

Ivey Case Studies: Co-ops and Credit Unions

Note: Case studies are in alphabetical order; credit unions are included in the first list and also broken out in a separate list beginning on page 3. Click on the title to take you to the summary page for the case. On the summary page, click on [link to case](#) to take you to the case on the Ivey Publishing site.

Contents

| | |
|--|----|
| Affinity Plus (A) | |
| — Credit union in the US | 5 |
| Agricultural Cooperatives: Origins, Structure, Financing and Partnerships | |
| — Agricultural coops in the US | 5 |
| Back Office Cooperative | |
| — Business-consulting coop in the US | 6 |
| Bloemenveiling Aalsmeer | |
| — Flower-growing and marketing coop in the Netherlands | 6 |
| Blue Ocean or Stormy Waters? Buying Nix Check Cashing | |
| — Credit union contemplates buying check-cashing business in the US | 7 |
| Canada Wide Savings, Loan and Trust Company | |
| — Savings, loan, and trust company in Canada | 7 |
| Challenges of Growth at Protegra | |
| — Computer software and business-performance-consulting coop in Canada | 8 |
| CHS Inc.: Cooperative Leadership in a Global Food Economy | |
| — Farm cooperative in the US | 9 |
| Co-operative Bank | |
| — Coop bank in the UK | 9 |
| Credit Unions: The Future of the Cooperative Financial Institution | |
| — Regulatory proposals around credit unions from a policy perspective | 10 |
| Diamond Foods | |
| — Snack-food cooperative in the US | 10 |
| Diamond Walnut Growers | |
| — Walnut growing and marketing coop in the US | 11 |
| Every Employee an Owner. Really. | |
| — Employee-ownership programs in the US | 11 |
| Federated Co-operatives Limited: Change Management | |
| — Organizational change at a large wholesale co-op in western Canada | 12 |
| Fonterra: Taking on the Dairy World | |
| — Dairy cooperative in New Zealand | 13 |
| Food Store of the Northern Lakes Cooperative | |
| — Grocery department of a cooperative in the US | 13 |

Ivey Case Studies: Contents

| | |
|--|----|
| Foundation for International Development Assistance/Productive Cooperatives Haiti: Increasing Organizational Capacity | |
| — Production coops in Haiti | 14 |
| Gearing Up at REI | |
| — Sporting-gear coop in the US | 15 |
| Goals in a Market-driven Economy | |
| — Insurance coop in Singapore | 15 |
| Harrington Financial Group | |
| — Savings and loan coop in the US | 16 |
| Indupalma and the Associated Labor Cooperatives, 1991–2002 | |
| — Palm and rubber coop in Colombia | 17 |
| Irizar in 2005 | |
| — Luxury-coach-vehicle-body coop in Spain | 17 |
| Just Us! Coffee Roasters | |
| — Coffee coop in Canada | 18 |
| La Fageda | |
| — Yogurt and dairy-pudding coop that employs the mentally disabled and mentally ill in Spain | 19 |
| La Fageda: An Outrageous Initiative | |
| — Yogurt and dairy-pudding coop that employs the mentally disabled and mentally ill in Spain | 19 |
| MD Foods Amba | |
| — Dairy coop in Denmark | 20 |
| Mid-Missouri Energy: Ethanol from Corn | |
| — Ethanol coop in the US | 20 |
| Migros | |
| — Food coop in Switzerland | 21 |
| Migros (Switzerland) | |
| — Grocery coop in Switzerland | 21 |
| Mission Federal Credit Union | |
| — Student-run credit union in the US | 22 |
| Mountain Equipment Co-op: Digital Strategy | |
| — Outdoor clothing and equipment coop in Canada | 23 |
| Mountain Equipment Co-op: The Private Label Strategy | |
| — Outdoor clothing and equipment coop in Canada | 23 |
| Mountain Equipment Co-op: Retailing with a Difference | |
| — Outdoor clothing and equipment coop in Canada | 24 |
| Negotiating for Fertilizer | |
| — Asset-based financing and agriculture training services for smallholder farmers in East Africa | 25 |
| Northwest Mutual Funds | |
| — Mutual-funds company in Canada | 25 |
| NTUC Income of Singapore (A): Re-architecting Legacy Systems | |
| — Income insurance coop in Singapore | 26 |
| Ontario Machinery Ring (A) — Problem Definition | |
| — Farm machinery coop in Canada | 26 |

Ivey Case Studies: Contents

| | |
|--|----|
| Purchasing Co-op | |
| — Purchasing coop in Canada | 27 |
| Rick Surpin (A) | |
| — Home health care coop in the US | 28 |
| Ripe 'N Ready | |
| — Stoned-fruit coop in the US | 28 |
| Rise and Decline of Labor-Management Cooperation: Lessons from Health Care in the Twin Cities | |
| — Labour-management cooperation in the US | 29 |
| Rural Credit Cooperatives in India | |
| — Rural credit unions in India | 30 |
| Saskatchewan Wheat Pool 2005 | |
| — Agrifood coop in Canada | 30 |
| South Dakota Wheat Growers | |
| — Grain producing and marketing coop in the US | 31 |
| Supply Chain Optimization at Madurai Aavin Milk Dairy | |
| — Dairy coop in India | 31 |
| Sustaining a Social Venture: Transformation of Annapurna Mahila Mandal into Annapurna Pariwar | |
| — Micro-credit coop in India | 32 |
| Tri Valley Growers: A New Age Co-op | |
| — Food-processing coop in the US | 33 |
| Vancity Credit Union — Strategy in Financial Services | |
| — Credit union in Canada | 33 |
| Vancity: Doing Good, Doing Well | |
| — Credit union in Canada | 34 |
| Vancity Savings Credit Union: Corporate Venturing into Uncharted Waters | |
| — Credit union in Canada | 34 |
| Western Union: Our World, Our Family | |
| — Financial services and communications company in the US | 35 |
| Women's Thrift Cooperatives in Andhra Pradesh | |
| — Savings and lending credit unions in India | 35 |
| The World's First Web Services Community Portal: BigTrumpet.com of NTUC Income, Singapore | |
| — Web-services technology in Singapore | 36 |
| | |
| Credit Unions | |
| Affinity Plus (A) | |
| — Credit union in the US | 5 |
| Blue Ocean or Stormy Waters? Buying Nix Check Cashing | |
| — Credit union contemplates buying check-cashing business in the US | 7 |
| Canada Wide Savings, Loan and Trust Company | |
| — Savings, loan, and trust company in Canada | 7 |

Ivey Case Studies: Contents

| | |
|--|----|
| Co-operative Bank | |
| — Coop bank in the UK | 9 |
| Credit Unions: The Future of the Cooperative Financial Institution | |
| — Regulatory proposals around credit unions from a policy perspective | 10 |
| Harrington Financial Group | |
| — Savings and loan coop in the US | 16 |
| Mission Federal Credit Union | |
| — Student-run credit union in the US | 22 |
| Northwest Mutual Funds | |
| — Mutual-funds company in Canada | 25 |
| Rural Credit Cooperatives in India | |
| — Rural credit unions in India | 30 |
| Sustaining a Social Venture: Transformation of Annapurna Mahila Mandal into Annapurna Pariwar | |
| — Micro-credit coop in India | 32 |
| Vancity Credit Union — Strategy in Financial Services | |
| — Credit union in Canada | 33 |
| Vancity: Doing Good, Doing Well | |
| — Credit union in Canada | 34 |
| Vancity Savings Credit Union: Corporate Venturing into Uncharted Waters | |
| — Credit union in Canada | 34 |
| Western Union: Our World, Our Family | |
| — Financial services and communications company in the US | 35 |
| Women’s Thrift Cooperatives in Andhra Pradesh | |
| — Savings and lending credit unions in India | 35 |

Ivey Case Studies: Co-ops and Credit Unions

Affinity Plus (A) → [link to case](#)

— *Campbell, Dennis; Tufano, Peter*

Product number: 209026

Publication date: 07/22/2008

Revised date: 10/05/2012

Length: 18 pages

Product type: Case (Field)

Source: Harvard Business School

The executive team at Affinity Plus Federal Credit Union has pushed the concept of members first deeply throughout the organization, empowering employees to put member-owners' interests ahead of either the organization's interests or their own. As a result of this focus, the credit union must determine what to do with its profitable indirect auto lending business, which some see as inconsistent with the strategic direction set by the management team.

