

›VARYING REALITIES?‹—SWOT ANALYSIS OF A CONSORTIALLY OPERATED DIGITAL PRESERVATION SYSTEM

»The belief that one's own view of reality is the only reality is the most dangerous of all delusions.« PAUL WATZLAWICK

INTRODUCTION:

The swot analysis is a strategic management model. It forms the basis of almost all attempts to formalize the process of strategy development. Examples for external factors in a swot analysis are technological developments, market trends, other institutions and politics. Examples for internal factors are financial resources, know-how, staff and image. HENRY MINTZBERG

The poster will exemplify how a swot analysis can be used in the context of a consortially operated digital preservation system using the example of Goportis—Leibniz Library Network for Research Information, the strategic network of the three German National Libraries.

SWOT ANALYSIS:

<p>EXTERNAL FACTORS</p> <p>INTERNAL FACTORS</p>	<p><u>OPPORTUNITIES</u></p> <p>official mandate for digital preservation</p> <p>growing political support for digital preservation</p> <p>move towards centralization of digital preservation responsibilities/activities</p> <p>developments of the digital preservation community (e.g. PRONOM)</p>	<p><u>THREATS</u></p> <p>lack of comparability/ interoperability of digital preservation strategies</p> <p>changing internal strategies</p> <p>lack of control over data</p> <p>no sufficient transparency</p> <p>consistently changing conditions (e.g. formats, hardware)</p> <p>dependency on external funding</p> <p>legal restrictions (e.g. intellectual property rights)</p> <p>focus on specific material type</p>
	<p><u>STRENGTHS</u></p> <p>shared staff resources</p> <p>shared hardware/software resources</p> <p>shared development output</p> <p>extended scope of materials (e.g. textual materials, AV materials)</p>	<p><u>SO STRATEGIES</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • service model • (organisational/contractual) flexibility towards changes • knowledge exchange • collaboration in standard tasks (e.g. technology watch, community watch, format registry work) • re-use of practical experiences of partners in system (e.g. configurations, workflows, preservation planning)
<p><u>WEAKNESSES</u></p> <p>dependency on partners involved (technical, organisational, financial)</p> <p>dependency on system chosen</p> <p>dependency on personal know-how</p> <p>different archiving standards amongst partners</p> <p>different archiving strategies amongst partners</p> <p>high number of integration points</p> <p>no individual scalability of system</p> <p>no individual modification of system</p> <p>unclear limits of system ownership</p> <p>unclear responsibilities and accountabilities</p> <p>no structured decision-making process</p>	<p><u>WO STRATEGIES</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • clear internal roadmap • policies • flexible scalability of system (throughput, overall size) • mutual political positioning • joint project work • involvement in competence networks 	<p><u>WT STRATEGIES</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • regulated communication flow • definition of system borders • definition of responsibilities • definition of accountabilities • planning exit scenario • sophisticated financial model (partner independent) • clear documentation (technical and organisational processes)
<p>so ▶ strength of the institutions, especially in regards to using chances in their environment (e.g. service models)</p> <p>st ▶ use of internal strength to counteract external risks</p> <p>wo ▶ elimination of internal weaknesses to make best use of external opportunities</p> <p>wt ▶ reduction of internal weaknesses to counteract external risks (weakest constellation—these strategies need to be addressed with highest priority)</p>		

OUTCOME:

POSITIVE

- clear and intuitive representation of dependencies and strategies
- required reduction of complexity to the most important influencing factors
- support in the development of strategy options

NEGATIVE

- influencing factors and strategy options are weighed the same
- dependencies and interdependencies are not addressed
- potential for conflict between different options/strategies
- partners in system are simultaneously internal and external factors
- strategies may not be agreeable to all partners—strategies have to be derived in a more differentiated manner than the swot analysis allows for
- who decides on weaknesses and strengths? The weakness of a single partner impairs the system. The strength of a single partner does not necessarily strengthen the entire system.
- how can a democratic decision process be reached, if different weaknesses and strengths exist amongst the partners?