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INTERNET BUSINESS MODELING: DEVELOPMENT OF INFORMATION INFRASTRUCTURE, TECHNOLOGIES, AND MODELS

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Abstract: Modeling the activities of Internet companies, the main task of which is to conduct an effective business, is explored in this article. The Internet faces such problems as the issue of privacy and security of the information transmitted, the issue of insufficient access to the web in some parts of the world, and some technical issues in such a seemingly high-tech system. As long as there is an Internet business, this topic will always be relevant. The need to combine optimal information systems with models of interaction between users is a constant problem that researchers, business, and government agencies are trying to find a solution. Each of the participants in this process considers the situation from their own point of view. However, the achievements of all parties form one or another model that determines the development of information systems and technologies. The models of the information business are analyzed, the directions of information commerce and the factors for the effective implementation of business models and the attractiveness of the Internet market are considered in the article. The choice of topic is determined by international trends aimed at developing business with minimal barriers for consumers in terms of receiving goods or services. In particular, during the period of struggle with COVID-19, when people are forced to stay at home, those companies that are poorly represented on the Internet will not be able to achieve success in their work. However, without the development of an optimal information infrastructure, software and sites, technologies and models, it is impossible to ensure fast customer acquisition and service.

Keywords: Internet companies, information business, Internet business, business models, risks.

I. INTRODUCTION

A group of the US scientists, with the support of the US authorities and their funding, decided to create a special network that could rapidly transmit information over long distances in the early 60s of the last century. The project was a success: people first managed to create the ARPANET information network in 1969, which was the direct predecessor of the Internet. However, this network was originally private: it only operated within the higher educational institutions of the states that took part in its development.

Such a network could already transmit a small stream of information and information commands over long distances. Next, a new and even more economical type of messaging – electronic mail – appeared on the basis of ARPANET. Then the idea emerged to expand the ARPANET network and make

it public, which was subsequently implemented – gradually, but at a fast pace. The new global public network received its current name – the Internet.

The Internet began integrating into other areas of life after all these events and the emergence of new forms of communication based on the new information world wide web. The economy was no exception. The so-called Internet banking has become very popular. Its basis was laid in the USA back in the 80s of the last century. However, it had primitive and mostly informative functions rather than operational ones. This area was actively developed in the 90s. The process of shifting physical operations into the electronic sector began in Russia in the early 2000s. Later, broker operations in the securities market were added to banking operations via the Internet along with a real-time quotation transmission system (although the basis for this was also laid in 1980).

However, the Internet was implemented in the economic sector not only in terms of finance. Moreover, the web itself formed a vast economic cluster, where electronic digital banking emerged. This sector was called e-commerce. This platform gave impetus to the improvement of old forms of trade and economic activity of companies and individual entrepreneurs. In this regard, the sector of trade in virtually any life necessities began to shift towards the Internet. Auctions also began shifting into the world wide web. The modern concept of the “Internet of Things” arose from such processes, which most accurately described its current state in economic terms. Moreover, due to its comprehensive nature of activity, the Internet provided broad opportunities to companies for unhindered and optimized conduct of the foreign economic activities, which implied the conquest of new markets for goods and services.

However, progress does not stop there. Unfortunately, this is due to the fact that the Internet has three main problems: the issue of privacy and security of the information transmitted, the issue of insufficient access to the web in some parts of the world, and some technical issues in such a seemingly high-tech system. However, the development of the modern information technologies is currently on the way to solving this problem. Progress in addressing these issues is already observed: a scheme has been recently created for sequential circuits that connect information blocks able to exist independently of each other, but at the same time to ensure the transmission of a single information signal. This technology is called Blockchain. This technology has found its application in almost all key areas of society (politics, medicine, finance). Blockchain technology has found a special role in the emergence of cryptocurrency. Cryptocurrency is a type of digital currency; however, it significantly differs from electronic money. In the context of the research, it should be noted that it is the combination of information systems and computer infrastructure with financial instruments that allows developing entrepreneurship on the Internet. From an economic point of view, the risks of any entrepreneurial activity still remain in this case.

