

Tech company problems and business flexibility solutions

By Simon Leicester, June 2019

Key: CSR=corporate social responsibility. Flexitype = type of business flexibility. Flexiscribe = mechanisms that code for business flexibility.

Political

- **Government tax legislations resulting in being a low taxpayer globally.** Likely to be a public relations concern for Facebook, Microsoft, Apple, Google, Amazon and other highly profitable tech companies.

Business flexibility (BFL) solutions; lobby to reform other kinds of government taxes (sales taxes, personal tax rates for the ultra-wealthy). Get politicians to publicly praise sizeable charitable grants given by the tech companies to needy causes (re-vitalised CSR programmes). Tech companies to invest in public education programmes that boost the numbers of next generation, highly capable, digital natives.

- **Data protection and storage concerns.** Likely to be a public relations concern for Facebook, Microsoft, Apple, Google, Amazon and some other tech companies regarding holding vast amounts of data about the user base (images, buying habits, personal data).

Business flexibility (BFL) solutions; 'Data & network security' flexitype – form a consortium of tech companies to develop next generation internet protocols and increased data security for users to suppress cyber-crime. Auto-delete information held older than 5 years. Align information collected to tech company core strategy and cease collecting information not needed to realise the strategy. Advise governments on how data protection can work better if they change their legislation.

- **Being perceived as a powerful monopoly, ripe for break up.** Likely to be a concern for Facebook (perception of too much power vested in the founder), Alphabet/Google and Amazon.

Business flexibility (BFL) solutions; Switch from Options FL (one grand plan with subplans) to Plan FL (multiple, high level plans). Run the different businesses from different countries to 'spread the perceived monopolies held'. Start a public relations campaign on how Western World tech oligopolies are needed to counter Russian or Chinese monopolies instead.

- **Unintentionally hosting extremist messages and unintentionally promoting fake news.** Likely to be a concern for Facebook, Google, Apple and Microsoft.

Business flexibility (BFL) solutions; introduce some flexiscribes generating 'mass customisation', 'machine learning' & 'workload outsourcing'. Revisit Process, Contract, Design & Comms flexibilities. Co-operate more productively with host government security services, so the spotlight shifts to the supply of extremist content, rather than tech companies mounting legal challenges that impede host country security operations.

- **Being perceived as closing down high street communities.** Likely to be a concern for Amazon.

Business flexibility (BFL) solutions; revitalise CSR initiatives that rebuild community focus, while still promoting customer convenience, customer ratings and every day, low prices.

- **Facilitating extreme wealth accumulation for an elite few.** Likely to be a public relations concern for Facebook, Microsoft, Google, Apple, Amazon and other highly profitable tech companies.

Business flexibility (BFL) solutions; tech company founders to rapidly set up charitable foundations that make sizeable grants to needy groups on a regular basis, using similar grant-making processes that respected charities use.

Social

- **Customer attitudes and buying patterns.** Customer loyalty and attracting next-generation users. Likely to be a concern for Facebook & Microsoft. And Apple in the face of Chinese & Korean competition in the mobile phone market.

Business flexibility (BFL) solutions; introduce a flexiscribe for 'constant new business development', to ensure next-generation income streams. Revisit communications flexibility. Engage high profile celebrities & respected public figures to endorse tech company products.

- **Aligning brand values with rising social concerns.** Likely to be a concern for Apple and Amazon regarding packaging pollution and obsolete unit disposals. Likely to be a concern for other tech companies storing what's perceived to be excessive amounts of data about user buying habits & lifestyles.

Business flexibility (BFL) solutions; revisit process, stakeholder & business model flexitypes. Auto-delete information held older than 5 yrs. Align information collected to tech company core strategy and cease collecting information not needed to realise the strategy. Change shipping packaging to biodegradable specifications. Design hardware for recycling after principal use.

- **Ethical concerns and media message credibility** - in the face of persistent government investigations. Likely to be a concern for Facebook (fake news, extremist messages) and Amazon (decimating the high street stores). Of wider tech company concern on the issue of paying low taxes.

Business flexibility (BFL) solutions; Process, communications & business model flexitypes. Work with governments to align media messages and ensure legislative compliance.

Technical

- **Competing technological development** - technology substitute threats. Likely to be a concern for Microsoft, Apple, Google (Chinese competition) and some other tech companies.

Business flexibility (BFL) solutions;’ Actively explore Styflex’ (style flexibility) and subsflex (substance flexibility) opportunities. Modify core business model to emphasise business flexibility (all types) in an uncertain environment. Keep generating intellectual property as a real options portfolio to counter competitive threats.

•**Maturity of technology. Where to from here?** Likely to be a concern for Facebook, Microsoft, Apple and some other tech companies.

Business flexibility (BFL) solutions; Develop and manage a real options portfolio, perhaps in the form of flexiscribe portfolio management with flexitype project management. Embrace Plan FL (multiple high level plans) – Tesla/Space-X, Virgin, General Electric and Alphabet are examples to emulate. Explore Pace FL (buy time, play for time, reinvent time). Revisit business flexibility trade-offs and trade-ons with service quality, cost, income, asset management, liability management and innovation.