INTEGRATED BUSINESS STRATEGIES & ITS IMPACT ON MODERN RETAIL TREND-(AFRICA)

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ABSTRACT

Now a day’s modern retail trend impacting on traditional retail sector and slowly this traditional retailing scenario is disappearing. In African continent very few countries like South Africa, Nigeria, Kenya, Tanzania and Ghana are responding quickly to modern retail trends culture. Countries like Guinea, Togo, Ivory Coast, Uganda, DRC, Ethiopia and many other countries of African Continent still lag behind in responding to such trends due to various reasons in their routine business. In these countries “Super Markets” “Shopping Malls” and “Modern Retail”, activities are visible in capital and regional towns. This paper sheds light on the impacts of integrated business strategies on modern retail trend.

KEYWORDS: Modern Retail Trend, Logistics, B2B, CRM.

INTRODUCTION

“Modern Retail Trend” the word itself is transferring the trends from traditional to modern, means like a proverb “Old Wine in New Bottle”. Modern retail strategy is not a new concept in this sector; in 1950’s and 60’s the regional administrations of respective countries were running co-operative societies comes under the control of Co-operative Ministry [Branch of Ministry of urban and rural development]. In these stores all types of groceries, utensils, clothes and daily essential commodities, even writing books to elementary school kids [during beginning of schools especially in the month of may and June every year]. Later these concepts were incorporated by all the state owned industries, even some private and public enterprises including educational institutions like universities, as a moral support to their employees. Totally this concept is “One Stop Solution” to respective category consumers. Even today certain country army staff’s are getting these benefits even after retired from the services. After 1990’s significant changes occurred on the above mentioned key words. When we compared to present strategies and trends with before 1990’s, the transformation is visible by way of substantial increase in investment and volume of turnover [revenue]. These developments has attracted more and more MNE’s to invest in this sector and the best example for integrated business strategy is “Wall Mart”.

First, why more and more MNE’s are entering in these sectors to increase their foot prints in developing countries, some of the countries in African continent giving good returns on their investment [ROI]. Each dependent sectors of an industry gets its own identity with huge revenues and leads to further innovations; also more and more employment opportunities are generated to well educate and less educated adults, we can call it as “Retail Revolution”. How this revolution occurred in retail sector and who are all played active role in this growth? When we trying to dig out, the real factors for this growth the above mentioned sectors [key words] played a vital role behind the screen; Especially “logistics, B2B and CRM”, for example 3-4 decades ago to receive or sending letters between countries, it takes nearly 25-30 days, sometimes beyond month. Today we are receiving within 7 days; because most of the international cargo flights are operating to country’s capital and regional capital towns to increase their revenue as well as their global presence on one side, some domestic courier companies are tied up with international courier companies and postal department on the other side. Most of the organizations especially MNE’s realized; if they want to sustain in the race and gain profit, reducing the cost of operation like distribution cost, logistics cost and transit time are the key agenda in their business.

Secondly CRM is one of the key factors in today’s integrated business policies. To retain customer equity integrated policies are most valuable. Some smart marketers are looking, beyond the attributes of the products and services, they can sell whatever they have. Consumers usually face a broad menu of products or services that might be satisfy them or they may land up in confusion what to select or what to drop, sometimes broader and wider menu frustrate consumers.

Thirdly marketers are focusing on building strong relation with customer or strong customer loyalty through B2B and other several techniques. Most of
the MNE’s are using franchise system in their business to reduce their involvement and financial burdens as well as other litigations. This franchisee system is the best example of B2B, it has dual role for both franchisee and franchiser.

Finally marketers are using Hybrid marketing channels, like “Go to Market” strategy along with telemarketing, Catalog, Internet, Mobile and SMS marketing through visualize and digital advertising. Across the world citizen groups and social entrepreneurs and media websites are setting the agenda for social change.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Modern retail trend pulls consumers to experience the global cultural trends, right from life style products to eating products, consumer electronics to entertainment. This is how globalization impact is visible everywhere, brand recall or awareness is much higher than ever today, it may be soft drinks, cookies, consumer electronic goods and many more essential commodities. Most of the MNE’s are creating universal consumer values and needs by tapping these markets. African continent is one of such continent open to global trends and attracting more and more MNE’s to acquire these markets to increase their market share and their global presence. Nestle, Coke, Pepsi and Unilever are in FMCG category, Toshiba, Dell, HP, Samsung, Nokia, LG and Sony in Consumer electronics category, in automobiles Toyota, Renault, Tata, Isuzu, Bajaj and TVS in HTV, SUV and Two wheeler category. In super market category ShopRite leading super market chain from South Africa is expanding its operations from South to Eastern parts of Africa.

