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Advantages and disadvantages of free education essay

One of the advantages small businesses and start-ups have is the freedom to innovate. Large, successful companies are risk-averse because they have a lot to lose; a start-up takes a gamble just by existing. Offering innovative products or marketing strategies can give your company an edge. However, there are advantages and disadvantages of innovation. Innovative companies have changed the world and made millions doing it. Desktop computers. Airplanes. The organic food industry. Internet search engines. Even if you're not Microsoft or Google, there are business benefits to being an innovator: It can accelerate your growth. Even a small start-up with the right project can become a major player. You stand out from the competition by offering something nobody else does. Offering new products or services makes it easier to satisfy your customers, not just now but in the future. Innovative companies attract innovative talent. Innovations don't have to transform society to be profitable. Simply innovating your company procedures to make you more efficient can bring benefits: You become more productive. Your costs go down. Your company's more competitive with your rivals. Your brand becomes more valuable. As a result of all these, you become more profitable. One of the disadvantages of innovation in the workplace is that it takes effort. Pressures in the business world often push companies to play it safe and not innovate, particularly if the business is established and profitable: When businesses plan for the future, they strive to build a consensus among the stakeholders. That's easier with small, cautious steps than innovative visionary ideas. Companies that promote from within end up with management teams who are used to and comfortable with the status quo. HR departments prefer to hire people who fit the current corporate culture, not those who want to shake it up and transform it. Stockholders and big investors hate to see any change that lowers returns even slightly. They look at the advantages and disadvantages of innovation and only see the negative side. It takes work to overcome the inertia that discourages innovation. It's often necessary work because the business environment keeps changing. Failure to innovate has disadvantages, too: You could lose market share to nimbler competitors. Productivity and efficiency go down. Key staff get frustrated their ideas aren't wanted and quit. Your profits dwindle. Some of the advantages and disadvantages of innovation are about how change affects the bottom line: If you're the first with a new, popular product, you can charge a high price until your competitors catch up. An established successful innovation creates interest in buying your future products. Innovation can add value to existing products, making them more profitable. The first cell phones did nothing but call people; now they can search the Web, take photos, record memories and map our routes. Change can also hurt your bottom line, though: Investing in an innovative product that doesn't work or doesn't sell flushes money down the drain. Even successful innovation takes time and money you could invest in other things. If you spend too much and don't get the product out fast enough, that can seriously choke off your cash flow. Innovation isn't just something business leaders do. Many companies have excited, creative employees with ideas to change processes, develop new products or innovate the way things are done. Adopting some of their ideas may be good for the company but there are also disadvantages of innovation in the workplace: You hire employees to do a job. It's often more important to have them deliver what they were hired for than come up with something completely new. You may already have innovative ideas of your own. The challenge, in that case, isn't finding more ideas, it's putting the ones you have into action. Novel, innovative ideas aren't always useful. Sometimes it's better to be cautious and not take risks. Choosing between the advantages and disadvantages of innovation isn't easy, but it's part of what makes a good leader: At-will employees are those who work without employment contracts. An employment contract can be a collective bargaining agreement between an employer and a labor union or an agreement between an individual and his employer. Being an at-will employee allows you to leave your job without advance notice, but you must live with the uncertainty of potentially losing your job at any time. For an employee, the primary advantage of being an at-will employee is that you can walk off your job at any time for any reason. You are not required to give advance notice to your employer. If you receive a more attractive job offer and you want to accept the new position and start work immediately, you can quit your present job without giving notice and without breaching an employment contract. Uncertainty is the primary disadvantage of being an at-will employee. Just as you can leave your job at any time without notice to your employer, your employer can terminate your employment at any time without notice to you. Your employer is not required to tell you the reason for terminating your employment, so you may not have an opportunity to explain