



Cooperative Education Report

Title: An Effort towards Building a Better Business Ecosystem

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for Cooperative Education, Faculty of Business Administration
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Title: An Effort towards Building a Better Business Ecosystem.


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We have approved this cooperative report as a partial fulfillment of the cooperative education program semester 2/2017

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Project Title: An Effort towards Building a Better Business Ecosystem

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Major: Finance and Banking

Faculty: Business Administration

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Abstract

This internship was conducted at Nepal Communitere, which is a dynamic resource center and a co-working spaces which also includes an incubation program. The main objective of this study was to gain a real world experience of corporate sector. I got a chance to work as a program intern for the organization where I was responsible for the communication, social media management and logistics management. Here, I got a chance to know more about branding of the organization and how it affects the content designs of the organization for the social medias and other marketing content. Also, I was able to manage the resources efficiently for the activities of the organization. I was also able to attain knowledge about the general work guidelines of a resource center, co-working space and incubation hub. As I was involved in the brainstorming and implementation of activities for the incubation program, I got to know more about some businesses in a holistic approach.

Keywords: Internship/ Co-working/Incubation/Business/Social media management/ Logistics management

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Acknowledgement

I would like to express gratitude to **SIAM University** faculty for organizing an CO-OP program as a part of course for the entire batch of the year 2014-2018 through which we were able to get in contact with the reality of the corporate world. We were able to gain experience about the workplace and the essentials of the workplace. We were also able to communicate with the professionals through which we gained some valuable information which will help us in our further work.

I would also like to thank **Nepal Communitere** for providing us an opportunity to work with the organization and help us get informed about the functioning of the organization in the market. I would also like to thank the organization for helping and guiding in every task that was assigned to us.

I would also like to thank all those people who accompanied and provided their help to me during entire internship period.

Thank You

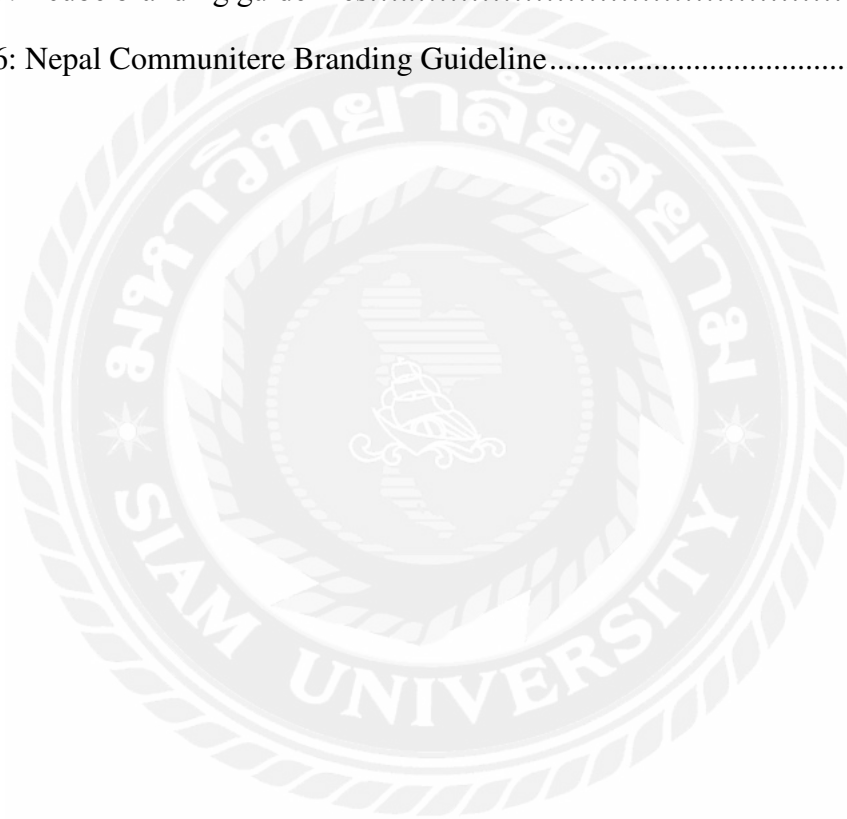
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Chapter I: Introduction