Issues: Financial management; Control systems; Cooperatives; Organizational design; Incentives; Finance

Disciplines: Finance

Setting: United States, 254, \$65 million, 2003

Agricultural Cooperatives: Origins, Structure, Financing and Partnerships → [link to case](#)

— *Goldberg, Ray A.; Preble, Matthew*

Product number: 911410

Publication date: 11/18/2010

Length: 15 pages

Product type: Note

Source: Harvard Business School

This technical note explains how agricultural cooperatives are structured and financed, as well as how they form partnerships with one another and other elements of the food system.

Issues: Cooperatives; Partnerships; Agricultural cooperatives; Supply chain management

Disciplines: General Management/Strategy

Setting: United States, \$192 billion, 2010

Back Office Cooperative → [link to case](#)

— *Haider, Don*

Product number: KEL583

Publication date: 11/01/2011

Length: 17 pages

Product type: Case

Source: Kellogg School of Management, Northwestern University

Bryan Preston, CEO of the Back Office Cooperative, leads several large human service providers through the process of building a shared-services platform to leverage scale and efficiencies. This successful collaboration matches the business case for restructuring against the constraints of mission-driven enterprises.

Issues: Strategic alliances; Restructuring; Restructuring strategies; Collaboration;
Nonprofit organizations

Disciplines: General Management/Strategy

Setting: United States; Illinois

Bloemenveiling Aalsmeer → [link to case](#)

— *Oberholzer-Gee, Felix; Dessain, Vincent; Beyersdorfer, Daniela; Sjoman, Anders*

Product number: 706441

Publication date: 12/14/2005

Revised date: 08/18/2006

Length: 18 pages

Product type: Case (Field)

Source: Harvard Business School

The Dutch Verenigde Bloemenveiling Aalsmeer Cooperative (VBA) was one of the world's largest flower exchanges. Around 6,300 flower growers, one half of them located in the Netherlands, used the auction to sell cut flowers and plants to more than 1,000 wholesalers. In 2004, the value of the flowers and plants traded at Aalsmeer exceeded 1.6 billion euros, representing 36% of the world's trade in cut flowers. Every morning, VBA held 55,000 Dutch auctions to match buyers and suppliers. While formidable in size, VBA management worried about the future of the exchange because direct sales between growers and buyers had started to bypass the auction. Kenyan growers, for instance, often shipped roses directly to wholesalers. VBA's management considered a number of strategic initiatives and tactical moves in response to the growth in direct sales. Should the exchange allow non-Dutch growers to become members? Would it make sense to have the wholesalers bear a larger fraction of the trading cost? Philip Smits, CEO of VBA, knew that expanding VBA membership and adjusting trading commissions were guaranteed to be hotly contested topics at the upcoming general meeting.

Issues: Market entry; International business; Market segmentation; International trade;
Green marketing; Auctions; Strategy formulation; Commodity markets; Bids

Disciplines: General Management/Strategy

Setting: 1,770, \$2 billion revenues, 2005, 2005

Blue Ocean or Stormy Waters? Buying Nix Check Cashing → [link to case](#)

— *Tufano, Peter; Ryan, Andrea*

Product number: 210012

Publication date: 07/09/2009

Revised date: 07/31/2009

Length: 28 pages

Product type: Case (Field)

Source: Harvard Business School

Kinecta Federal Credit Union has the opportunity to purchase Nix Check Cashing as part of their blue ocean strategy to reach the financially underserved and increase credit union membership and deposits. But they face financial as well as reputational risk. Check cashing, payday lending and other alternative financial services are maligned in mainstream financial circles. This case asks students to evaluate both organizations, their respective industries, and the proposed \$45 million deal and determine whether it makes sense for Kinecta to purchase Nix.

Issues: Financial planning; Financial statements; Change management; Strategic planning;
Consumer credit

Disciplines: Finance

Setting: 669, \$123,000,000, 2007

Canada Wide Savings, Loan and Trust Company → [link to case](#)

— *Shaw, David C.*

Product number: 9B12N009

Publication date: 07/09/2012

Revised date: 07/09/2012

Length: 11 pages

Product type: Case (Gen Exp)

Source: Ivey

The chief executive officer of a financial institution must decide whether or not to grant a \$3 million loan to an investor in mutual funds. The financial institution makes loans of \$2 for every \$1 invested in mutual funds to qualified investors. The issue here is to determine whether

the risks associated with this loan application justify the investment. The case involves assessing the various risks associated with the loan, including the credit risk attached to the borrower, the market risk of the planned investment program, and the currency risk of a loan in Canadian dollars and investments in foreign securities.

Learning objective: The case describes the situation of the lender but could also be used from the point of view of a borrower and would ask the question: “Is this plan to borrow \$3 million a good investment strategy for this investor?” The case develops a clear understanding of the risks associated for lender and borrower and provides a basis for thinking through this investment strategy.

Issues: Investment Decision Making; Risk Assessment; Canada

Disciplines: Finance, International

Industries: Finance and Insurance

Setting: Canada, Small, 2012

Intended audience: Undergraduate/MBA

Challenges of Growth at Protegra → [link to case](#)

— *Travica, Bob*

Product number: 9B10E004

Publication date: 04/21/2010

Length: 14 pages

Product type: Case (Field)

Source: Ivey

Protegra is a small company established in 1998 in Winnipeg, Manitoba. The company specializes in the area of computer software development and business performance consulting. Protegra features a unique organizational design, characterized by a lack of hierarchy and a collegial, professional culture centred on employee and customer values. Various information systems support Protegra’s design. In the process of expanding into foreign markets and enlarging staff, Protegra has been concerned with preserving its way.

Issues: Managing Growth; Organizational Change; Information Systems; Consulting

Disciplines: General Management/Strategy, Information Systems, Organizational Behaviour/Leadership

Industries: Administrative, Support, Waste Management and Remediation Services

Setting: Canada, Small, 2009

Intended audience: MBA/Postgraduate

CHS Inc.: Cooperative Leadership in a Global Food Economy → [link to case](#)

— *Goldberg, Ray A; Preble, Matthew*

Product number: 911409

Publication date: 11/18/2010

Revised date: 01/11/2012

Length: 25 pages

Product type: Case (Field)

Source: Harvard Business School

CHS, the largest farm cooperative in the US, was planning its 2020 vision statement and the role the cooperative should play in the food system.

Issues: Long term planning; Cooperatives; Global business

Disciplines: General Management/Strategy

Setting: Minnesota, 8,812, \$25.3 billion (2010), 2010

Co-operative Bank → [link to case](#)

— *Kaplan, Robert S.; Datar, Srikant M.*

Product number: 195196

Publication date: 03/23/1995

Revised date: 04/22/1997

Length: 17 pages

Product type: Case (Field)

Source: Harvard Business School

A British bank with strong roots in the cooperative movement encounters declining profitability in an increasingly competitive and deregulated financial services industry. It attempts to grow by broadening its customer base and increasing the range of products and services offered. It turns to activity-based costing as part of its reengineering effort to learn more about the process and product costs and customer profitability, and contemplates what actions to take based on this new information.

Issues: Management accounting; Activity-based costing; Cost accounting; Cost analysis;
Cost systems

Disciplines: Accounting

Setting: England, £300 million deposits, 1993, 1993

Credit Unions: The Future of the Cooperative Financial Institution → [link to case](#)

— *Pozen, Robert C.; Hou, Grace*

Product number: 312131

Publication date: 05/09/2012

Revised date: 07/19/2012

Length: 22 pages

Product type: Case (Library)

Source: Harvard Business School

Credit unions are a specialized type of depository institution with a cooperative, non-profit structure and a federal tax exemption. They originated as small, cooperative institutions with an emphasis on uncollateralized consumer lending to the unbanked working-classes. Over time, credit unions have evolved into a wide range of sizes, though compared to banks, a much higher proportion of credit unions are still very small. One subset of non-traditional credit unions has been able to expand as a result of looser field of membership requirements and expanded product and service offerings through the use of corporate credit unions and Credit Union Service Organizations. This case looks at the regulatory proposals around credit unions coming out of the financial crisis from the policy-making perspective. Credit unions have lobbied policymakers for expanded powers that will enable them to help stimulate the economy and create jobs by serving more customers and extending more credit. These expanded powers include increasing the business lending cap and raising secondary capital from non-members. The protagonist is a research analyst who must evaluate the benefits of credit unions against the costs, including the federal tax exemption. He also must consider the policy objectives of credit unions against alternative ways to achieve those objectives.

