's bargaining power, which in return requires strategic flexibility when establishing sustainable relationships between businesses to consumers.

There is positive correlation of + 1 between *DTI Congo's re-branding efforts* and *the country's ease of doing business ranking*. The above confirms the argument that online business registration improvisation *per se* is not associated with innovative outcomes in the organisation. Rather, there are several dimensions that affect the effectiveness of IS improvisation and its link to innovative outcomes.

DTI Congo brand is regarded as a promise of quality service delivery for distinctive business registration service. As such, online business registration adoption could be perceived as brand identity for the department, promoting product's personality by using IS improvisation to instil brand loyalty amongst entrepreneurs. Currently, organisations and countries with strong brand built familiarity between product or service and customers, which makes selling easier. As mentioned earlier that customers are more likely to buy Coca cola drinks in supermarket, and tourists would easily choose South Africa as holiday destination in Africa. One of the reasons is that both Coca cola and South Africa have invested extensively in the development of latest IS infrastructure; and constantly innovating.

From the above, branding can be central to both DTI and Congo's strategic planning because it creates various benefits in areas such as online marketing communication, improvisational resource allocation, human resource performance and branding strategy, reflecting in brand promise (Andreasen & Kotler, 2003). The positive correlation between *DTI Congo's re-branding efforts* and *the country's ease of doing business ranking* denotes that IS improvisation provides greater leverage of marketing resources for DTI Congo owing to the fact that branding strategies are not restricted to advertising only; indeed a strong brand can spend less on marketing and save in operating costs.

Contents analysis data was used to analyse *focus group discussions*. The purpose of focus group discussions was to remove much of the subjectivity from summaries and to simplify the detection of trends, which answered research questions. As stated earlier, 5 respondents were selected and invited for focus group discussions, which paved a vista for further academic discourse.

- **How Will DTI Congo's Online Business Registration System Transform the Process?**

During the focus group discussion, all five participants agreed that an online business registration system will transform the business process at DTI Congo. However, the aim of this question was to ascertain respondents' understanding of the anticipated transformation from the current procedure. Respondents argued that in the brick-and-mortar business registration process, applicants have to follow every step from (1) receiving and forwarding application, (2) relevant directorate will be concerned with inputs evaluation, which would determine whether the output is satisfactory, or not, (3) outbound logistics, (4) marketing activities and (5) front office staff to help customers in collecting the outcomes.

Participants agreed that all the above-mentioned steps would be automated and integrated in an online business system. Further, they also agreed that online business registration would enable DTI Congo to achieve a conservative-relational competitive advantage, through the offering of a new product that delivers a superior customer-specific solution, which will be electronic submission of the application, electronic payment of the application fees and electronic delivery of the business permit. Discussing the safety and security of Congolese online applicant became imperative.

- **How Does DTI Congo-Brazzaville Intend to Prevent Fraud and Protect Online Applicant Data from Internet Criminals?**

During discussions around this question, participants expressed different approaches about the growing concerns of online consumers' data safety. Two participants agreed DTI

Congo's online business system will be interactive and equipped with secured user controlled online applications that will expand experience, knowledge and market power of consumers.

The other three respondents were very much concerned about the vulnerability and lack of integrated coordination of DTI Congo's computer systems. Regardless of marketing entrepreneurial initiatives, they suggested that security features must include confidentiality, access control, integrity, checks, identification, digital signature, data encryption and secure delivery of the online business permit. However, all the six participants agreed that computer systems will be equipped with antivirus software to transform safety threat to business opportunity and prevent Denial of Service (DoS) incidences.

One participant argued that DTI Congo will use firewalls to protect their networks against security risks. However, five of them agreed on the fact that only Congolese entrepreneurs who have computer skills will utilise DTI Congo's online business service. In the opposite, they revoked the issue of low take-ups of online business registration as a constraint. They stated that owing to the infancy of the e-commerce in Congo-Brazzaville, DTI Congo will be willing to invest in online business registration system because it is a new business requirement that is at the core value of the ease of doing business ratings.