1.1 Company Profile



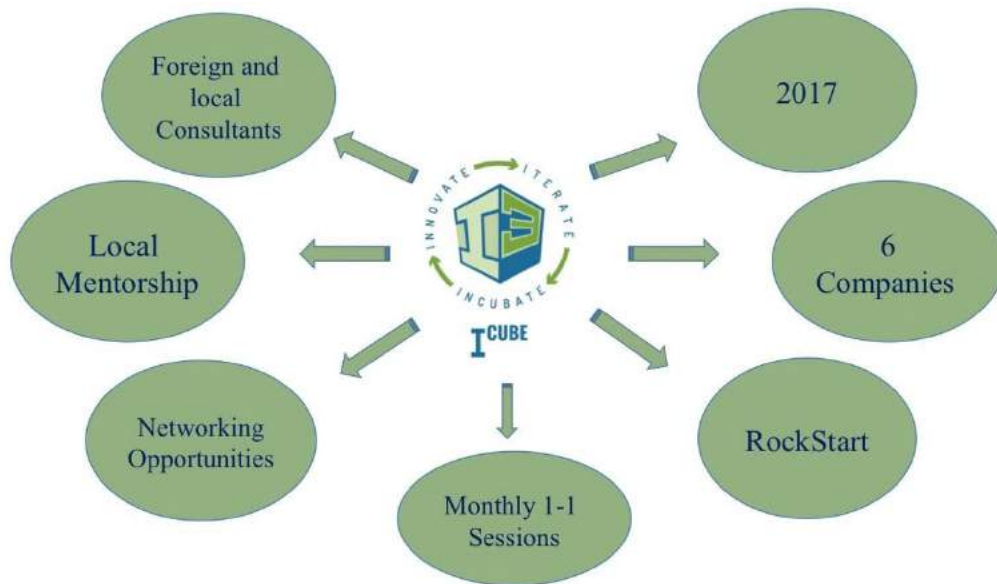
Figure 1: Company Logo

Nepal Communitere is a Nepali registered non profit company that is designed to become a self sustainable social enterprise designed to respond to communities' needs. NC believes in building a sustainable community by involving the community to take initiatives. NC is an organization that builds platforms for collaboration and co-working between individuals, NGOs, INGOs, entrepreneurs, and community leaders. NC runs a co-working space where the people for diverse community can work on innovative ideas to build it into a reality. It also runs a year long Incubation Hub where the different companies are provided support to grow in this business eco-system. NC also provided spaces for the training, events and other educational programs. It also has a maker's space, where people can come in a work on prototyping, which includes 3D printing facilities. (Nepal Communitere, 2015)

NC organizes networking session every Fridays where the diverse groups of people come together for a common goal, discuss their ideas, build new connections. NC also organizes monthly speaker session where different renowned entrepreneurs from the industry come and share their insights.

Recently, Nepal communitere has launched an I-CUBE program where the companies in their infant stage are provided with the support to sustain and grow in this business eco-system. I-CUBE program provides companies with various supports form strategic to operational. I-cube approach is to provide active, experienced, on-the-ground presence with a focus on providing resources, processes and tools required to empower the local entrepreneurs. The key pillars of I-CUBE

program are Innovation, Iteration and Incubation. I-CUBE program coaches and mentors the companies so that they are able grow and become self-sustainable. The main objective of the I-CUBE is to contribute towards building a better business eco-system.



The I-cube program was started in 2017, with 6 companies. I-cube program is also associated with **Rockstart** – which is a accelerator program which has funded 150+ companies till date. I-cube conducts 1 on 1 session with the companies every month for the regular update and monthly planning. Also, I-cube conducts various networking session for the I-cube entrepreneurs to have an opportunity to build their relations with the industry leaders and market influencers. This program also finds and provides local mentors for the companies for better guidance. I-cube also had tie-ups with various local and foreign consultants who provide their business consultancy services to the companies, which includes “Thagaconnect” from UK and “Antarprerana” from Nepal.