It can be stated that Internet companies are currently experiencing a huge demand for their services, which are no longer so specific as they used to be. Many companies associated with the Internet, its development or activities in its field, are becoming famous among ordinary people now. These include Google, Yandex, eBay, Amazon, and Mail Group. The list is not limited only to these enterprises: companies involved in computer technologies (Microsoft, IBM, Apple, etc.) that directly or indirectly participate in this can also be added. Moreover, conducting business in this area also became very popular in the Russian Federation. At the same time, the features of the organization of their financial and economic activities are quite unique.

The generally accepted and standard classification of the directions is as follows [1-3]:

The first area includes intercorporate relations, where both

entities are intermediate links in the production and consumption process (B2B in the international classification, which means “Business to Business”). It implies an interaction between two corporate entities or individual entrepreneurs (which is why it is wrong to believe that there should be no individuals in this environment by default). Most often, this concept includes such types of activities as wholesale trade, sale of raw materials and semi-finished products that will be later transferred by the buyer for processing, the provision of R&D services, sale of capital goods, etc. Despite the large scale of such operations, they can also be low-cost because transactions in this area are carried out with the least frequency, but with large transactions in volume. Moreover, the highly developed communication systems with customers can be neglected in this sector (“If a large batch is ordered, the delivery to the customer is free”, although communications in this area are considered to be of the highest quality for the same reason) and often low direct and indirect costs of operations. However, these statements are not always implemented in this area, which translates into the risk of conducting business in this sector.

The second area covers financial and economic relations between organizations or individual entrepreneurs and consumers (B2C, “Business to Consumer”). This area often involves the direct sale of goods or the provision of services to the end consumers in the business circle. A small volume of transactions, but with high frequency of their implementation (the exception is when the product is “absolutely inelastic”) can be often traced in the operation of this model.

This model is a standard one. In fact, there is an improved B2B2C model or area, as well as B2G. The first, as one might guess, involves the actual addition of the two above areas in the classical classification. The latter is the economic relationship between the business represented by organizations and individual entrepreneurs and government bodies (“Business to Government”). This category is very similar to the B2C model, in which some concepts are replaced (for example, the platform, exchanges, etc. will be transformed into a “tender platform” as part of the B2G model).

The research is aimed identification of Internet information systems influence on development of business interaction models.

The tasks of the research are as follows:

- (a) exploring the information structure of modern business processes
- (b) identifying the most significant IT solutions affecting the development of business models on the Internet
- (c) exploring the risks of functioning of the identified models and their development prospects

Continuous development of information systems determines the IT progress. As far as entrepreneurship is concerned, progress is leading to building of the B5 model. The successful combination of the developed Internet infrastructure with the interests of entrepreneurs gradually legitimizes the new Blockchain model.

II. METHODS

A. Key activities of the Internet companies. Intranet as a special side and its B0 model

The dimensions of the activities of enterprises operating in this field are in fact the main foundations for the further construction of models. They also describe a particular direction of the impact of networks, which is only embodied with the direct participation of the World Wide Web [4-6]. The description of each of these dimensions is provided below.

- a) The Internet or another corporate network with an internal focus (Intranet).

This dimension implies the use of networks (Internet and the local one) only within the company for internal communications. It bears a communication nature in the company (i.e., ensuring communication between each business process that occurs in the company). This dimension includes the only virtually universal model or its layout B0, which is called the same as the dimension itself.

- b) The Internet as a World Wide Web primarily focused on external activities (Extranet).

The Extranet embodies the very global nature of the Internet,

which is the most important. This particular dimension implies the use of new technologies and the results of progress in this area. It includes several models that are worth considering separately [7, 8, 9].

Let us get back to the internal network. As already mentioned, the Intranet model is the only model within its framework. This model most likely does not apply to any of these areas (B2B, B2C, B2B2C, or B2G). It operates in the same business field, that of a large company rather than of an individual entrepreneur. The reason is the following. This model is associated with the concept of the transaction costs of the enterprise. This is only possible in conglomerates, holding companies, and other commercial organizations with a complicated hierarchy and structure. Therefore, the World Wide Web should not necessarily be a link there. In addition, it also must be said that historically this model was the first (it was actually used by its predecessor ARPANET). In order to protect data against declassification by other departments, branches, and other divisions, this company can organize a closed local area network (LAN). As such, a model of this type was created for organizing effective communication systems of the largest enterprises in structure, which need to leave some of the information confidential.