Issues: Financial management; Financial planning; Investment management; Finance

Disciplines: General Management/Strategy

Setting: 2011

Diamond Foods → [link to case](#)

— *Bell, David E.; Shelman, Mary*

Product number: 510013

Publication date: 12/15/2009

Length: 34 pages

Product type: Case (Field)

Source: Harvard Business School

CEO Michael Mendes has transformed a grower-owned cooperative into a publicly traded top marketer of snack foods. Diamond's organization, culture, product development process, advertising and promotion strategy, and specifically its marketing department have been built from the ground up to address fundamental changes in retail structure and consumer behavior. Can the Diamond model be successfully applied to other food categories?

Issues: Cooperatives; Corporate strategy; Advertising campaigns; Market segmentation; Leadership

Disciplines: General Management/Strategy

Setting: United States, 850, \$600 million, 2009

Diamond Walnut Growers → [link to case](#)

— *Goldberg, Ray A.; Carter, Mollie H.*

Product number: 597048

Publication date: 11/12/1996

Length: 23 pages

Product type: Case (Field)

Source: Harvard Business School

Diamond Walnut Growers is the largest walnut marketer in the world. As a grower-owned cooperative, it is under pressure to operate as efficiently as independent handlers. Diamond is evaluating its high-margin consumer branded business, which has experienced little to no growth, and the low-margin but rapidly growing industrial business to determine its strategy regarding each.

Issues: Cooperatives; Marketing strategy

Disciplines: Marketing

Setting: United States, 500, \$200 million revenues, 1996, 1996

Every Employee an Owner. Really. → [link to case](#)

— *Rosen, Corey; Case, John; Staubus, Martin*

Product number: R0506H

Publication date: 06/01/2005

Length: 8 pages

Product type: Harvard Business Review Article

Source: Harvard Business School Publishing

Surveys indicate that when new rules on expensing stock options take effect, many companies are likely to limit the number of employees who can receive equity compensation. But companies that reserve equity for executives are bound to suffer in the long run. Study after study proves that broad-based ownership, when done right, leads to higher productivity, lower workforce turnover, better recruits, and bigger profits. Done right is the key. Here are the four most important factors in implementing a broad-based employee equity plan: A significant portion of the workforce — generally, most of the full-time people — must hold equity; employees must think the amounts they hold can significantly improve their financial prospects; managerial practices and policies must reinforce the plan; and employees must feel a true sense of com-

pany ownership. Those factors add up to an ownership culture in which employees' interests are aligned with the company's. The result is a workforce that is loyal, cooperative, and willing to go above and beyond to make the organization successful. A wide variety of companies have recorded exceptional business performance with the help of employee-ownership programs supported by management policies. The authors examine two: Science Applications International, a research and development contractor, and Scot Forge, which shapes metal and other materials for industrial machinery. At both companies, every employee with a year or so of service holds equity, and employees who stay on can accumulate a comfortable nest egg. Management's sharing of financial information reinforces workers' sense of ownership, as does the expectation that employees will accept the responsibilities of ownership. Workers with an ownership stake internalize their responsibilities and feel they have an obligation to both management and one another.

Issues: Organizational structure; Employee benefits; Employee stock ownership plans; Stock options

Disciplines: Organizational Behaviour/Leadership

Setting: Arizona; California; Texas; Vermont; Missouri

Federated Co-operatives Limited: Change Management → [link to case](#)

— *Dionne Pohler*

Product Number: 9B16M066

Publication Date: 04/29/2016

Revised Date: 04/29/2016

Length: 10 pages

Product Type: Case (Field)

Source: Ivey

In 2013, after almost three years of making organizational changes, the chief executive officer of Federated Co-Operatives Limited (FCL) wondered if he was pushing his unique company through a transformation too quickly or if he was not pushing hard enough to modernize the company. FCL was a co-operative, a remnant of a farmers' purchasing association that had grown to become one of the 50 largest companies in Canada. However, the company's financial success and democratic governance structure had lulled FCL into a situation characterized by outdated processes and systems. Information technology, branding, leadership, and talent management processes needed to be transformed, and a culture change was necessary to move forward. But some employees were resisting, possibly as a result of burnout due to the magnitude of change or the co-operative governance structure that complicated the process of change. The chief executive officer needed to address his employees at a questions and answers session about the progress of the transformation. What should he tell them?

Learning objective: This case can be used in any general management course that has modules emphasizing organizational culture and change. Given the level at which the issues are explored, the case may be most useful for senior-undergraduate or graduate-level courses in leadership or strategic human resource management. After completing this case, students will be able to:

- Evaluate change management theories and concepts.
- Become familiar with alternative business models.
- Understand the ambiguity that surrounds decisions during large-scale changes.
- Identify the potential obstacles for this organization and how to overcome them.

Issues: Change management; Culture; Co-operatives; Co-op; Leadership; Canada; Farming; Agriculture; Modernization; Update; Technology

Disciplines: General Management/Strategy

Industries: Wholesale Trade

Setting: Canada, Large, 2013

Intended audience: Undergraduate/MBA

Fonterra: Taking on the Dairy World → [link to case](#)

— *Goldberg, Ray A.; Porraz, Jose Miguel*

Product number: 903413

Publication date: 12/02/2002

Revised date: 05/29/2003

Length: 22 pages

Product type: Case (Field)

Source: Harvard Business School

Fonterra was a cooperatively owned dairy company — New Zealand's largest company and the world's largest exporter of dairy products. To maintain its leadership, Fonterra had to respond to increased competition, new consumer tastes, consolidation of its customers, and increasing subsidies on milk by developing countries. This futuristic case identifies trends that the cooperative has to take into account for its future success. It can be examined as a model for other co-operatives in other commodity systems.

Issues: Co-operatives; Trade policy; International business; Partnerships; Globalization; Mergers

Disciplines: General Management/Strategy

Setting: New Zealand, 20,000, \$6.6 billion revenues, 2002, 2002

Food Store of the Northern Lakes Cooperative → [link to case](#)

— *Foltos, Barry C.; Gaumer, Carol J.; Shah, Amit J.*

Product number: NA0076

Publication date: 04/15/2010

Length: 14 pages

Product type: Case

Source: North American Case Research Association (NACRA)

A survival strategy was needed for the Food Store department of the Northern Lakes Cooperative. The 85-person Food Store department, one of eleven departments at the Northern Lakes Cooperative, had not been profitable for years. While not profitable, it served the needs of its Co-op members by providing a grocery service and serving as an anchor in the Co-op Mall.

Issues: Financial performance measurement; Management; Accounting; Advertising; Marketing strategy

Disciplines: General Management/Strategy

Setting: United States; Wisconsin

Foundation for International Development Assistance/Productive Cooperatives Haiti: Increasing Organizational Capacity → [link to case](#)

— *Sharen, Colleen*

Product number: 9B12A037

Publication date: 07/16/2013

Revised date: 07/15/2013

Length: 17 pages

Product type: Case (Field)

Source: Ivey

AWARD WINNING CASE — Best Case Award, 2013 Administrative Sciences Association of Canada (ASAC) Conference. Since the 2010 earthquake, the executive director of the Foundation for International Development Assistance (FIDA) had been managing exploding demand for economic development from Haitians, the international development community and from individual Canadians. While there was a lot of money available for earthquake relief and micro-finance, far less was available for sustainable long-term economic development. FIDA needed an additional \$2 million over the next three years to support projects that had been approved by both FIDA and its Haitian partner, productive cooperatives Haiti (pCH). FIDA needed to find investors who understood and supported the unique vision, principles and methods of FIDA/pCH.

Learning Objective:

- Describe the relationship between vision/mission and marketing strategy.
- Describe customer behaviour and relationships, customer segmentation and targets as well as channels.
- Analyze a marketing strategy, including branding, positioning, targets and marketing mix.
- Analyze competitive strengths and weaknesses.
- Discuss the benefits and limitations of personal selling and mass marketing.
- Develop a marketing strategy and message.