1.2 Organizational Structure

Nepal communitere follows a flat organizational hierarchy, which includes Executive Director, Finance and Administrative head, Program officers, Base Manager and Logistic Coordinator, Maker space and Cargo Bar Extraordinaire, Interns, Housekeeper. The diagram is below:

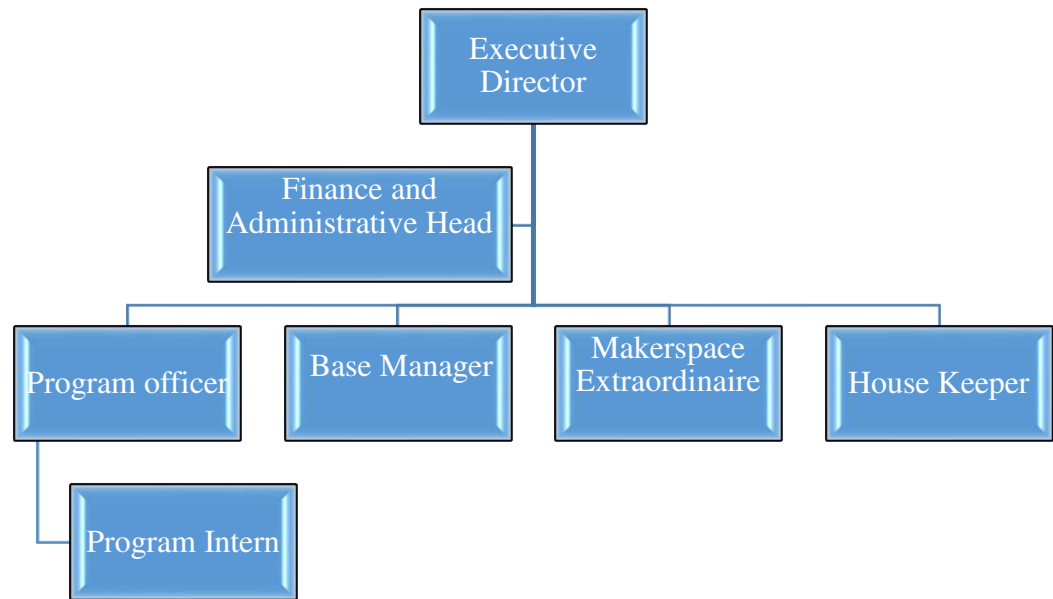


Figure 2:Organizational Structure

1.3 Statement of report

The Internship has been performed as a requirement of the course for the completion of the Undergraduate degree at SIAM University. This is a part of the course for the students to complete a 3months of internship for the better knowledge of the industry and experience of working in an actual market before the completion of the undergraduate degree.

1.4 Objectives of study

The Objectives of the study are as follows:

- Making Real-world decisions by applying business concepts and theories.
- Develop proficiency in specific business disciplines including human resources management, operations management, marketing, accounting and finance.
- Improve Business skills such as communication, technology, quantitative reasoning, and teamwork.
- Build relations with professionals of the industry and potential mentors who can guide and provide support.
- Develop network of professional relationships and contacts.
- Develop a solid work ethic and commitment to ethical conduct and social responsibility.
- Develop Proficiency in creating social media designs and media contents