A chart of such a system is presented below (Figure 1):

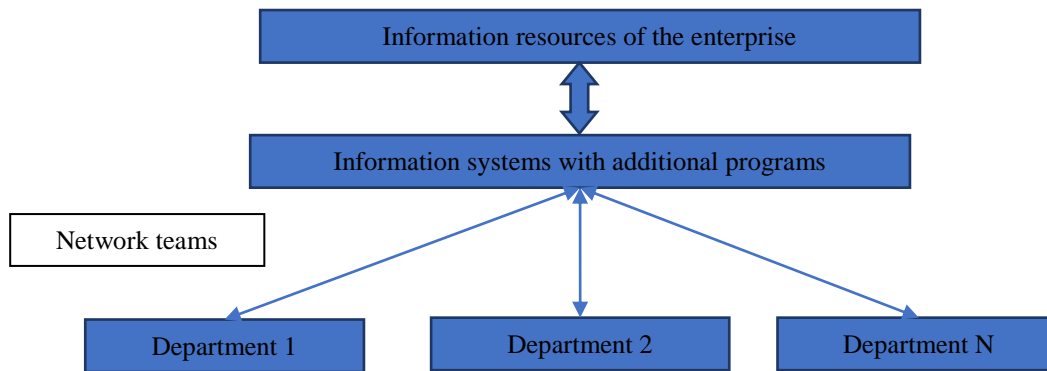


Figure 1: Chart of the Intranet model

B. Extranet models

Let us consider the Internet models of the external focus. They include B2B, B2C, and B2G areas.

III. CHARACTERISTICS OF THE B1 (“BUSINESS CARD”) AND B2 (“INFORMATION ORDER”, “INFORMATION SYSTEM OF ORDERS”) MODELS

Let us consider the first model from the Extranet network model group. It is the B1 scheme (it is also called the “Business card” model). In general, this model is the first one in the consideration of the Internet as the World Wide Web. Not only employees of the company, but also some external entities are the users in this case. These include suppliers and contractors, buyers and customers, for example. The information for them may also be limited. All the necessary

information includes prices, product range, product availability, the ability to provide services in a specific place and time, preferential and special conditions, etc. In addition, the company installs some additional plug-ins (add-ons to software and websites) that allow to establish communication between economic agents (pop-up windows with online support or advice, a feedback form for a potential or current consumer via email or phone, subscriptions, etc.). This model was especially actively used in the first Internet stores. It is also used at the moment, especially by some active electronic agents that belong to the area of small business or are individual entrepreneurs [10, 11].

The graphic image of the model is very similar to the chart of the B0 model, and B1 looks as follows (Figure 2):