During this question, participants had well-established the linkage between online business system safety features and its business success, which seal the study's early findings based on the underpinning theory of IS improvisation.

6. FINDINGS AND INTERPRETATION

6.1. Lack of Adequate Understanding the Usability of Online Business System as Branding Tool for DTI Congo

The 260 questionnaires had 61 % response rate because some respondents living in the city of Pointe-Noire who could not return the questionnaire at work made it impossible for the researcher to trace them for questionnaire collection owing to the lack of proper street names and house numbers in the city of Pointe-Noire. Participating in this study represented national pride for the majority of respondents, who wish to support Congolese researchers addressing local problems. Among 159 respondents, 75% were male and 25% female. This shows that male respondents were dominant in this sample. From data analysis, 81.8% (49.7% plus 32.1%) of respondents believe that online business registration improvisation at DTI Congo is possible. However, 18.3% (12.6% plus 5.7%) do not believe this. The intention to adopt an online business registration system for re-branding DTI Congo is largely based on male employees' favourable attitudes towards e-commerce. There are 18.3% (12.6% plus 5.7%) of respondents who do not believe the applicability of IS improvisation in business registration process in Congo. This segment argues that lack of expertise and creativity from improvisers is more likely the cause of doubt.

6.2. Convergence between Improvisational Activities will Generate a Novel Outcome

There are 81.8 % of respondents who believe that IS improvisation in business registration process is a novelty; and share the opinion that online business improvisation will depend on the substantive convergence between the organisation's Website planning, designing and implementation activities. The more improvisational an activity in business registration process, the narrower the time gap between planning, designing, and implementing will be. Considering that online business improvisation is a creative process; spontaneity and extemporaneity will be required from improvisers. Convergence between improvisational activities will generate novel outcome, namely electronic delivery of business permit. Indeed the quality of that outcome will boost DTI Congo brand image and satisfy stakeholders. The novelty of the outcome will highlight the change in terms of service delivery mode without modifying the essence of what is being delivered. Arguably, e-business improvisation in the

organisation requires the use of resources at hand. In that context, improvisation is akin to bricolage but still requests the fulfilment of its fundamental dimensions such as creativity, novelty, intuition, substantial convergence, extemporaneous and absence of plan in the action.

6.3. There Are Positive Correlations of +1 among the Five Numerically Measured Variables Namely Online Business Registration, Safety of Business Data, Service Branding at DTI Congo, Ease of Doing Business in Congo-Brazzaville and Electronic Word of Mouth

Positive correlations between variables indicates that only safe computer systems at DTI Congo will attract users and online transactions. Safe online business registration platform website will be the main catalytic factor to spread electronically word of mouth in social media and mark the era of economic digitalisation in Congo-Brazzaville. The process of economic digitisation confirms the argument that online business registration improvisation can only be associated to innovative outcomes if managers reconcile improvisers' efforts with five dimensions of improvisation namely team expertise, team work, experimental culture, real-time information and training. DTI Congo brand is regarded as a promise of quality service delivery for distinctive business registration service. As such, online business registration adoption would enable the organisation to overcome branding challenges namely plethora of registration numbers, lack of pre-determined requirements for business registration in some sectors of the economy, DTI Congo's inability to introduce innovative product, lack of automated application dissemination in the value chain and lack of efficient internal linkage between primary and support activities.

7. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Congo-Brazzaville is known for being at the bottom of the pile when it comes to the ease of doing business ratings. The situation causes concern especially as there is growing awareness that Congolese business' inability to compete in a fiercely competitive international economy spells ruin. From the above, current authors recommend that DTI Congo consider utilising online business registration system as branding tool. Indeed online business registration system implementation will close the gaps and save time for both customers and the organisation. However, further study could explore different models for online business registration, which would create awareness for DTI Congo to be inspired from some.