1.5 Expected outcomes

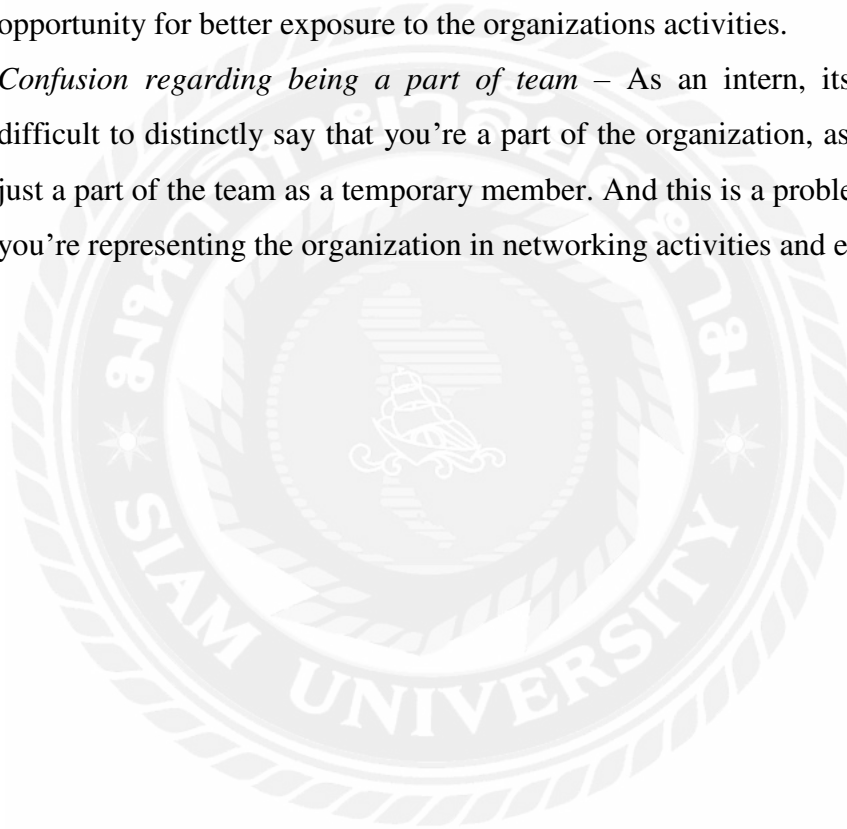
The expected outcomes of the internship are:

- Better Professional relationships with the players of the business ecosystem.
- Better ability to make strategic plans and decisions.
- Ability to perform and manage multiple tasks.
- Become a better team player.
- Have better communication and other interpersonal skills.
- Proficiency in designing social media content and marketing content.
- Develop better time management skills.

1.6 Limitations of Study

Since, study has some limitations, this internship also had a few limitations mentioned below:

- *Lack of time* – Since the internship period was only 3 months, I was not able get into more number of tasks and perform tasks in a better detail. If the time frame would have been longer, there would have been an opportunity for better exposure to the organizations activities.
- *Confusion regarding being a part of team* – As an intern, its always difficult to distinctly say that you're a part of the organization, as you are just a part of the team as a temporary member. And this is a problem when you're representing the organization in networking activities and events.



Chapter II: Literature Review

Every ecosystem consists of different elements which is necessary for the ecosystem to sustain. Without one element in the ecosystem, the entire ecosystem would be out of balance and will be difficult to maintain it. Similarly, the business ecosystem requires different types of businesses which would act as different elements of the ecosystem. For the business ecosystem to grow, prosper and sustain, it is necessary for the businesses from different industry to operate and emerge in the same market.

A business ecosystem is the network of organizations including suppliers, distributors, customers, competitors, government agencies, and so on involved in the delivery of a specific product or service through both competition and cooperation. (Investopedia) The main idea of this system is that every entity in the system is affected and can affect the other entity, which creates a constant revolving relationships in which entities must be flexible and adaptive to survive in this ecosystem.