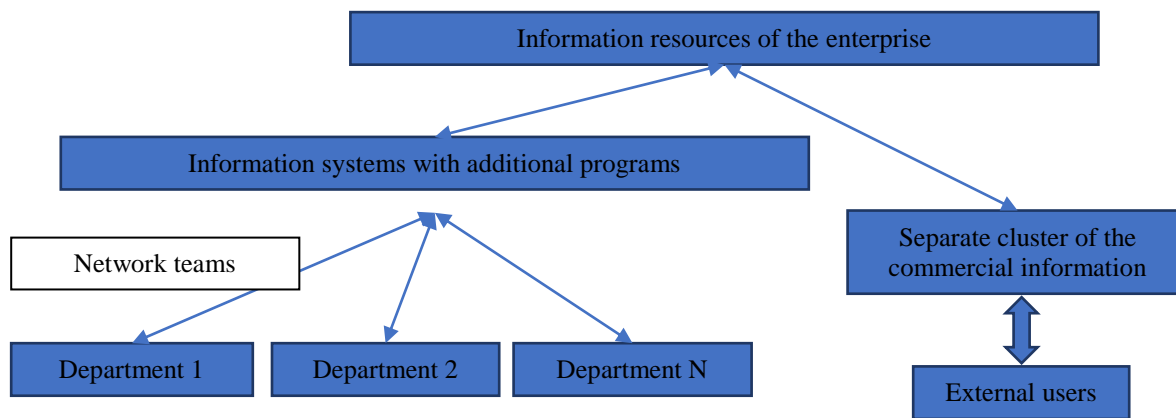


Figure 2: The B1 "Business card" model

It can be seen from the characteristics that this model provides some basic information to customers, users, and other interacting entities in order to assist them in making decisions in the procurement process. This is why this model was called "Business card".

The following model has a somewhat complicated structure compared to the previous ones. It is called the B2 "Information order" model. This model is a consequence of technological progress in the Internet. It incorporates several elements of the economic infrastructure system of the modern market economic conditions that play intermediary and organizational roles but are already digitalized and virtualized. It is very important to understand that specific objects of the market infrastructure – the information systems of orders – are divided depending on the direction of the business model of the enterprise (which gave the name to the model) [12, 13].

Let us start with the B2B sector. The infrastructure through which Internet companies operate in this business area includes specialized exchanges, corporate auctions, and special information systems of the enterprise. In this context, the exchange is similar to the tender platform in its purpose and is aimed at finding favorable conditions for both the contractor or customer and the consumer or buyer. Corporate auctions are organized trading platforms, where several entities claim to execute a certain contract or order, offering the best conditions until no one else offers better, or the rest are unable to complete the order meeting the conditions as well as the winner. These first two platforms are independent trading electronic systems. As a rule, they allow to filter the conditions of orders by price parameters, characteristics, and other components during the search. These schemes are designed to reduce enterprise costs as much as possible. However, it is worth remembering that conducting operations, and even entering the markets through these infrastructure elements are by no means free: fees for transactions or even a registration fee on the platform may be charged. Moreover, exchanges and auctions may provide some additional services for a fee. All this also represents the costs of enterprises.

At the enterprise level, the infrastructure for receiving orders in the B2B sector is carried out using special enterprise information systems. This element is aimed more at

interacting with the existing clients and suppliers of the commercial organization, as well as with the former ones. However, the main advantage of this system is also the ability to optimize the procurement process by filtering products when seeking for the right one, performing analysis, optimizing logistics processes, etc.

Let us consider the sector of interaction between a business entity and an end B2C consumer. First of all, the "end consumer" will be associated with an individual (a buying person) in this case. Internet stores and consumer auctions are the main elements of the infrastructure responsible for placing and receiving orders. Let us start with the first one. This form of activity is actually at the peak of its popularity at the moment. Internet stores are not only created as separate business entities in this case, but also as part of retail and wholesale companies that have operated offline in the consumer sector until recently. This was dictated by the decrease in the share of free time in the routine of the "man of today" in the current conditions, as well as other objective circumstances. However, there are several drawbacks. For example, logistic and transport costs are among the most significant ones. They cannot always be transferred completely to a specific consumer, which increases selling prices, which will mean an increase in the risk of a decrease in demand. In addition, there are some information and commercial risks associated with cybercriminals in the World Wide Web. Their activities can bring damage not only to a specific department represented by the Internet store, but to the entire enterprise.

Consumer auctions are another element of the B2 model infrastructure in the B2C sector. Internet auctions for ordinary consumers are relatively new platforms for interaction within this business model. eBay and Amazon (both located in the USA) were innovators in this area. This platform is good because it can be used to sell some used goods or the ones that have not been yet used for some reason from a special, limited, and other unique series for quite a lot of money. In turn, this platform provides consumers with an opportunity to buy a particular product to meet their needs (perhaps even at a low price for them). Some of the consumer Internet auctions also share the functions of the Internet stores, in some respects, as they allow suppliers with goods for a fixed price

to sell them in the non-auction mode (there is no competitive part). However, significant shortcomings arise when conducting activities on this platform. The most serious one is the chance to stumble upon scammers: auctions have not yet come up with good tools to deal with them (blacklisting is the only measure). Another drawback is the lack of quality control over the goods, since the responsibility of the auction organization (as a simple intermediary) does not include this function. Consumers acquire a certain product at their own peril and risk, guided by their consumer expectations. The information risk is the final one.