Issues: Non-profit management; social enterprise; brand positioning; marketing strategy; Canada; Haiti

Disciplines: Marketing, International

Industries: Social Advocacy Organizations

Setting: Canada; Haiti, Small, 2012

Intended audience: Undergraduate/MBA

Gearing Up at REI → [link to case](#)

— *Madsen, Dennis; Morse, Gardiner*

Product number: F0305C

Publication date: 05/01/2003

Length: 2 pages

Product type: Harvard Business Review Article

Source: Harvard Business School Publishing

For the sixth year in a row, sporting-gear cooperative REI made Fortune's list of the 100 best companies for which to work. CEO Dennis Madsen shares his thoughts about the things the retailer seems to be doing right—among them, aligning corporate culture with employees' values and not getting too far ahead of customers.

Issues: Cooperatives; Organizational culture; Employee benefits

Disciplines: General Management/Strategy

Goals in a Market-driven Economy → [link to case](#)

— *Geok, Wee Beng; Lain, Robert; Koh, Shirley*

Product number: AB01002

Publication date: 01/01/2001

Length: 29 pages

Product type: Case

Source: The Asian Business Case Centre, NTU

This case traces the corporate history and development of NTUC Income (INCOME), the only insurance cooperative in Singapore. Established in 1970 as the poor man's insurer with the social goal of providing coverage for the low and middle-income groups, INCOME today ranks among the top life and general insurers in Singapore. While INCOME has been very profitable since its inception, it has never lost sight of its social and community role of serving its policyholders and the citizens of Singapore. This fact was not missed by the Prime Minister of Singapore who urged the cooperative not to forget those in the lower income bracket when he graced the cooperative's 30th anniversary celebration as Guest-of-Honour. Since 2001, the local insurance industry had undergone major changes in the form of new regulations following the Monetary Authority of Singapore's liberalization of the financial services industry. One regulation, in particular, required all insurance agents in Singapore to undergo at least 30 hours of professional training annually. This ruling would have an adverse impact on INCOME's part-time agents who made up more than 80 percent of the cooperative's sales force. Many were likely to quit and IN-

COME could soon see its part-time sales force halved. The liberalization was also expected to attract new players to the insurance market. With new challenges posed by the liberalization, what would the future hold for INCOME? INCOME had enjoyed years of tremendous growth and had emerged from the Asian Crisis relatively unscathed. Could its previous success help pave the way for continued prosperity? In the face of greater competition, how should INCOME continue to meet its social objectives without neglecting or giving up some of its business goals?

Issues: Social entrepreneurship; Change management; Not-for-profit organization; Union leadership; Union-based co-operative; Re-organization of national union movement; Financial liberalization

Disciplines: General Management/Strategy, International

Industries: Finance and Insurance

Setting: Singapore

Harrington Financial Group → [link to case](#)

— *Moel, Alberto; Merton, Robert C.*

Product number: 297088

Publication date: 02/14/1997

Revised date: 04/29/1997

Length: 15 pages

Product type: Case (Field)

Source: Harvard Business School

In early 1997, Harrington Bank, a small Indiana savings and loan (thrift) wondered what its next move should be. Harrington was acquired in 1988 by the principals of Smith Breeden Associates, a money-management and consulting firm specializing in the application of modern financial technology to the pricing, hedging, and risk management of mortgage securities. The Smith Breeden principals had established an arms-length contract with Harrington, where Smith Breeden advised Harrington on the pricing, hedging, active management, and risk management of Harrington's assets and liabilities. Since the acquisition, the bank had done very well. Assets had grown from \$75 million in 1988 to over \$520 million at the end of 1996. Its net interest margin had more than tripled, core operating profits had grown by over 400 percent, and return on equity had been substantially increased. Still, Harrington in 1996 was not an average thrift. 80 percent of its assets consisted of mortgage-backed securities (vs. 30 percent for the median thrift), and most of its liabilities were not deposits but other forms of wholesale funding.

Issues: Acquisitions; Risk management; Mortgages

Disciplines: Finance

Setting: Indiana, 65, 1997, 1997

Indupalma and the Associated Labor Cooperatives, 1991–2002 → [link to case](#)

— *Fernandez, Diana; Trujillo, Diana M.; Gutierrez, Roberto*

Product number: SKE026

Publication date: 09/16/2003

Length: 21 pages

Product type: Case (Field)

Source: Social Enterprise Knowledge Network

Indupalma was managed as a plantation during its first 30 years. Labor cooperatives emerged as a response to a financial and governance crisis that led Indupalma to the brink of bankruptcy at the beginning of the 1990s. Workers and peasants formed associations to create autonomous business units (such as cooperatives, microenterprises, and associations), which sold their services to Indupalma. The company invested a great deal of resources in technical and administrative training and in human resource development for associates. The performance of workers improved, and the financial viability of the company was regained. Today, cooperatives face multiple social and economic challenges; the role of Indupalma in facing these challenges (intervention, paternalism, empowerment, or indifference) will put to the test the solidity and true impact of the development process.

Issues: Operations management; Cooperatives; Social enterprise; Social responsibility;
Crisis management; Philanthropies; Strategic alliances

Disciplines: Organizational Behaviour/Leadership

Setting: Colombia, \$13 million revenues, 1991, 2002

Irizar in 2005 → [link to case](#)

— *Casadesus-Masanell, Ramon; Mitchell, Jordan*

Product number: 706424

Publication date: 03/15/2006

Revised date: 09/14/2006

Version date: 09/14/2006

Length: 26 pages

Product type: Case

Source: Harvard Business School

To maximize their effectiveness, color cases should be printed in color. In June 2005, Koldo Saratxaga, the leader of Basque-based luxury coach manufacturer Irizar, decided to leave after 14 years at the helm of the worker-owned cooperative. Under Saratxaga's stewardship, Irizar was saved from near bankruptcy in 1991 and has become a highly profitable industry leader with a 23.9 percent compound annual growth rate since 1991. The company opened a number of manufacturing sites as far-reaching as Mexico, Morocco, India, Brazil, China, and South Africa.

Irizar calls itself a project based on people and has realized its success through a business model characterized by a narrow product focus, strict quality adherence, an empowered workforce, and a truly customer-centric organization. Irizar's model is completely different from that of most other coach manufacturing firms given the absence of unions, departments, and hierarchy. All activities are carried out by self-managed teams (teams, for example, are responsible for setting their own work schedules and objectives). Although Irizar's model has worked fantastically well for over 14 years (since Sarataga's arrival), the question now is: Will the company continue to thrive without Sarataga? Or is Irizar's success due to Sarataga's leadership? Includes color exhibits.

Issues: Business models; Cooperatives; Organizational culture; Trust; Leadership;
Competitive advantage

Disciplines: General Management/Strategy

Setting: 3,000, \$350 million revenues, 2005, 2005

Just Us! Coffee Roasters → [link to case](#)

— *Sagebien, Julia; Skinner, Scott; Wesbler, Monica*

Product number: 9B06A027

Publication date: 01/09/2007

Length: 22 pages

Product type: Case (Field)

Source: Ivey

The founders of Just Us! Coffee Cooperative (Just Us!) are involved in a strategic planning process. The growing demand and acceptance of fair trade products is good news for the industry and opens many opportunities for Just Us!, but there are also risks. Just Us! will likely face increased market competition from major U.S. retail coffee brands and Canadian supermarket brands, pressure on margins as more brands crowd the shelves, and more competition for access to top quality sources of supply. Just Us! will have to make strategic choices and will have to develop a clear and focused marketing plan.

Issues: Social Venturing; Fair Trade; Corporate Social Responsibility; Brand Management;

Social Entrepreneurship; Co-operatives; International Trade; Ethical Issues

Disciplines: International, Marketing

Industries: Retail Trade

Setting: Canada, Small, 2006

Intended audience: Undergraduate/MBA

La Fageda → [link to case](#)

— *Vernis, Alfred; Lamolia, Laura; Arenas, Daniel*

Product number: SKE119

Publication date: 05/01/2009

Length: 14 pages

Product type: Case

Source: Social Enterprise Knowledge Network

For over 25 years, Cristóbal Colón, La Fageda's founder and president, had managed this cooperative that primarily produced yogurts and dairy puddings and employed a large share of La Garrotxa's mentally challenged population. Colón had been able to position these yogurts made in a small town far from Barcelona's commercial hub right next to Danone products, the undisputed dairy sector leader in Spain, on supermarket and hypermarket shelves. La Fageda had accomplished this feat by producing a quality yogurt that consumers viewed as a farm product: natural and wholesome. By late 2007, Colón's overriding concern was how to keep La Fageda's yogurts in distribution circuits. On the one hand, large food multinationals had ever-increasing leverage with retailers; on the other hand, some leading chains were prioritizing their own brands. Colón wondered if La Fageda could maintain its competitive positioning while upholding its founding spirit. For him, it was paramount to preserve the jobs that enabled La Fageda to ensure social and labor integration for people with mental disabilities.