So we work on incubation of different types of businesses to be able to operate and sustain in the market. We have a cohort of different businesses, which are from different industries and different segments of production stage. This company serve an incubator for those infant companies. We provide support, consultation, and facilitate these companies to be market-ready. Thus, this is an effort towards building a better business ecosystem through facilitating diversified business emerging in the market. We have companies form tech sector, agriculture sector, fashion and safety sector, hospitality sector and tourism sector. Each company is facilitated and helped to be aware about the latest changes in the market, guided about the changes in the policies, and is encouraged to deal with the different entities of the market, for better coordination and speedy growth of the company as well as the ecosystem as a whole. The main objective of the business ecosystem is to encourage new collaborations to address social and environmental changes as well as fundamental human needs and desires. And needs of the market. Also, promote creativity and innovation to lower the cost of production. The following figure shows the elements of a business ecosystem;

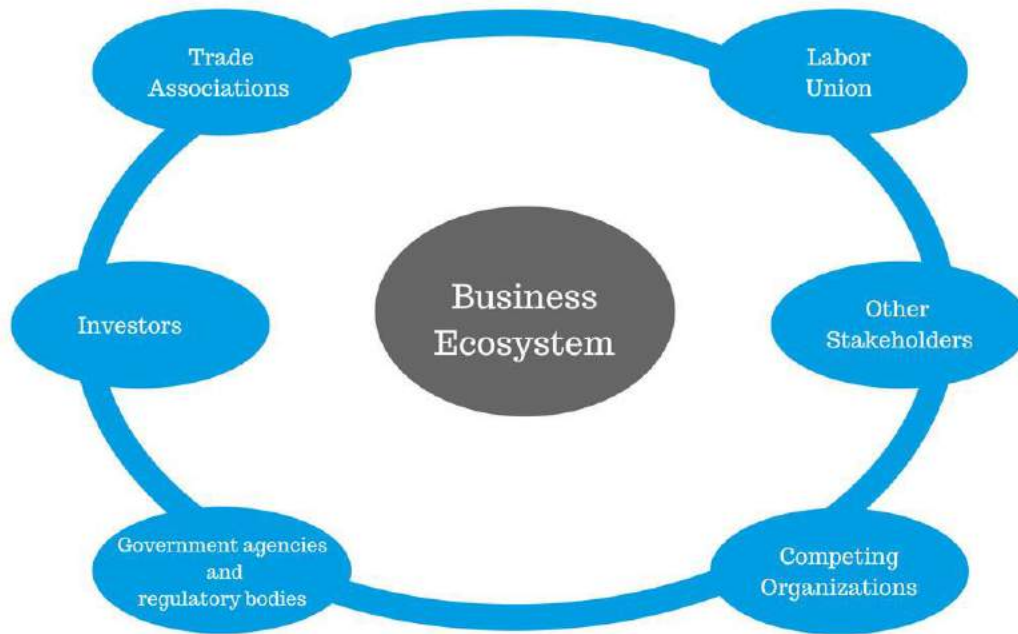


Figure 1: Business Ecosystem

2.1 Team Co-ordination (Human Resource)

The first thing in the internship important in the internship was creating the co-ordination in the team which also included the internal communication as well as external communication. I was able to create a good communication with the team members of the organization through the help of various theories including both written and oral communication. The organization also conducted a team meeting every week so that there is better co-ordination between the members of the team. Also, we had regular activities that helped us to know each others way to doing the work which helped us to work with each other in more effective way.

2.2 Budgeting (Financial Planning and Control)

I was also responsible for looking after the overall finances of some activities and events that were taking place in the organization, I was able to prepare a budget and maintain all the records of the finances with the help of

knowledge that I had got from the finance lectures. I was able to ask for quotation from different vendors, compare it and get the best one that suited our overall budget. This helped me to prepare and handle the over finances of the activities much better.

2.3 Creating social media and marketing content (Strategic Management)

Since, the representation of the company in the social media and other marketing is very much dependent on the beliefs, visions and mission of the organization. The strategic management was very much helpful in this aspect. It was very important for me to be well aware about the mission, vision and beliefs of the organization for me to create any social media content, I was able to have understanding about these aspects of the company with strategic management theories.

2.4 Maintaining database (MIS)

For maintaining the data, the management information system was very useful, I was able to maintain some of the activity reports of the organization in a systematic manner which helped the team members of the organization for the ready reference and providing the feedback with the help of the record and making changes where necessary in the activity of the organization. This record of data was also helpful in making decisions.