The final area to be considered is the provision of business services to the government (B2G) [14, 15, 16]. In fact, there is only one platform related to market infrastructure – a tender platform for state procurements. In the Internet space, this sector is represented by a special portal under the Treasury. This platform can either integrate into the existing private portals considered in the B2B area or have a separate platform

on this portal. The state agencies are given the opportunity to meet their needs on a commercial basis through such platforms. Moreover, the state can sell goods and provide services to businesses entities and entrepreneurs through its bodies and enterprises. There are also ranking functions for the existing orders by their price and even by the legislative framework on the basis of which the state body holds a tender on such platforms. Unfortunately, this method also has its drawbacks, especially in the Russian realities of commercial organizations and individual entrepreneurs. Firstly, usually state orders can only be carried out by medium and large enterprises because of their amounts. Secondly, there are corruption risks when working with the state bodies. Finally, the bureaucracy in the country makes activities in this area unprofitable.

A chart of the B2 model (without B2G, since it contains an element of the market infrastructure) is presented below (Figure 3):

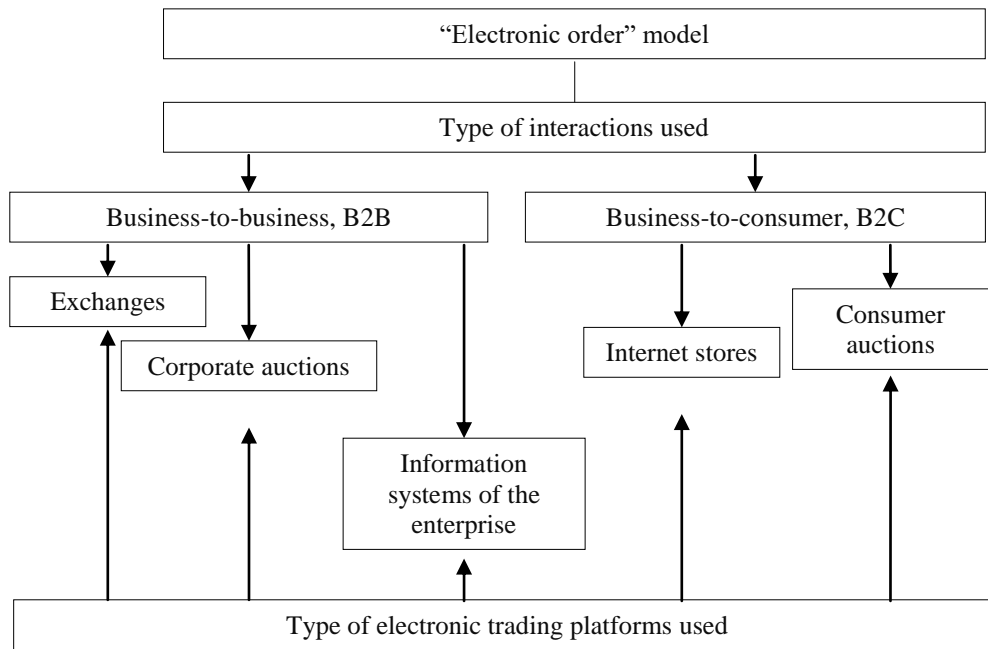


Figure 3: Chart of the B2 “Information order” model

IV. CHARACTERISTICS OF THE B3 (“FULL AUTOMATION”) AND B4 (“OUTSOURCING”) MODELS

The last two models of the Extranet are also the results of technological progress in the development of the World Wide Web [17-19].

The B3 model (also known as the “Full automation” model) includes the widespread introduction of automatic technologies from the ICT at all stages of the enterprise circle: from wholesale purchases of goods and raw materials for production through the already mentioned specialized ordering systems to sales through their own online stores.

