

ICT Marketing

An interesting example of marketing strategies discussed in courses and seminars revolves around an assessment of the Indian shoe market in the middle of last century. The story goes as follows:

A large company specialized in the design and manufacturing shoes, always eager to expand its business, is evaluating options to target international markets and setup a production facility overseas. Choosing India as a possible potential, the company's board decides to send a top marketing executive in order to assess the situation on the ground. The executive flies to India, spends a couple of weeks there and comes back with the following report; *"India is a huge country with a largely poor population of around five hundred million people, most of them run barefoot and haven't even heard of shoes, the shoe market is so small that it is totally ignored by our competitors, investing in a production facility in India is a waste of valuable company resources and therefore not recommended"*. The board accepts the executive's recommendations and shelves the project.

A year later the board decides to take a second look at the Indian shoe market and this time dispatches a different marketing executive to assess the situation. The executive flies to India, spends a couple of weeks there and comes back with the following report; *"India is a huge country with a largely poor population of around five hundred million people, most of them run barefoot and haven't even heard of shoes, the shoe market is very small but has a very high potential for growth with virtually no competition in sight, investing in a production facility in India will provide formidable returns and therefore highly recommended"*. The board accepts the executive's recommendations and proceeds with the investment plan.

There is a lot to be learnt from this story when it comes to marketing Jordan's ICT products and services. In ICT terms, the Indian market is large and has a good potential for growth and expansion, but it is becoming saturated with competition from highly respectable ICT companies from all over world jostling for a piece of the cake not to mention the formidable array of Indian ICT companies themselves.

There are other markets that have an equal if not better growth potential than India and they have been largely ignored by our ICT sector. The sub-Saharan African market is a prime example. Over the past six years, a number of Jordanian software development companies have secured contracts in Africa in the areas of banking, insurance and billing systems among others. With patience and perseverance more business will surely follow. Just like the Indian marketing example, the trick is to spot the potential early, take a calculated risk and try to be there before everybody else.