Chapter III: Methodology

- **Help and manage I-cube training materials**
 - Manage the records of agendas, materials, handouts, evaluations, slides and other documents of different workshops in a systematic manner for readily reference. Maintain physical record file of monthly workshops in a systematic and chronological manner.
 - **Design and develop interactive programs for I-cube**
 - Design different events and activities for Nepali innovators and entrepreneurs such as team building activities, speaker sessions, coffee mornings. Help in the preparation of the weekly activities for the entrepreneurs.
 - **Help in communication, logistics and coordination of all I-Cube and Nepal Communitere weekly events.**
 - Help in the preparation of the weekly events of the organization. Prepare checklists for the event and coordinate with the people in the organization for the smooth flow of the events. Also, prepare different materials for the weekly events such as preparation of questionnaire for the guest speaker sessions.
 - **Take photos of regular events for reporting purposes and for social media communication.**
 - Take photographs of the regular events for the preparation of post event reports and for posting it on the social media pages of the organization.
 - **Develop content and design social media.**
 - Design social media contents and posts for the regular update on the social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram and twitter.
- Communicate with the web handler**
- Communicate with the web handler and update the website contents.

- **Draft marketing and communications content for the I-Cube Program and Nepal Communitere including highlighting entrepreneurs' profiles (stories)**
 - Make a draft of the marketing and communication content by covering the stories of the entrepreneurs and their updates regarding their business for I-CUBE program.
- **Digitalization of information**
 - Maintaining a digital database of Nepal Communitere's stakeholders, consultants, trainers, visitors, etc.
- **Provide support to I-CUBE team**
 - Help the I-cube team is collecting the resources for the I-Cube Entrepreneurs regarding their business such as performing the research and helping the I-CUBE entrepreneurs in various other tasks.
- **Helping in Finance activities**
 - Prepare over all budgets for the events. Get the quotation from different vendors and compare the prices while preparation of budgets. Communicate with the finance officer regarding the financial aspects of the I-cube team.
- **Communicate with the external parties**
 - Contact external parties as a representative of he organizations regarding various activities of the organization.
- **Visit various networking events and workshops**
 - Visit and take part in various networking events and workshop such as skill share, and collect knowledge and share the experience with the I-CUBE entrepreneurs.

Chapter IV: Results and Discussion

4.1 Contributions made during the internship.

This internship has been very fruit full for me to gain experience of the real corporate world. I have been able to get exposure to various businesses along the time of this internship and have been able to know more number of people in this internship. Some of the works that I as an intern has done in the organization were:

a) Managed the data base.

I was responsible for the managing of the data base both in hard copy as well as soft copy. I managed to get the hard copy of all of the activities and resource materials including handouts and filed it in a chronological order for the ready reference in the future. Also, I maintained the data base of the donors, participants and partners of the company so that there is easy access to contacts for future uses and was accessible to all the members of the organization.

b) Branding through social media

I was also responsible for the creating the social media graphic contents and drafting the written contents for the social media. I performed the designing of the social media posts for all the happy hours and other activities and event of the organization and also created a written draft for almost al of the activities of the organization. I made the social media graphics for all the activities such as happy hours (Every Friday), I-cube retreat, etc.

c) Enhanced Communication channel

I also acted as a channel of communication between the I-cube entrepreneurs and the I-cube team. I acted as medium for the flow of information from the entrepreneurs a team and vise versa. After something was decided by the team, I used to communicate that information to the entrepreneurs and after the collection of the information and responses from the entrepreneurs, I communicated it to the team.

d) Enhanced logistic management

I also managed the logistics of the events and activities of the organizations, such as settling up the place, the layout for the event, other materials required for the activity. I took care of all the materials required for the event and made sure everything is in place for the event. I also coordinated with other team members so that the event to completed smoothly. During the external events, I also communicated and dealt with the external vendors for the venue and other required materials. I also prepared the questionnaire for the speaker session.