First of all, it is worth starting with the stage of entry of raw

materials or goods as a result of deliveries. The automation of procurement and orders starts at this stage. A certain part of the database provides the information required by suppliers. Organization’s overheads are reduced, savings in electronic document management and financial accounting of operations and optimization of logistics processes, etc. are achieved when using automated systems. However, an automated system also requires certain costs – it would be wrong to assume that they would be incurred at the time of purchase of such a system. Fixed costs may include fees for using additional features, licensing fees, etc. Therefore, such systems are very often fully functional in large companies, and the model itself is applicable to medium and large businesses.

This model was adapted for the B2B2C scheme mentioned above. In fact, it was implemented in full in this case. In addition, most often this scheme coexists with the real sector of the economy. This means that in addition to Internet stores, there are also a large number of points for offline sales.

Many large enterprises in the industrial sector of the economy are trying to fully switch to this model today, or at least get closer to it. These include Toyota, Ford Motor Company, GM, and other greats of the automotive industry.

The chart of the B3 model is presented below (Figure 4):

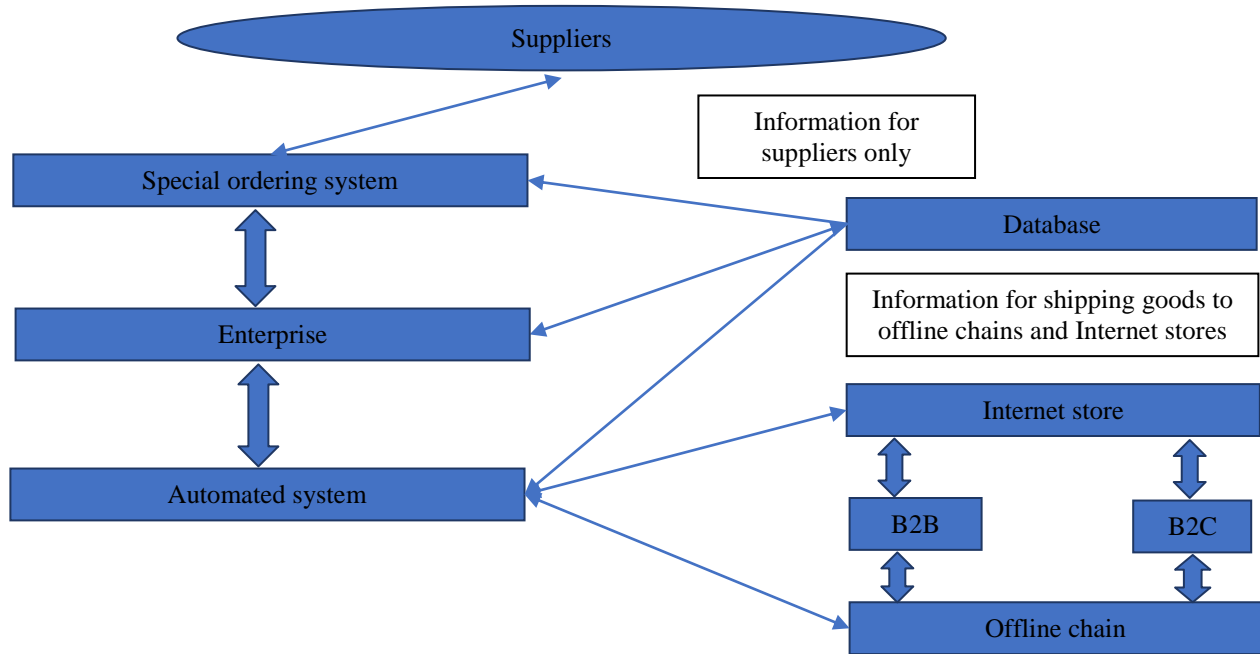


Figure 4: The B3 “Full automation” model

Let us study the B4 “Outsourcing” model. It also emerged not long ago with the advent of the outsourcing phenomenon, which involves the transfer by some organization of certain functions of the enterprise under an agreement on the provision of appropriate services, in order to maintain its stable operation and reduce the cost of creating the appropriate departments to deal with the transferred responsibilities. The emergence of outsourcing on a large scale was due to the development of information and communication technology [20, 21]. Prior to this, there was only one type of it – production. It was not much in demand, since enterprises were engaged in the core production according to constituent documents, and such outsourcing was useful only in one case: when the enterprise needed services of auxiliary workshops (which was not always in demand).