Issues: Small & medium-sized enterprises

Disciplines: General Management/Strategy

Setting: Spain

La Fageda: An Outrageous Initiative → [link to case](#)

— *Segarra, Montse; Ochoa, Ignacio; Segarra, Jos A.*

Product number: IES227

Publication date: 10/14/2008

Length: 23 pages

Product type: Case

Source: IESE University of Navarra

La Fageda is a social initiative which employs the mentally disabled and mentally ill in the Garrotxa region (Girona), helping them integrate into society through production and marketing of top quality yogurt. The case study raises growth alternatives and their consequences. La Fageda and its leadership are epitomized in the person of Cristóbal Colón, its founder and chairman. What started as a work cooperative is now a complex structure consisting of a work and consumers' cooperative and two foundations (a grant-making foundation and an assistance foundation) where governance, management and other interests dovetail. The case study ad-

addresses the alternatives for ensuring the continuity of the social initiative, reflecting on the government and institutional structure. Side topics are also considered, including a financial-social report, communication policies and financial data.

Issues: Corporate governance; Strategy; Communication

Disciplines: General Management/Strategy

MD Foods Amba → [link to case](#)

— *Goldberg, Ray A.; Knoop, Carin-Isabel; Reavis, Cate*

Product number: 599052

Publication date: 12/10/1998

Length: 22 pages

Product type: Case (Field)

Source: Harvard Business School

In 1998, MD Foods, a Denmark-based dairy cooperative, was searching for growth opportunities that would enable it to become northern Europe's preferred retail dairy supplier. The options being considered included expanding in existing markets, entering into new markets, or growing via product alliances and innovation. The experience of the company's U.K. subsidiary demonstrated that as the food retail sector consolidated, being the supplier of choice was becoming increasingly difficult. Product and service innovation was the key to survival.

Issues: Cooperatives; Market segmentation

Disciplines: General Management/Strategy

Setting: United Kingdom; Denmark, 13,000, \$4 billion revenues, 1998, 1998

Mid-Missouri Energy: Ethanol from Corn → [link to case](#)

— *Reinhardt, Forest; Holbrook, Noel Michele; Weber, James; Sartor, Karla*

Product number: 711004

Publication date: 11/01/2010

Revised date: 12/01/2010

Length: 33 pages

Product type: Case (Field)

Source: Harvard Business School

To maximize their effectiveness, color cases should be printed in color. MME is a farmer-owned cooperative that produces ethanol from corn. The cooperative has performed well in comparison to other producers but margins in the industry had declined as industry production levels neared market demand limits. MME farmers needed to decide whether to take advantage of their success and expand through acquisitions, whether they should sell the plant, or whether they should continue current operations. MME must consider ongoing regulatory changes that

impacted the industry, the possible impact of imported ethanol, the power of the petroleum industry which bought its product, and ongoing uncertainty about corn and ethanol price swings.

Issues: Business & government relations; Small & medium-sized enterprises; Agricultural cooperatives; Energy; Government policy; Strategy

Disciplines: General Management/Strategy

Setting: Missouri; North America, 39, \$100 million, 2010

Migros → [link to case](#)

— *Reinhardt, Forest; Dessain, Vincent; Sjoman, Anders*

Product number: 706028

Publication date: 12/14/2005

Revised date: 02/10/2006

Length: 25 pages

Product type: Case (Field)

Source: Harvard Business School

In October 2005, Urs Riedener, head of marketing at Swiss retailer Migros, is contemplating the company's competitive position. Primarily a retailer for foods and near-foods products, the cooperative Migros, with close to 600 retail outlets in Switzerland (but only four outside its domestic market), is facing stiffer competition, both from existing competitors (such as Coop) and new arrivals (such as hard discounters Lidi and Aldi). Riedener and Migros management have so far always had faith in Migros' position in the marketplace, built around its governance structure (the customers were also the owners, creating a close link between the retailer and the market) and its emphasis on never selling harmful products. Socially, ecologically, and ethically produced products were key aspects of Migros' product offering. Riedener knows that Migros benefited from a unique position—and he wants to make sure that Migros defends it from both new and old competitors.

Issues: Cooperatives; Social enterprise; Corporate governance; International business; Global business; Environmental protection; Strategy; Supply chain management; Competition; Competitive advantage; Natural resources; Competitive environment; Product differentiation

Disciplines: General Management/Strategy

Setting: Switzerland; Europe, 9,700, \$4.2 billion Swiss francs revenues, 2005, 2005

Migros (Switzerland) → [link to case](#)

— *Ulrich, Jutta*

Product number: A12050002

Publication date: 01/31/2006

Length: 6 pages

Product type: Case (Library)

Source: Thunderbird

Migros is a grocery retailer in Switzerland, organized as a co-op with over one million Swiss households as members. Migros also operates a travel agency, gas stations, a book and record club, and other business. In the last decade, Migros has tried to expand into neighboring countries, but the venture in Austria failed and the presence in France and Germany remained small. The case asks why Migros has not been more successful abroad, especially in Austria, given the seemingly quite similar cultural environment and language (German). A key issue is the Migros brand strategy, both in the domestic market and abroad. Cultural questions are important since behavior and food preferences vary significantly. The case also raises the question what a successful enterprise can do when it seemingly cannot grow.

Disciplines: International, Marketing

Industries: Retail Trade

Setting: Switzerland

Intended audience: Undergraduate/MBA

Mission Federal Credit Union → [link to case](#)

— *Dunn, Craig P.; Burton, Brian K.*

Product number: NA0113

Publication date: 10/01/2010

Length: 7 pages

Product type: Case

Source: North American Case Research Association (NACRA)

John Parsons, a senior vice president with Mission Federal Credit Union in San Diego, needed to decide whether to advocate for an initiative from a member of the credit union's board of directors to open a student-run branch in an inner-city region of San Diego. Such a branch would be ground-breaking—the first student-run credit union branch in the country open to the general community—and it would fit with Mission Federal's general philanthropic outlook, would be an example of social entrepreneurship and strategic philanthropy, and would have other advantages. But it would be located in an area far from current members, would take money away from other philanthropic efforts supported by long-term board members and give it to an effort proposed by a new and aggressive board member, in addition to other problems. Furthermore, the branch would become financially profitable only in the long run, if ever. Parsons needed to decide just how much he believed in this project.

Issues: Social enterprise; Corporate governance; Corporate social entrepreneurship;
Social responsibility; Credit; Commercial banks

Disciplines: General Management/Strategy

Setting: California; United States

Mountain Equipment Co-op: Digital Strategy → [link to case](#)

— *Pirouz, Raymond; Mark, Ken*

Product number: 9B13A019

Publication date: 06/24/2013

Revised date: 07/08/2013

Length: 18 pages

Product type: Case (Field)

Source: Ivey

The vice-president of marketing and communications at Mountain Equipment Co-op, a retailer of outdoor sporting goods, is examining its marketing strategy following the decision to stop producing its physical catalogue. The 40-year-old retailer wants to broaden its reach beyond its hard-core group of customers. Although it currently has an online presence, it needs to further develop its online sales and outreach programs.

Learning objective: The case is suitable for undergraduate, graduate and executive marketing classes. The objective of the case is to enable students to develop an appropriate digital marketing strategy, given the constraints of the firm's brand and history.

Issues: Target Market; Digital Marketing Strategy; Monetization; Growth; Organizational Change; Canada

Disciplines: Marketing, Entrepreneurship

Industries: Manufacturing

Setting: Canada, Large, 2012

Intended audience: Undergraduate/MBA

Mountain Equipment Co-op: The Private Label Strategy → [link to case](#)

— *Thomson, Matthew; Mark, Ken*

Product number: 9B12A028

Publication date: 07/13/2012

Revised date: 09/14/2012 (Data)

Length: 15 pages

Product type: Case (Field)

Source: Ivey

Mountain Equipment Co-op (MEC) is a well-known Canadian retailer of outdoor clothing and equipment. While it stocks a range of branded products in its stores, a key source of profits is its private-label line. The challenge MEC faces is how to continue to develop and launch innovative private-labeled products while recognizing that they may be direct competitors of MEC's assortment of global brands. MEC needs to develop its line-up without being seen as infringing on

intellectual property or being too much of a “follower.” In assessing how MEC can develop its line-up, students can review MEC’s philosophy as a co-operative (in which it positions itself as being different from corporations) and its design philosophy.

