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Problems of application of cluster approach and formation of directions of optimization of activity of the industrial enterprise

Annotation: *The article identifies main problems of the cluster approach, which is quite widespread in countries with developed economies. It is proved that the experience of industrial potential development proves effectiveness of cluster approaches in the process of improving competitiveness of industrial enterprises within a particular region or industry. Methods of business diversification and formation of a diversified product portfolio of the enterprise are revealed. The problems of increasing competitiveness of domestic industrial production, which is in the plane of the cluster approach are considered.*

Analyzing foreign and domestic scientists' opinions to form optimization areas of the industrial enterprise, main directions regarding optimization methods are proposed.

It is concluded that in modern conditions, each of the proposed concepts of optimization has its own advantages and disadvantages. To improve the efficiency of this process, they should be combined and optimised within the framework of such an integration approach.

Keywords: *industrial enterprise; industrial cluster; competition; cluster campaign; competitiveness; industrial potential.*

The factor of competition becomes crucial for the progressive development of priority sectors of the Russian industry. At the same time, most manufacturing sectors continue to be in a difficult situation. In this connection, it is necessary to

create mechanisms to improve competitiveness of enterprises of priority industries (including engineering), whose products could participate in global competition.

The solution to the problem to increase competitiveness of domestic industrial production is in the plane of the cluster approach, which is quite widespread in countries with developed economies.

The accumulated experience to develop industrial potential proves effectiveness of cluster approaches in the process of improving competitiveness of industrial enterprises within a particular region or industry.

Most of the concepts and approaches aimed at improving competitiveness of industrial enterprises in most cases are weak. The vast majority of researchers focus on certain aspects of the functioning of industrial clusters and pay insufficient attention to the development of strategies to improve competitiveness of enterprises within the formed cluster groups.

To do this, it is necessary to analyze methods of business diversification and formation of a diversified product portfolio of the enterprise currently used in the field of industrial production.

Analyzing foreign scientists' views to form areas of optimization of industrial enterprise, it becomes obvious that most of the proposed methods are based on the approaches proposed in I. Ansoff's works.

In this connection, it seems appropriate to pay special attention to the proposed concept of strategic segmentation, foundation of which is the «strategic management zone» (SMZ) or strategic economic unit» (CEU). Within the approach, proposed by I. Ansoff, strategic economic unit is a certain separate segment of the external business environment of the enterprise, which is in the zone of its economic interests. The process of determining such a SMZ is started by studying and identifying needs of the target market (market segment), then it is necessary to study production technology in accordance with the type of consumer. Analysis should also take into account territorial (regional) factor, due to the fact that even within the same region the needs of the target market segment may vary significantly.

In this regard, a number of researchers believe that it is advisable to optimize the product portfolio of the enterprise based on the definition of its profile (the main business direction).

As part of this approach, it is proposed to carry out the so-called «related» optimization, in which the selection of the most attractive areas of activity for the enterprise (business areas) should be based on the analysis of related industries. For example, R. Lehman believes that when choosing directions of optimization of activities and building a diversified product portfolio, first of all, it is necessary to focus on the dynamics of production costs and possibility of obtaining a positive synergetic effect through reasonable diversification.

According to his opinion, distribution of fixed costs between different business areas will make it possible to significantly reduce the volume of unit costs, such as, for example, R & D costs, advertising companies.

At the same time, this effect can manifest itself in relation to supply and sales channels, marketing activities. Thanks to such «related» optimization / diversification, enterprise can significantly reduce costs and thus release additional financial resources for development. It is impossible not to agree with R. Lehman and A. Raykov, who believes that such an approach to the optimization of the industrial enterprise will significantly improve its effectiveness and efficiency. However, it should be noted that it is not always possible to see a direct link between optimization and synergy. In some cases, «unrelated» optimization can lead to much more effective results, which is explained by the specifics of the activity, conditions of operation and situation in the market, which the researcher excluded from the field of analysis. At the same time, obvious merit of this author is a careful study of the synergetic effect, manifestation of which indicates success of the optimization.