the circumstances of the behavior that led to your termination. At-will employment can be advantageous for an employer who wishes to terminate a poorly performing employee. The employer need not tell the employee why she is being fired; it is sufficient to merely inform the employee that she is being terminated, effective immediately. If an employer suspects the employee has violated company policies but does not want to incur potential legal liability with accusations, the at-will employment doctrine lets the employer end the employment relationship without a potentially litigious explanation. Employee backlash over the potential for unfair terminations has led some state legislatures to provide safeguards for at-will employees. For example, Montana's Wrongful Discharge from Employment Act was enacted in 2009 in response to complaints that companies were using the at-will employment doctrine to cheat long-term employees out of pension and vacation benefits. Under the Montana law, a discharged employee can sue for wrongful termination if the employer terminated him because he refused to violate public policy, if the termination was not for good cause, or if the employer's termination violated its own personnel policies. The Structured Systems Analysis and Design Method, or SSADM, is an approach to designing and analyzing information systems. Developed in Britain in 1980, this method uses logical data modeling, entity event modeling and data flow modeling in a six-step process to determine how a system must be created or updated. This long and complicated analysis has multiple advantages and disadvantages. One advantage of SSADM is its use of three techniques to determine information system viability. Logical data modeling determines the entities -- and the relationships between them -- in the system. Data flow modeling determines the ways in which data changes from one form to another, the holding areas for the data, the entities that send data into the system and the routes through which the data flows. Entity event modeling documents how events within the business affect the entities of the information system. When these three methodologies and viewpoints are provided, the model is more accurate and complete. Such a deep and thorough analysis of a system greatly reduces the chance of any information being misunderstood at the beginning stages of the project. This can occur in systems that have inadequate analysis and poorly thought-out design. Also, since SSADM is used frequently, most people involved in the project will understand the process. Using a familiar process prevents the need to train new staff and saves both money and time. The SSADM is a very structured method of creating information systems. It exercises control over every aspect of the creation process. This control is one of the major reasons it has become the standard, because it leaves very little room for error. This rigidity, however, can also lead to difficulties. It is inevitable that the requirements for the system will change at some point during development. SSADM is built on the analysis of data. If this data changes after the SSADM analysis has already taken place, the system recommended by the data may be incorrect. The biggest drawback of the SSADM system is that it takes a great deal of time. When a business takes so much time to analyze the project, it may make it difficult to create the information system by a desired end date. There is a large delay between the inception of the project and the delivery of the system. If any employees of a company are not trained in the SSADM techniques, the company will need to spend even more time and money training them in this difficult system. Photo Courtesy: Yagci Studio/Getty Images Everywhere you look these days, you're bound to see an advertisement. In short, we're being bombarded, but some folks may not realize that marketing is more than just getting one's product out there. In fact, it's a complex science. In the modern age of hyper-targeting -- we're looking at you, personalized Instagram ads -- some companies are staying true to mass marketing, a tactic that has its roots in the Roaring Twenties. So, what is mass marketing -- and does it still work? Mass marketing is a strategy that utilizes a single campaign for the masses. That is, the ad should be compelling to anyone who might possibly stumble across it. At first glance, this may seem like what all companies do, but non-mass marketing is far more complicated. Marketers do intense research into sociology and the life and purchasing habits of people of demographics they want to reach. How serious are these marketing researches? Well, the word teenager didn't exist until marketers wanted to target that age group. Photo Courtesy: Corey Jenkins/Getty Images In non-mass marketing, advertisements for the same product may look drastically different based upon which publication they appear in. For example, the same jewelry company may include a picture of a beautiful actress wearing a necklace in a magazine with a readership mainly made up of women, while they may run something completely different in a magazine geared towards men. However, in mass marketing, the jewelry company would run a single ad, regardless of audience or publication. One of the most famous mass marketing efforts is that