Learning objective: Topics that can be discussed with this case include the role of a private label in a retail organization’s strategy, product development, and retail industry dynamics.

Issues: Private Label; Retail Strategy; Product Development; Product Assortment; Canada

Disciplines: Marketing, General Management/Strategy

Industries: Retail Trade

Setting: Canada, Large, 2009

Intended audience: Undergraduate/MBA

Mountain Equipment Co-op: Retailing with a Difference → [link to case](#)

— *Conklin, David W.*

Product number: 9A94R001

Publication date: 03/28/1994

Revised date: 02/25/2010

Length: 8 pages

Product type: Case (Field)

Source: Ivey

A co-operative involves many unique business features, and these are illustrated by Mountain Equipment Co-op. Of particular interest is the way in which customers are shareholders, and so the firm faces customer empowerment that both strengthens its market presence and also influences its product mix and pricing structure. Management faces a unique set of success criteria. Apart from its co-op nature, Mountain Equipment demonstrates the creative ways that a service sector retailer participates today in the manufacturing sector. Its proactive role involves ongoing contributions to the design of products, and even participation in the ownership of manufacturing facilities.

Learning objective: This case deals with the adjustments of Canadian corporations to new trade and investment agreements, particularly the Canada-United States Free Trade Agreement (FTA) and the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA).

Issues: Competitiveness; Market Strategy; Corporate Strategy; Employee Participation

Disciplines: General Management/Strategy

Setting: Canada, 1993

Intended audience: Undergraduate/MBA

Negotiating for Fertilizer → [link to case](#)

— *Brett, Jeanne; Nelson, Katherine; Tilzer, Nicole*

Product number: KEL434

Publication date: 11/01/2009

Length: 17 pages

Product type: Case

Source: Kellogg School of Management, Northwestern University

One Acre Fund (OAF) was founded by Andrew Youn in 2005 for the purpose of helping to solve the chronic hunger problem in Africa. The idea is to provide the resources (seed, fertilizer, and education) necessary for African farm families to feed themselves when their land holdings are one acre or less. The business model of OAF is that of a cooperative

Issues: Organizational behavior; Negotiation; BATNA; Nonprofit organizations

Disciplines: Organizational Behaviour/Leadership

Setting: Kenya

Northwest Mutual Funds → [link to case](#)

— *Dawar, Niraj; Mark, Ken*

Product number: 9B08A003

Publication date: 05/06/2008

Length: 17 pages

Product type: Case (Field)

Source: Ivey

Northwest Mutual Funds is a boutique mutual funds company that differentiates itself on a high level of customer service. The case describes how the company is considering marketing its funds directly to retail investors. Thus far, the company has marketed its fund only to the financial planners that make up the channel. The case illustrates channel issues, and helps students discuss how products must be differentiated from competitors' products in the channel.

Issues: Differentiation; Positioning; Distribution; Advertising

Disciplines: Entrepreneurship, Marketing

Industries: Finance and Insurance

Setting: Canada, Medium

Intended audience: Undergraduate/MBA

NTUC Income of Singapore (A): Re-architecting Legacy Systems → [link to case](#)

— *Sethi, Neerja; Allampalli, D.G.*

Product number: AB05002

Publication date: 10/11/2005

Length: 20 pages

Product type: Case

Source: The Asian Business Case Centre, NTU

The case describes various information technology (IT) initiatives undertaken by NTUC Income Insurance Cooperative Limited, Singapore from 1980 to 2002 to be a leading player in a highly competitive market. Although early IT adoption, such as computerisation, online marketing, e-commerce and web services enabled the cooperative to attain a state-of-the-art front-end and a low cost service delivery model, its back-end legacy applications and architecture were still antiquated in 2002. Lack of flexibility, poor connectivity to the Internet and new devices, lack of maintenance support for the hardware and software, and frequent breakdowns of the main-frame forced the Chief Information Officer (CIO) to mull over a re-architecting project in mid 2002. Although the legacy systems served NTUC Income satisfactorily for the last two decades, three breakdowns from mid-2002 to early 2003 created a nightmare for the IT department and compelled the CIO to contemplate its upgrading, for which he had three options: build in-house or outsource, or buy a ready package to customise. Describing the pros and cons of these options, the case provides comparative profiles of two bids: one by a local vendor to build a new system and the other an international vendor, eBao, a young upstart from China, to buy a ready package and customise it. Considering the technology risks and possible impacts of the re-architecting project, what should the CIO do-build or buy?

Issues: Integration of legacy systems, Web services technology, IT outsourcing

Disciplines: International, Management Science, Information Systems

Industries: Public Administration

Setting: Singapore

Ontario Machinery Ring (A) — Problem Definition → [link to case](#)

— *Funk, Thomas*

Product number: 9B04A021

Publication date: 11/23/2004

Revised date: 10/07/2009

Length: 9 pages

Product type: Case (Gen Exp)

Source: Ivey

The Ontario Machinery Ring is a cooperative set up to perform a matchmaking service for farmers who want to have custom work done and farmers who want to do custom work. This

concept is widespread in Europe but has not been tried in North America. The general manager of the organization has set up a prototype operation and is looking at expansion opportunities. Expansion will take more funds than are available and the general manager has sought financial assistance from the provincial Ministry of Agriculture and Food. Before committing funds to this project, the ministry requires marketing research to measure demand for the machinery ring concept. Supplemental cases, Ontario Machinery Ring (B) and (C), product 9B04A022 and 9B04A023 look at questionnaire development and data analysis.

Issues: Marketing Planning; Data Analysis; Sales Forecasting; Marketing Research

Disciplines: Marketing

Industries: Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting

Setting: Canada, Small, 2000

Intended audience: Undergraduate/MBA

Purchasing Co-op → [link to case](#)

— *Menor, Larry; Erskine, James A.; Leenders, Michiel R.*

Product number: 9B00D018

Publication date: 10/20/2000

Revised date: 01/08/2010

Length: 4 pages

Product type: Case (Field)

Source: Ivey

One of the founders of a small business owners' purchasing cooperative organized four months earlier was reflecting on its successful performance. The members of the co-op were willing to share responsibilities in the management of the co-op's primary activities of obtaining price quotes, invoicing members, and making delivery arrangements. The members were currently considering the possibility of extending the types of materials purchased collaboratively to services such as photocopying and printing of brochures and business cards. She wondered how best to promote the growth of the purchasing co-op and therefore, needed to create an action and implementation plan, considering: membership size, types of products and services purchased, qualitative and quantitative benefits of co-op involvement, vendor management and allocation of resources.

Learning objective: The case is intended as a brief introduction to one means of vendor management, purchasing co-operatives (informally arranged). It is planned for use in a logistics and supply management course, or as a supplementary case on purchasing for the operations management core course. The case is intended for use by individuals and students with limited to no prior exposure to such a purchasing arrangement or to vendor management issues for small businesses. The conceptual issues to be explored revolve around: vendor selection and management; formation and management issues related to purchasing co-operatives (informal agree-

ments and, with a supplementary reading such as Johnson, P.F. (1999), formal arrangements); and consolidation of orders. Further, these concepts are explored as they relate to a small business and enterprise.

Issues: Materials Management; Construction; Small Business; Purchasing

Disciplines: Entrepreneurship, Operations Management, Introductory Business

Industries: Administrative, Support, Waste Management and Remediation Services

Setting: Canada, Small, 2000

Intended audience: Introductory

Rick Surpin (A) → [link to case](#)

— *Hanson, Kirk O.; Bollier, David; Rowlands, Penelope*

Product number: 992019

Publication date: 01/01/1992

Length: 13 pages

Product type: Case (Field)

Source: Business Enterprise Trust

A long-time community development worker creates hundreds of jobs for low-income women and minorities by forming a for-profit home health care cooperative, Cooperative Home Care Associates. May be used in Entrepreneurship, Strategic Management, Organizational Behavior, Human Resources Management, and Ethics courses to help students explore: 1) the motives of an entrepreneur starting a venture to meet a tangible social need—the social entrepreneur; 2) the concept of worker-ownership and its potential consequences; 3) how to simultaneously serve the needs of various groups in an economically deprived area; and 4) the creation of jobs for individuals many dismiss as unemployable (single mothers on welfare, etc.).