8. REFERENCES

- Andreasen, A.R. & Kotler, P. (2003). *Strategic Marketing for Nonprofit Organizations* (6th ed.). Upper Saddle River: Prentice Hall.
- Brace, I. (2004). *Questionnaire Design: How to Plan, Structure and Write Survey Material for Effective Market Research*. London: Kogan Page.
- Browning, C.S. (2016). Nation Branding and Development: Poverty Panacea or Business as Usual? *Journal of International Relations and Development*, 19, 1, 50-75.
- Centre of Excellence for Public Sector Marketing. (2009). Guide to Branding in the Public and Not-for-Profit Sectors. (Technical Report of Centre of Excellence for Public Sector Marketing) http://www.mikekujawski.ca/ftp/cepsm_branding_ebook.pdf
- Chelariu, C., Johnston, W.J. & Young, L. (2002). Learning to Improvise, Improvising to Learn: A Process of Responding to Complex Environments. *Journal of Business Research*, 55, 2, 141-147.
- Ciborra, C.U. (1999). Notes on Improvisations and Time in Organizations. *Accounting, Management and Information Technologies*, 9, 2, 77-94.

- Congo Vision. (2015). Les plus belles voix musicales des deux Congo réunies dans Terre sacrée. <http://www.congovision.com/ambongo2.html>
- Croom, S., Romano, P. & Giannakis, M. (2000). Supply Chain Management: An Analytical Framework For Critical Literature Review. *European Journal of Purchasing & Supply Management*, 6, 1, 67-83.
- Faraj, S. & Sproull, L. (2000). Coordinating Expertise in Software Development Teams. *Management Science*, 46, 12, 1554-1568.
- Fundacio Bit. (2016). Design Options Paper SME Value Chains: Peer Learning of Innovation Agencies about Innovation Support in SMEs in Transnational Business Value Chains. (European Union SME Value Chain Report). https://ec.europa.eu/easme/sites/easme-site/files/671524_design_options_paper_smevaluechains.pdf
- Garud, R. & Karnøe, P. (2003). Bricolage versus Breakthrough: Distributed and Embedded Agency in Technology Entrepreneurship. *Research Policy*, 32, 2, 277-300.
- Golafshani, N. (2003). Understanding Reliability and Validity in Qualitative Research. *The Qualitative Report*, 8, 4, 597-607.
- HBS Marketing. (2009). Service Canada Branding Presentation. Paper Presented at Canadian Conference on Public Service Branding, February 17, Montréal, Canada.
- Heaton, J. (2017). The Difference between Marketing and Branding. (Tronvig Gourp Report). <http://www.tronviggroup.com/the-difference-between-marketing-and-branding>
- Henn, M., Weinstein, M. & Foard, N. (2009). *A Critical Introduction to Social Research* (2nd ed.). London: SAGE Publications.
- IS City. (2010). Research Methodology. <http://www.is.cityu.edu.hk/staff/isrobert/phd/ch3.pdf>
- IZF. (2015). Agence Publicitaires Locales. <http://www.izf.net/annuaire/agence-publicitaires-locales>
- Kokt, D. & Koelane, T. (2013). Reflecting on Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in Marketing from a Marketer's and Student Perspective. *African Journal of Business Management*, 7, 31, 3098-3108.
- Kotler, P. & Lee, N. (2007). *Marketing in the Public Sector: A Roadmap for Improved Performance*. Upper Saddle River: Wharton School Publishing.
- Lauren, D. (2017). The Importance of Fax Machines. http://www.ehow.com/list_6328090_benefits-fax-machines.html
- Leedy, P.D. (1989). *Practical Research: Planning and Design* (4th ed.). New York: Macmillan.
- Lévi-Strauss, C. (1966). *The Savage Mind*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Molnar, W.A. (2009). Information System Development in a Process Management Environment: The Dynamics of Improvisation and Bricolage During Embedded Software Design. (Doctoral Dissertation, University of Warwick, UK).
- Momo, A.M. & Ukpere, W.I. (2011). The Economic and Logistic Benefits of Online Business Registration for Congolese Immigrants in Cape Town. *African Journal of Business Management*, 5, 14, 5994-6004.
- Momo, A.M. (2016). Improvisational Model of Business Registration for Branding Services in Congo-Brazzaville. *Digital Knowledge*, 1, 2, 163-194.
- Momo, A.M. (2017). President Trump's Threats in Coltan Supply Chain Due Diligence Stunt Congo's 2020 Nation Branding Vision. *World Scientific News*, 69, 86-97.
- Nacioglu, A. (2016). As a Critical Behaviour to Improve Quality and Patient Safety in Health Care: Speaking Up! *Safety in Health*, 2, 10, 1-25.
- Nneka, A.A. (2015). Extent of Application of Marketing Mix Strategy by Small and Micro Scale Enterprises in Osun State, Nigeria. *African Journal of Marketing Management*, 7, 2, 16-19.