of Coca-Cola. Over the years, the company has run a variety of advertisements with its iconic polar bears, for example, and those memorable ads are meant to appeal to everyone, not a particular group of Coke drinkers. Mass marketing gained popularity in the 1920s when radio irrevocably changed both entertainment and marketing. Before that, most advertisements were targeted, simply because they appeared in magazines for specific audiences. Even today, it would be pretty odd to find an advertisement for submarine construction tools in *O, The Oprah Magazine*, for example. Photo Courtesy: Getty Images/Thanasis Zovailis But, thanks to the advent of the radio, '20s advertisers became eager to maximize their marketing dollars and reach broader audiences than ever before. It also helped that folks were glued to their radios, much in the same way we're constantly watching our TV and phone screens today. Thus, this one-size-fits-all form of advertising was born. Soon, companies employing the strategy ran the same effective ads on television, newspapers, and billboards, which, undoubtedly, reshaped marketing in America. Even though it's a one-size-fits-all notion, mass marketing is not just some cheap shortcut to maximize an advertiser's spend. In fact, it forces marketers to think creatively in order to craft the one big ad that'll be broadcast across multiple channels. Think the McDonald's jingle or Skittles' "taste the rainbow" catchphrase. What do they have in common? Folks around the world can't get them out of their heads. Photo Courtesy: Flashpop/Getty Images The phrases and visuals associated with mass marketing have staying power, so they become strong symbols of a brand. A single campaign conveys a strong message to all sectors of the public, and, as a result, creates an increased awareness and particular brand identity. Long story short, the more an ad is out there in the public, the more likely folks are to support it. Be it by building a kind of trust through being recognizable or simply being the first things folks think of, mass marketing urges consumers to practice brand loyalty. While mass marketing can be effective, marketers have also found a lot of success by appealing to the nuances of individual demographics. While mass marketing has the potential to reach a large audience, it also has the potential to lose a large portion of said audience. It's difficult to make a message that truly appeals to everyone -- and first impressions matter. In reality, different people are interested in different products for different reasons. In short, a mass marketing campaign is a gamble, and while some marketers have struck gold, others have lost millions. Photo Courtesy: Getty Images/Oscar Wong Moreover, truly effective mass marketing campaigns can be cost-prohibitive. One would not be wrong to assume that mass marketing often has a massive cost. Any message that's primed to reach the whole population needs to be spread far and wide, so one newspaper ad isn't going to cut it, even if that publication has an ostensibly large readership. Instead, a great mass marketing campaign may call for ads in several newspapers, on multiple radio stations and TV channels, and on various social media platforms. Not to mention, you'll want a variety of pay-per-click ads, too. Needless to say, the cost can add up very quickly, which is why you'll often see large corporations, as opposed to the family-owned business down the road, undertaking these mass marketing efforts. During the 2012 Presidential election, Pizza Hut employed a mixture of mass marketing and viral marketing to create a wild contest. Anyone who attended a particular debate and asked then-candidates former President Barack Obama and Senator Mitt Romney whether they preferred sausage or pepperoni on their pizzas would receive free pizza for life. There was a backlash from the public, and Pizza Hut ended up scrapping the audacious idea for something that didn't implicate the presidential hopefuls. Photo Courtesy: Getty Images/Allison Michael Orenstein All of this to say, mass marketing that doesn't resonate with the public can descend into controversy. For Pizza Hut, public opinion of the campaign was dubious at best -- and angry at worst. Not to mention, Pizza Hut was in the news for all the wrong reasons, and this mass marketing effort painted the brand in a bad light. (Maybe not all press is good press, after all.) Another prime example? In the 1980s, Coca-Cola launched a mass marketing campaign for New Coke, the infamous new formula of Coca-Cola that hoped to compete with the sweeter Pepsi. The advertisement served little purpose -- other than to give customers a reason to complain about the new formula. Although plenty of people knew about the New Coke, public opinion of the new formula was so poor that it was eventually pulled from shelves. This exemplifies the high-stakes aspect of mass marketing. If it fails, it fails hard. Mass marketing is very much a double-edged sword. It can take a brand from obscurity to the spotlight, but it costs so much that marketers really need to get it right the first time. For a business that is looking to tap into a larger market, mass marketing could definitely be the key to success, but perhaps it's best to proceed with some caution.

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