e) Financial management

During the internship I also looked at some part of the finances of the organization, especially regarding the I-cube program. I looked at the overall finances and maintained the records of the I-cube retreat program. Also, regarding other activities of I-cube program, I supported in the financial activities of Nepal communitere. I also had made come specific formats regarding the financial aspects, such as the sample format for the bills of purchase incase the vendors do not provide the bills. Also, a sample format for the contract paper.

f) Grievance Handling

During my internship I noticed that the company was not addressing the queries of the staffs, especially the support staffs. I requested for the meeting with the superiors and came up with the ways to motivate the staffs and address to their queries and grievances. After this discussion, the team started to have team lunch meetings, where we discussed about the problem, new work assignments, accomplishments and also celebrated the accomplishments of the staffs professionally as well as personally.

4.2 Details of related learning process and new knowledge received.

During my internship period I got a chance to work with professionals and consultants where I had an opportunity to attain knowledge about various things that I was unaware about as well as to update the knowledge that I had. Here is some significant learning that I was able to attain:

a) Branding guidelines and strategy.

I got to know about the importance of the organization's mission and beliefs while creating the marketing plans and social media promotions and content. I got to know that an organization is branding their company through these social media contents, I got to know that company should be considerate about the colors and fonts while creating any social media contents and marketing plans. For example, the guideline for the organization I work in was:

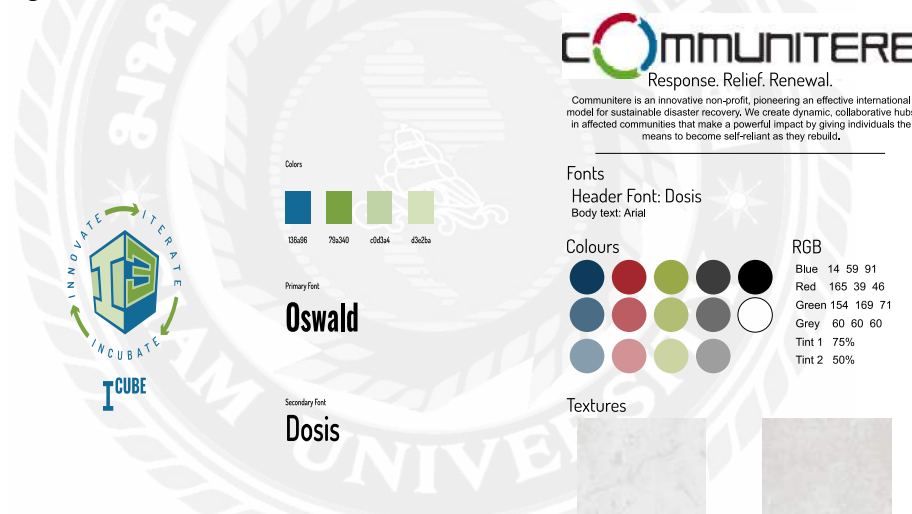


Figure 1: I-cube branding guideline

Figure 2: Nepal Communitere Branding Guideline

b) Social media promotions and content designs.

As a finance and banking student I did not have much knowledge regarding the social media promotions and design creation. As a part of

this organization I got to know more about the strategies to create a impactful social media content and I received full guidance and support for this from my supervisor who constantly overlooked at my works and corrected it.

c) Proficiency in software

Since, the use of technologies is a crucial part of any graduate and being able to implement the knowledge of such technologies is important. I had not been so comfortable with the use of various software that made the work more efficient and effective. As most of the works were performed on the Google drive, google docs, Google sheets, Google forms, Canva and eventbrite, I was able to gain proficiency in these software.

d) Human Centric design

During my internship, I also got to know about the various management theories out of which one that interests me was human centric design (HCD). While the team was consulting the entrepreneurs and brainstorming about the I-cube companies, I got to know about this topic even more and I was able to gain more insights on the topic. HCD is a management framework that helps in developing solutions to the problems by involving human perspectives in problem solving process. (Human Centric Design, 2018)

e) Public Relationship management

As a part of this organization, I also was able to take part in various networking events. And I was not very good at networking and I got to know about the more about how to develop good networking skills, I got to know about the proper body postures, how to open a conversation with new people, how to make connections with people who I've just met, how to follow up with the people after the networking sessions, etc. All in all, I also got to improve my public relation management skills.