Issues: Business ethics; Cooperatives; Social enterprise; Employee empowerment; Entrepreneurship; Privatization

Disciplines: General Management/Strategy

Setting: 1992, 1992

Ripe 'N Ready → [link to case](#)

— *Goldberg, Ray A.; Winig, Laura*

Product number: 906404

Publication date: 10/26/2005

Revised date: 02/07/2007

Length: 23 pages

Product type: Case (Field)

Source: Harvard Business School

Stoned fruit has quality variations, reducing consumption. Five independent growers formed a cooperative to provide quality control and a brand name — Ripe 'N Ready — that enabled retailers to differentiate their stores and producers to differentiate the products they supplied. Consumer acceptance has been high. The issue is how to expand the concept without adversely affecting the original users of the product. Also, what new kinds of competition are they creating?

Issues: Cooperatives; Quality control; Models; Supply chain management; Competition; Brand management

Disciplines: General Management/Strategy

Setting: California, Under 10, \$2 million revenues, 2005, 2005

Rise and Decline of Labor-Management Cooperation: Lessons from Health Care in the Twin Cities → [link to case](#)

— *Preuss, Gil; Frost, Ann C.*

Product number: CMR250

Publication date: 01/01/2003

Length: 23 pages

Product type: CMR Article

Source: California Management Review

Labor-management cooperation has been regarded for many years as a panacea for organizations' competitive woes. The academic and popular presses have lauded the joint efforts of companies and their unionized workforces to come together to solve companies' competitive problems while saving employees' jobs. Moreover, research on and examples of labor-management cooperation have found that through joint efforts, unions and firms can improve organizational performance and employee outcomes. Increasingly, however, it appears that cooperation is often but a short-lived phenomenon. This article examines a major initiative of labor-management cooperation that was undertaken to facilitate the fundamental restructuring of the health care delivery system in Minneapolis/St. Paul, Minnesota. For 10 years, management of more than a dozen hospitals and representatives of the Minnesota Nurses' Association came together to negotiate and manage the process of system integration, rationalization, and delivery improvement. The results were remarkable. Yet, just a few years later, despite the success, only remnants of labor-management cooperation remain in these hospitals. This article examines the reasons for this demise and provides lessons for those engaged in cooperative undertakings that may help extend the life of those initiatives.

Issues: Performance measurement; Labor relations; Labor unions; Negotiation

Disciplines: Organizational Behaviour/Leadership

Setting: 6100, 5.282 billion, 2009

Rural Credit Cooperatives in India → [link to case](#)

— *Li, Wei; Parmar, Bidhan*

Product number: UVABP0521

Publication date: 08/20/2008

Length: 16 pages

Product type: Case

Source: Darden Business School

Recently, the Indian Congress asked a distinguished committee of experts to analyze and make policy recommendations about India's Cooperative Financial Institutions (CFIs), which included organizations such as credit unions and cooperative banks. One committee member, Mohan R. Narayan, a leading economist at a prestigious Indian university, was enthusiastic about the job; it was an opportunity to help millions of rural poor and to have a positive effect on the country. Some poor farmers, deeply in debts to money-lenders, had been reported to resort to committing suicide when they faced with draught or other catastrophes and saw little reason to continue living. Well-functioning CFIs would certainly help restore hope and boost income for the rural poor. But he knew the system had a long history of overregulation, financial laxity, and corruption. Creating an actionable and clear strategy would be no easy task. The case, written at the invitation of the World Bank to study the challenges of building inclusive financial system in emerging countries, invites students to discuss 1) The roles and responsibilities of financial institutions in poverty-reduction and economic development, 2) the benefits and risks of using public versus private institutions to aid development, and more specifically, 3) the economics of credit cooperatives-in particular how they function in an emerging market setting.

Disciplines: General Management/Strategy

Saskatchewan Wheat Pool 2005 → [link to case](#)

— *Goldberg, Ray A.*

Product number: 906402

Publication date: 10/31/2005

Length: 29 pages

Product type: Case (Field)

Source: Harvard Business School

CEO Mayo Schmidt had just guided his firm through five difficult years. Survival had come with the difficult decision to change the 80-year-old agricultural cooperative into a Canadian business corporation. The Saskatchewan Wheat Pool (SWP) now faced the future with a new financial structure, world-class assets, a proven management team, a sound balance sheet, and access to capital for stability and expansion. In the face of increasing global grain demand and new technology-based product possibilities, Schmidt was convinced that, as a producer, Canada would have a long-term advantage because of its history of high-quality grain production. Further, he believed that SWP, with its deep farmer relationships and state-of-the-art infrastructure,

was ideally positioned to lead the development of identity-preserved value chains. How should Schmidt build on the SWP's unique strengths to create a company that would flourish and prosper for the next 80 years?

Issues: Cooperatives; Corporate strategy; Value chains; Globalization; Commodities; Leadership

Disciplines: General Management/Strategy

Setting: Canada, 1,800, \$1 billion revenues, 2005, 2005

South Dakota Wheat Growers → [link to case](#)

— *Bell, David E.; Shelman, Mary*

Product number: 508034

Publication date: 01/03/2008

Revised date: 02/11/2008

Length: 40 pages

Product type: Case (Field)

Source: Harvard Business School

As a farmer-owned cooperative, South Dakota Wheat Growers (SDWG) serves the needs of its 3,600 active farmer-members by supplying farm inputs and organizing the marketing and transportation of grain produced in the co-op's service territory. For almost 80 years, the majority of grain was shipped out of the area by rail to markets in the East and the Pacific Northwest. However, the recent expansion in ethanol production is changing the pattern of grain flow along with stimulating the local farm economy. SDWG's management and producer board must decide how to continue to meet the needs of their producer-owners under the new conditions.

Issues: Cooperatives; Strategy

Disciplines: Marketing

Supply Chain Optimization at Madurai Aavin Milk Dairy → [link to case](#)

— *Unnikrishnan, Dinesh Kumar; Pandian, P. Arun; Nachiappan, SP*

Product number: IMB341

Publication date: 12/01/2011

Revised date: 07/30/2012

Length: 9 pages

Product type: Case

Source: Indian Institute of Management–Bangalore

The Madurai District Cooperative Milk Producers' Union Ltd. also known as Madurai Aavin Milk Dairy (MAMD) has been one of the largest dairies in the southern part of Tamil Nadu, India. One of the major activities in the MAMD's supply chain was the procurement of milk

from the farmers and also to provide necessary technical input facility to them. The procurement was carried out by forming village-level milk producers' cooperative societies (MPCS). The supply of raw milk from the farmers around Madurai to Aavin is decreasing, whereas the demand is increasing. Several strategies are explored by Aavin to meet the demand for their main product, premium milk. Aavin faces two challenges: 1. Forecasting the demand for premium milk, and 2. Meeting the demand in an optimal manner that would maximize their profit.

Issues: Regression analysis; Preferences; Supply chain management; Demand forecasting; Process improvement; Linear programming

Disciplines: Operations Management

Setting: India

Sustaining a Social Venture: Transformation of Annapurna Mahila Mandal into Annapurna Pariwar → [link to case](#)

— *Basargekar, Prema*

Product number: 9B12M059

Publication date: 06/20/2012

Revised date: 06/12/2012

Length: 16 pages

Product type: Case (Field)

Source: Ivey/ISB

Annapurna Mahila Mandal (AMM), Mumbai, is a trust that provides micro credit and other services to poor working women. It was established in 1975 by a veteran Goa freedom fighter and social entrepreneur and her late husband, a union leader, in the wake of a decade-long mill-workers' strike in Mumbai. Though AMM was a pioneer in the field of urban microfinance, by 1982 it slowly started losing its focus on microfinance and diverted to other social activities, which were difficult to scale up and thus started to turn unviable. In 1993, when AMM's chairperson began looking after the operations, she realized that the external environment was evolving quickly with changes in regulations, rising competition, rising aspirations of microfinance clients, etc. If not tackled on time, these potential threats could jeopardize the survival of the organization. AMM needed to develop a very clear vision as to which direction it should grow in in order to become sustainable without losing its focus on the core objective — the empowerment of poor women.

