

Introduction

Nowadays pursuing typical cost reduction strategies alone is not enough in order to stay competitive and achieve a decent market share. These days, customer needs have become more manifold and complex, so that integrating these needs along each step of the business development process is indispensable. Hence, addressing customer needs and staying competitive require new creative strategies that allow for the inclusion of new factors in the business model development. In recent years businesses have tried to overcome these challenges by employing innovation methods and tools in their companies. Innovation is understood as: the successful commercialization of an idea, research result, or invention. Innovation creates business value through new products, technologies, services, and processes. “New” means to the market or the firm and does not have to be new to the world.

In market-driven innovation processes, the company’s attention is focused on the newly discovered unfilled need of the potential customers. Today’s possibilities to access information worldwide have changed the role of the customer in the global marketplace. Market-driven innovation management requires a systematic approach that allows for understanding and developing solutions that effectively respond to the fulfilment of the customers’ needs.

In order to improve the competitiveness of Egyptian enterprises and foster innovation in the local context, the Industrial Innovation Strategy in Egypt has been developed within the framework of a bilateral technical cooperation project under the guidance of the Egyptian Ministry of Trade and Industry (MTI) with technical assistance provided by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH, on behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ). The first measure of MTI’s innovation strategy – InnoAware – seeks to raise interest in innovation as a potential source of growth for SMEs through implementing workshops, networks, events, etc.

The InnoAware Toolbox is designed in such a way that innovation experts can use the described tools in three different environments: with companies, start-ups, or higher education institutions. For each tool one or more innovation techniques are presented and detailed guidelines for implementing the tools are provided ¹

In order to implement InnoAware, it is necessary to train innovation experts to make them familiar with the InnoAware Toolbox. This will allow them to develop and implement a number of activities to effectively spread knowledge on innovation through intermediary organisations all over Egypt.

Therefore the specific objectives of the InnoAware Toolbox are:

- To equip innovation experts with tools for planning events to create innovation awareness.
- To guide innovation experts in the development of an implementation plan for InnoAware events.
- To promote innovation and its key role in growth and competitiveness of Egyptian enterprises.

The InnoAware Toolbox was developed based on the experience of the iN4iN Network (www.in4in.net).

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