- Pisano, G.P. (2016). You Need an Innovation Strategy. *Harvard Business Review*, 93, 6, 44-54.
- PMC Cabinet. (2006). *Étude diagnostique du Guichet unique et des barrières à l'investissement privé au Congo*. PMC Unpublished Research Report.
- PwC. (2012). South African Retail and Consumer Products Outlook 2012-2016. (PwC 2012-2016 Market Survey Report). <https://www.pwc.co.za/en/assets/pdf/retail-and-consumer-products-outlook-2012-2016.pdf>
- Radio France International. (2015). Invité Afrique. Le musicien Congolais Ray Lema. http://www.rfi.fr/emission/20140309-ray-lema-rca-concert-solidaire-centrafrique-paris-/#./?&_suid=143238994692307964816652169202
- Ramnarain, Y. & Govender, K.K. (2013). Social Media Browsing and Consumer Behaviour: Exploring the Youth Market. *African Journal of Business Management*, 7, 18, 1885-1893.
- Secchi, E., Roth, A. & Verma, R. (2016). The Role of Service Improvisation in Improving Hotel Customer Satisfaction. *Cornell Hospitality Report*, 16, 1, 3-10.
- Shemi, A.P. (2012). Factors Affecting E-Commerce Adoption in Small and Medium Enterprises: An Interpretative Study of Botswana. (Doctoral Dissertation, Salford Business School, UK).
- Siemens. (2017). African Digitisation Maturity Report 2017. (Siemens Report). http://www.siemens.co.za/pool/about_us/Digitalization_Maturity_Report_2017.pdf
- Smith, D.J. & Blundel, R.K. (2014). Improvisation and Entrepreneurial Bricolage versus Rationalisation: A Case-Based Analysis of Contrasting Responses to Economic Instability in the UK Brass Musical Instruments Industry. *Journal of General Management*, 40, 1, 53-78.
- Stat Trek. (2017). Random Number Table. <http://stattrek.com/Tables/Random.aspx>
- Struwig, F.W. & Stead, G.B. (2001). *Planning, Designing and Reporting Research*. Cape Town: Pearson Education.
- Teo, T.S.H. & Pian, Y. (2003). A Contingency Perspective on Internet Adoption and Competitive Advantage. *European Journal of Information Systems*, 12, 2, 78-92.
- The World Bank. (2008). The Republic of Congo at a Glance. (Technical Report) <http://www.worldbank.org/en/country/drc>
- The World Bank. (2015). Mobile Cellular Subscriptions (per 100 People). <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/IT.CEL.SETS.P2>
- Vera, D. & Crossan. M. (2005). Improvisation and Innovative Performance in Teams. *Organization Science*, 16, 3, 203-224.
- Vukasovic, T. (2013). Building Successful Brand by Using Social Networking Media. *Journal of Media and Communication Studies*, 5, 6, 56-63.
- Wasserman, D. (2001). A Stress-Vulnerability Model and the Development of the Suicidal Process. In Wasserman, D. (Ed.). *Suicide: An Unnecessary Death* (13-27). London: Martin Dunitz.
- Yétéla, M. (2012). *Présentation de CFBAP*.