Learning objective:

- To discuss the role, challenges, and opportunities for a social enterprise in a developing economy.
- To illustrate the complex and dynamic business environment surrounding the social sector within which an organization has to operate in order to achieve its objectives.
- To discuss the strategic dilemmas faced by a social enterprise in achieving the dual goals of economic sustainability and social progress.
- To discuss the possible ways in which a social enterprise can bring about change.

Issues: Sustenance; Social Goals; Restructuring; Social Organization; Microfinance; India

Disciplines: General Management/Strategy, Entrepreneurship

Industries: Finance and Insurance, Social Advocacy Organizations

Setting: India, Medium, 2009-2010

Intended audience: MBA/Postgraduate

Tri Valley Growers: A New Age Co-op → [link to case](#)

— *Goldberg, Ray A.; Carter, Mollie H.*

Product number: 598003

Publication date: 09/05/1997

Length: 25 pages

Product type: Case (Field)

Source: Harvard Business School

Tri Valley Growers is a dominant co-operative in its industry and, yet, still suffers from poor returns. The board of directors worked with the new CEO to change the product, market, and financing focus of the co-op to assure a long and profitable future for its shareholders, employees, and growers.

Issues: Cooperatives; Restructuring

Disciplines: General Management/Strategy

Setting: United States, 500, \$1 billion revenues, 1997, 1997

Vancity Credit Union — Strategy in Financial Services → [link to case](#)

— *Goerzen, Anthony*

Product number: 9B04M026

Publication date: 04/05/2004

Revised date: 10/14/2009

Length: 12 pages

Product type: Case (Field)

Source: Ivey

Vancity Credit Union is one of the largest credit unions in Canada with \$9 billion in assets and 300,000 members. The company's success was based on three key elements: member experience, employee experience and community leadership. With the pressure of increased competition from financial institutions and changing market characteristics, the chief executive officer must review the corporate strategy and resources to determine how the company can stay competitive and further increase its members and services.

Issues: Managing Industry Change; E-Commerce; Strategic Positioning; Financial Institutions

Disciplines: General Management/Strategy

Industries: Finance and Insurance

Setting: Canada, Large, 2004

Intended audience: Undergraduate/MBA

Vancity: Doing Good, Doing Well → [link to case](#)

— *Klein, Saul*

Product number: 9B10M069

Publication date: 10/13/2010

Revised date: 05/27/2011

Length: 8 pages

Product type: Case (Field)

Source: Ivey

The case describes the situation facing Vancity in the wake of the 2008 financial crisis, in an environment where monetary policy was being used to stimulate the economy. The immediate decision facing the CEO was whether to raise interest rates on loans to make up for falling interest income. With close to zero per cent interest rates being advocated by the Bank of Canada, the spread between deposit and loan rates had narrowed to unprecedented levels. The situation was complicated for Vancity by its structure as a member-owned cooperative and its strategy of community engagement, as well as by its need to get members to sign consent to the rate change.

Issues: Co-operatives; Financial Crisis; Interest Rates; Strategy

Disciplines: General Management/Strategy

Industries: Finance and Insurance

Setting: Canada, Large, 2009

Intended audience: Undergraduate/MBA

Vancity Savings Credit Union: Corporate Venturing into Uncharted Waters → [link to case](#)

— *Thornhill, Stewart; Dutta, Devkamal; Friedman, Diane*

Product number: 9B02M035

Publication date: 11/29/2002

Revised date: 12/01/2009

Length: 20 pages

Product type: Case (Field)

Source: Ivey

Vancity has been Canada's biggest success story in the field of community banking. The board of directors must consider whether the credit union should venture into mezzanine financing, a competitive industry in which the organization has no prior experience. The proposal is favored by a board member who feels that the credit union can re-invent itself in the marketplace by following this route. The decision is troublesome because even if it makes economic sense there is an issue of whether it will achieve organizational fit with Vancity's overall culture and employee orientation.

Issues: Corporate Strategy; Entrepreneurial Finance; Credit Unions

Disciplines: Entrepreneurship, General Management/Strategy

Industries: Finance and Insurance

Setting: Canada, Large, 1998

Western Union: Our World, Our Family → [link to case](#)

— *Marquis, Christopher*

Product number: 410050

Publication date: 09/09/2009

Revised date: 12/09/2010

Length: 22 pages

Product type: Case (Field)

Source: Harvard Business School

In 2006, Western Union spun-off from its former parent, First Data Corporation and began the process of defining itself as a standalone organization. Part of that effort was the creation of a strategic corporate social responsibility program called Our World, Our Family. The case tracks Western Union's earlier CSR initiatives and how they resulted in the creation Our World, Our Family. Key elements of the case focus on understanding the Western Union business model focused on financial remittances, and how their corporate citizenship efforts bring value to the company by satisfying the diverse needs of Western Union's stakeholders.

Issues: Economic development; Social responsibility; Globalization; Philanthropies; Leadership; Developing countries; Finance

Disciplines: Organizational Behaviour/Leadership

Women's Thrift Cooperatives in Andhra Pradesh → [link to case](#)

— *Stuart, Guy*

Product number: HKS076

Publication date: 07/01/2002

Length: 31 pages

Product type: Case

Source: Harvard Kennedy School

After more than 10 years of operation, the Women's Thrift Cooperatives (WTCs) in the impoverished Karimnagar and Warangal districts of Andhra Pradesh are an established part of the lives of their women members. As such they represent opportunities and challenges for the women and the non-governmental organization, the Cooperative Development Foundation (CDF), which planted the seed for their growth and has since supported them with technical assistance. The cooperatives are savings institutions that also lend money to their members and they rely solely on the spread between the interest they pay on the savings and the interest they earn on their loans to support their operations. In recent years the fund utilization of the thrifts has decreased, leading to some concern about their financial sustainability. The members and CDF are attempting to do something about this by starting a dairy cooperative to sell milk in the city of Warangal — the women will use the proceeds from loans from the thrifts to finance their milk purchases. There is also concern that the thrifts' accounting practices are disguising some loans in default, resulting in an overly rosy financial picture. CDF and the leadership of the cooperatives have to work out how to get the thrifts to recognize the losses that the defaults constitute without undermining their faith in the thrifts. And finally, there is pressure on the CDF from the leadership themselves to relax its rule, which the thrifts freely adopted, that prohibits leadership participation in electoral politics. The thrifts have provided a fertile training ground for women to become involved in the public life of the village, and they are now in demand as candidates for political office, given the early 1990s Indian constitutional amendments that set aside one-third of all local council seats for women. HKS Case number 1656.0

Issues: Project evaluation; Economic growth; Microfinance; Strategic planning; Leadership; Community development; Demographics; Nongovernmental organizations; Nonprofit organizations

Disciplines: General Management/Strategy

Setting: Asia; India

**The World's First Web Services Community Portal:
BigTrumpet.com of NTUC Income, Singapore** → [link to case](#)
— *Sethi, Neerja; Allampalli, D.G.*

Product number: AB05011

Publication date: 10/11/2005

Length: 20 pages

Product type: Case

Source: The Asian Business Case Centre, NTU

The case describes the successful creation and Phase One launch of the world's first web services technology-based portal BigTrumpet.com in October 2002 by a large cooperative society, the NTUC Income Insurance Cooperative Limited Singapore (NTUC Income), to enrich and em-

power the lives of Singaporeans by aggregating numerous services. Known for its ability to glue disparate systems, savings in integration and middleware costs and interoperability, the web services technology was a new lifeline for obsolete mainframes. Set to launch in seven months, the case documents how James Kang, chief information officer of NTUC Income overcame the challenges of new technology, multi-agency coordination, tight deadline for Phase One completion and launch. Pioneered by the Infocomm Development Authority (IDA) in April 2002, the BigTrumpet.com project was a model for cooperation among public-private-people partnership. Furthermore, the portal won the Singapore 2004 National Infocomm merit award for innovative use of infocomm technology. Despite these many achievements, Kang wondered what options were available to improve the portal's take-up rates by other service providers and value proposition to its customers.

Issues: Web services technology, portal development, IT project management

Disciplines: International, Management Science, Information Systems

Industries: Public Administration

Setting: Singapore