Chapter V: Conclusions

5.1 Self-assessment as future professional

The internship at Nepal Communitere has helped me grow my professionalism as well as grow personally. The internship has enabled me to work under pressure and perform multiple tasks during my work period. I was able to perform the given tasks in the given time despite of the multiple works that were assigned to me, as this taught me to prioritize the work as per the urgency and its importance. This will help me to perform better in any other corporate office I am engaged with in my further dates.

Though the time period was small, I was able gain much knowledge, regarding various personal and professional skills, including social media management, budgeting, planning, and networking with people of the same market/industry which has opened up various doors for my further career.

After this internship, I have experienced progress in my professionalism and level of commitment towards my work. With the help of this opportunity, I have been able to groom myself as a good candidate for the corporate sector.

5.2 Comparison of practical learning VS theory

There are a lot of learning from the classroom, that has helped us through the work we did in the actual work environment and practiced in the internship but some of the knowledge was outdated and some were still not adapted in the Nepalese market. Some of the classroom knowledge were only understood better with the experience of doing it in real.

For example, we had studied about various data management skills in the management Information systems, but I found that those were not quite used in the Nepalese system. Nepalese market still uses the manual information management system and I found that the types and systems of information management were very expensive and was very inappropriate for the small companies especially in a developing country like Nepal.

Also, during our study, we had almost one semester to perform one research where as in the organization we require data urgently. For this we had to prepare the questionnaire and push towards the collection of the results in very short time, sometimes the time used to be just 4-5 days to collect the results.

Sometimes, the theoretical knowledge that we study and knowledge that is actually required in the real world are different as the theory are made under constant assumption which might be be very much different than the real world applications. But the knowledge that we have gained during the classes act has a base for the new practical knowledge that we gain in the real corporate world, which helps us to understand and react quick to the new knowledge. The classroom knowledge has enabled us for the quick learning.

5.3 Recommendation for Entrepreneur in Nepal

Employees being the key element in the success of the business, especially in the start-up and growth phase of a company, one problem that I observed in the internship regarding the massive failure in the start-ups was inability to handle the staff grievances and retain the staffs. During my internship this topic came a number of times and I myself encountered various grievances related problems that the staffs had regarding their jobs as well as the other colleagues. The grievance of the staffs must be handled properly so, that I staffs feel loyalty towards the organization and they perform better in the organization. As Sir Richard Branson quoted “If you take care of your employees, they will take care of your customers”. So he entrepreneurs have to take care of their employees so that they have better retain rate of their customers and they perform for the company’s interest rather than the personal interest.

The company’s administration should have more workshops regarding the Human resource management so that they know the techniques regarding the employee growth, employee motivation, employee grievances handling, etc. Also, the company should hold various meetings and activities involving the employees of all levels, so that they feel part of the organization. Meetings along with creative games and brain storming sessions, idea sharing, and appreciation session, etc. should be conducted for the employees, so that they feel their importance in the organization.

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Annex



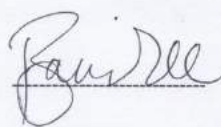
TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

This is to certify that Mr. Aayush KC a student of BBA Major in Finance at Kathmandu College of Management has successfully completed his 3 months of Internship program (from 26 February, 2018- 25 May, 2018) at our office here in Pulchowk, Lalitpur.

During his period of internship he worked closely with our incubation program officers assisting them in the incubation program. He has a good knowledge and quantitative skills at managing financial and logistics tasks of a project; he is social and treats his colleagues with warmth and politeness.

We wish him the very best in all his future undertakings.

Sincerely,

 25/05/2018

Bahar Kumar

Deputy Director





Bibliography



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