An enterprise can outsource the following functions:

- a) Marketing functions. These include market analysis, advertising, and more;
- b) Logistic functions. For example, determination of the optimal routes for supply and delivery of goods and raw materials, etc.;
- c) Financial functions. Mostly related to accounting; and
- d) Some managerial functions.

Outsourcing reduces the number of departments and divisions of the company, which allows it not only to remove unnecessary elements in the usual sense, but also to optimize its structure and even reorganize it globally. This results in cost savings.

The chart of the B4 model is shown in the figure below (Figure 5):

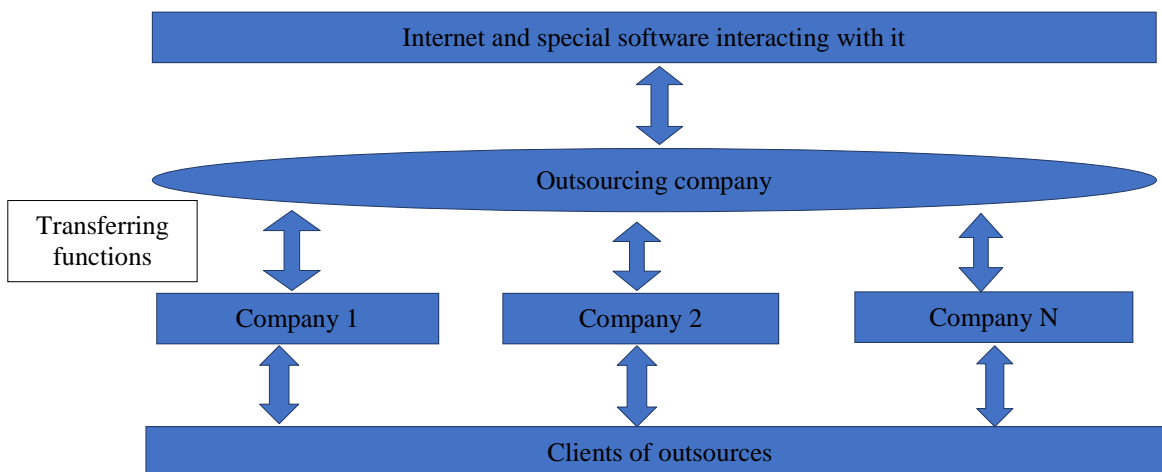


Figure 5: The B4 “Outsourcing” model

To summarize, the considered models are actually ranked in chronological order. However, this does not mean that they do not find their application at the present time. Moreover, they can be combined under certain circumstances or if necessary. For example, the Intranet B0 model can be used in internal communications, while one of three models can be used in relation to the external environment (within the scope of the already mentioned Extranet), the first of which (B1 “Business card”) does not actually require the creation or the participation of any additional communication schemes or market infrastructure facilities.

V. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The risks of conducting business by Internet companies are divided into two categories: standard risks of conducting any economic commercial activities and specific threats related to enterprises in a particular field [22-26].

Risks of the first category are universal probable threats and obstacles to conducting business. These risks include the following:

a) Interest rate risk.

It describes the occurrence of the probability of interest rate changes by the main monetary authority, represented mainly by the main Bank or Reserve of the country, which can have either positive or negative effect on the activities of companies in a particular field and in general business activity in the country. The matter is that in the modern market conditions, enterprises do not actually expand at the expense of their equity only. Organizations often take interest-bearing loans for the implementation of an extensive growth strategy. From the point of view of tactical planning of activities (shorter time period), loans are also an integral part of maintaining the production activities of enterprises. It all depends on the key rate (or the refinancing rate, where such is still present). With its increase by the monetary authority, the cost of loans of regular commercial banks for the entire business and others also increase. The enterprise faces the following dilemma: either to partly shift the cost of loans and

borrowings directly to the product costs or to reduce the scale of the enterprise. In the first case, there is a risk of a strong drop in demand for goods, which will result in losses for the enterprise. The second option, which is the most preferred, will cut profits. However, both options remain negative, which determines the phenomena and processes in such a direction as risky for the business.

b) The operational risk subgroup.