M. Porter in the process of determining the most promising areas of activity (in the process of optimization) considers it necessary to focus on the study of the external environment of business and include in the analysis the competitive environment in the markets of the company, competitive position of companies producing similar types of industrial products, consumer behavior models, level and trends of supply and demand. If an unfavorable trends in the target market are identified for the enterprise, or level of pressure from competitors increases, potential opportunity to achieve success in this sphere (business direction) is low. In addition, porter analysis (except for external factors) takes into account the emergence of a synergistic effect that can be obtained as a result of optimization/ reasonable diversification, for example, reducing volume of unit costs for advertising communications and sales promotion programs, brand maintenance, etc.

In the event that unfavorable trends in the target market are identified for the enterprise, or the level of pressure from competitors increases, the potential opportunity to achieve success in this sphere (business direction) is low. In addition, the porter analysis (except for external factors) takes into account the emergence of a synergistic effect that can be obtained as a result of optimization/ reasonable diversification, for example, reducing the volume of unit costs for advertising communications and sales promotion programs, brand maintenance, etc.

At the same time, the emphasis is given to study international markets and in accordance with this, to optimize activities of the enterprise, offering to use the so-called «5-factor model of industry competition». Based on the

analysis of existing approaches to optimization, it should be noted that foreign approaches to the formation of the optimal product portfolio of an industrial enterprise are not without drawbacks, which include the following:

- list of optimization criteria is far from complete, in addition, in the process of optimizing activity for each industrial enterprise, it is necessary to form an individual set of optimization criteria depending on the specifics and conditions of operation;
- unsystematic nature in the ranking procedure according to optimization criteria;
- lack of logic in the process of planning structure of a diversified product portfolio;
- vagueness of the definition of specific criteria for the selection of the most promising diversified product portfolio, since none of the proposed methods makes it possible, by combining the indicators, to obtain a single value.

Thus, determination of the attractiveness of the evaluated areas of optimization is carried out on the basis of a study of the competitive environment and identification of the level and stage of development of the industry. This procedure should be combined with a study of the internal business environment of the enterprise to determine its strengths and weaknesses. Based on the synthesis of the obtained results, attractiveness of estimated optimization directions is determined and a strategic behavior model for each of the optimization directions is proposed. It is necessary to pay attention to some limitations of this approach, the most significant of which is the condition of the company's market share not less than 10%, because otherwise there may be a significant error in the analysis.

A.P. Gradov's approach, which offers choice of the most promising direction of optimization on the basis of a certain algorithm, consisting of 5 steps, in the development of which criterion of product range of the enterprise is taken into account (Fig. 1.).

The proposed approach by A. Serpilin (based on the formation of the product range) proposes to use as a guide ranking results of different types of products for a certain economic parameter (profitability, unit price, profitability, unit cost, etc.).

The best product portfolio which have received maximum points on the rating results will be considered, while existing resource constraints should also be taken into account. This approach can be used as an auxiliary tool in the formation of the optimal diversified product portfolio of an industrial enterprise.

Analysis of all the proposed concepts of optimization of activity allows us to conclude that each of them has its own advantages and disadvantages. At the



Fig. 1. Formation of the product range of the industrial enterprise

same time, all the proposed approaches can be classified in two main directions regarding choice of optimization directions: resource and industrial-economic.

Industrial and economic concepts focus on the study of factors of the external environment of the enterprise business, as well as identification of markets with the highest rate of return. This is due to the fact that study of external factors will form an objective basis of optimization process. As for the resource concepts that appeared in the last decade of the last century, they are focused on the assessment of internal business environment. It should be noted that provisions and industrial-economic and resource concepts are widely used in optimization of industrial enterprises, therefore, from the author's point of view, to improve efficiency of this process, they should be combined, i.e. it is recommended to carry out optimization activities within the framework of such an integration approach.

Increase competitiveness of enterprises in the sphere of industrial production in modern economic conditions is becoming one of the priorities, solution of which lies in the formation of large cluster associations, functioning of which is able to provide not only an increase in value added as a result of the high production, but also development of sustainable competitive advantages of industrial enterprises-members of clusters.

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