It arises in connection with the likelihood of a violation of the production process of the enterprise or in the event of a conflict of interest with other economic agents. Such risks in this area include technical interruptions related to special equipment (Internet cables, servers, high volume data storages, etc.), problems with the provision of services to particular clients, and problems associated with government bodies. The latter is particularly relevant for the Russian Federation at the moment. For example, a law called “Yarovaya package” was adopted, aimed at maintaining national security in the state, according to its official wording. This law also introduced the obligation for telecommunications companies and some organizations related to activities in the Internet to collect some private data about their consumers. The authors do not address the social issue and problems of this law. From the economic point of view, the law is also disadvantageous for enterprises of these industries, since additional capacities (data storage servers) are required to store a huge amount of data about each person, which will also cost enormous money. This example demonstrates a conflict of interests between enterprises and the state, which will have an economic effect on both consumers (due to higher prices for important network services) and companies.

c) The risk of violation of the financial stability of the enterprise and other financial risks.

Internet companies, as well as industrial ones, also face such risks. They suggest a violation of the liquidity of the

enterprise assets, financial stability, and a strong imbalance between the organization's own and borrowed funds. In addition, high growth rates of offers from many Internet companies for their services play a negative role. Relatively speaking, there is "overstocking" in the Internet area. This occurred in 1995 – 2001 in the USA, when the financial crisis of the Internet area happened. It caused severe damages to large companies and few medium-sized companies, and led to the massive bankruptcy of small enterprises, individual entrepreneurs, and most medium-sized organizations.

Let us consider the second group of risks for the enterprise operation in the Internet industry. They are associated with special features of conducting business in this innovative industry. These include:

1) Information risk.

It has already been considered in the analysis of extranet models. This risk and the development of methods to combat it are the most urgent problems at the moment. The activities of cybercriminals are damaging the activities of Internet companies and their consumers on a massive scale. Special software, such as antivirus, is used to prevent hacker attacks by cybercriminals on the company's servers and information resources today, but it is not a guarantee of protection, since its program code can also be hacked (and the protection as well, accordingly). This will affect enterprises and interacting entities using all models from B2B to B2B2C and B2G.

2) Risk associated with the specifics of competition and the organization of the company in the early stages of its existence.

The Internet market has become one of the most competitive and open markets today. A small enterprise and an entrepreneur may not need a lot of costs and resources to enter it. Despite this, it must be kept in mind that other actors who intend to do the same are also on the alert. Moreover, each of them has its own competitive advantage, which will be put at the forefront at the immediate launch of operational activities. The question is how these key benefits, ideas, and unique elements of the company strategy will be implemented. The venture may fail in some cases if an enterprise has improperly planned its activities or entered the wrong market segment. For example, the concept of selling a very large amount of durable goods at affordable prices is not too consistent with the B2C model. Such planning is a managerial task.

Only the main factors are listed in this study. The rest can be identified by many analysis models and methods, which also help to compare them (SWOT, PEST analysis, risk matrices, and other methods).

VI. CONCLUSION

The Internet business is becoming more popular. The number of Internet users and the turnover of e-commerce are constantly growing. In these conditions, the managers who are able to assess the capabilities of new information technologies

and their introduction into the activities of the enterprise, as well as to understand the business models of the Internet market can improve their strategic positions using global networks or create their own new Internet business that has a number of advantages compared to the traditional business.

The Internet business is still an actively developing field of business. This statement applies not only to highly developed countries, but also to Russia. The virtually unceasing progress in the IT sector will most likely also lead to the design of the B5 model, which will probably be called by the name of the already discovered new technology "Blockchain" model. Much in the success of the company depends on the choice of a particular model.

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