First I would like to share my views and my references in transportation. Transportation is playing a vital role in any business or industries, means key link between end user, distributor and manufacturer. Today we are using very innovative strategies in this sector to receive and send goods within hours of time; JIT (Just in Time) strategy is a significant one. Even though our advancement and innovative strategies have some hindering hiccups, may be non availability of spares of fuel efficient vehicles or improper servicing points and so many other aspects like government regulations. The most important factor is fuel price fluctuation, most of the times it is happening weekly or monthly. Due to these barriers transportation firms are thinking to invest on a priority basis in this sector to succeed. Modern logistics management is based on serving in an efficient manner to satisfy customers to retain business. Modern customer driven-logistics management focuses on delivering products on time with the least cost without any damages. Some leading organizations developed a systematic logistics management process which checks the credibility of its transporters by scrutinizing the cargo at the delivery point in comparison with its condition at the time of dispatch and the time taken by the transporter to deliver the goods, the quality of trucks that are being used and also the reputation of the transporter in the industry. In this path logistics companies introduced online tracking system, this is a significant development in creating good rapport with existing customer as well retain.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

I had three strong reasons to bring out this paper with a procured and saved data’s

1] Since 2005-present I have worked in African countries with various industries like FMCG manufacturer and marketers, trading and procurement companies.

2] African continent is one of the best profitable continent which gives good ROI to MNE’s.

3] With current facts and figures I would like to expose to rest of the world how African continent is responding towards global trends through this paper.

My research methodology in this paper is; I did a qualitative analysis to gain more insight into the current application with the available potential database in a newly emerging African economy. All over the world companies are trying to cut down their staff’s strength and logistics cost to the maximum extent. Companies have realized now they want to cutting down their distribution cost significantly as well as their production cost by resorting to efficient production techniques like “Just In Time” [JIT]. Distribution system is vary from country to country, it depends various factors like technology, economic environment. As the fuel costs are increasing also taxes, transport authorities are imposing more and more emission regulations, cost of steel is increasing, scarcity of fuel, political volatility on one side and manufacturing or reassembling of vehicles in host countries on the other side, all these factors are force logistics executives to rethink of their strategies or fine tune their strategies. Ultimately the end user will suffer with scarcity of essentials and commodities price will increase due to the above reasons. Logistics strategies should be renovate and re-designed which should be friendly to costumer.

TRANSPORTATION
The following areas where transportation companies can modify their strategies:

1. Fuel efficiency
2. Emission control in heavy diesel vehicles
3. Corporate sustainability action with FMCG companies
4. Change their present locations nearer to port
5. Last delivery destination

Globally, transportation industry was consuming 24 million barrelosf diesel per day in 2009 and the same will increased to 34 million barrels per day by 2030. This will reflect on the transportation companies operational cost and likely to be adopting the above mentioned views rather than making tactical moves, also looking for smart and new strategies.

South African transport minister was expressing his views on 2nd Congress of the African Association of Public Transport (UATP) in Johannesburg on 08/08/2012 “Effective transport system is the pillar of growth and development in Africa”. Most of the countries in Africa are importing all types of commercial vehicles, because the country specific advantages [CSA] may not be supporting to start manufacturing units. This is one of the prime reasons for transportation companies unable to provide good logistics support manufacturing industries located in African countries. Some countries do not have sea ports and they are depending on other countries, for example Ethiopia. Secondly some of the countries transport authority systems and regulations are also affecting the international transportation system [Foreign Trade]. For example Kenya and Ethiopia countries are having road transportation facility between the two countries, but Ethiopia adopted “Left Hand driving” system and Kenya is “Right Hand Driving” system. This is also a one of the hindering factor, but this is not a major hindering factor if bureaucrats minds, due lack of political willingness this move was not take up with serious attention.

Now the question is can we use more fuel efficient vehicles or greener vehicles to reduce operational cost or can we use alternative fuels like electric, liquefied natural gas and bio-diesel vehicles, even though cost will not come down and yet cost will be high. “The revitalization of the rail infrastructure across Africa will address the colonial spatial development, while at the same time, establish new networks between countries. Regional integration will depend, to a degree, on the harmonized transport infrastructure networks between and within countries.” The following views are given slightly efficient and cost decrease in their operations. With this we cannot satisfy customer fully but we can provide them fair service so that they can feel good. As a part of initiation of their rethinking exercise they found following remedies:

1. Changing the trade routes
2. Localization

Since the last two decades global business giants are searching for the places where they can able to get their goods manufacturing as well as their supply chain will be cheaper. As a part of their searching exercise, finally they found some countries are more suitable for their further business. Those countries are China India, Thailand and Vietnam Asia Pacific, Mexico and Brazil for Central American countries, Tanzania and Kenya for east and central African countries, Nigeria, Guinea, Ghana and Cote-de-ivory for West African countries. Johannesburg and Durban South African countries, these countries are attractive alternatives.

In India well known FMCG, Cement, Fertilizers and even petroleum Product companies are using rail route as their transportation mode. A well known detergent manufacturer in India (Nirma Ltd-Ahmadabad) is using rail as their transportation mode to send 2400 metric tons of detergent soaps and powderto their depots in one stretch. These goods reach to the destination within 48 to 72 hrs from manufacturing point. The same should be implemented in developing countries in African continent, some of the countries in east Africa implemented rail and road construction with private investments from china and other countries investors.

**CUSTOMER RELATION MANAGEMENT**

CRM is one of the key factors in today’s integrated business policies. To retain customer equity the following reasons are most valuable.

1. Understand the customer expectations in market place
2. Customer attracting strategy
3. Integrated marketing plans should satisfies customer with maximum returns
4. Create profitable relation with customer
5. Customer loyalty yield more profit

Customer or consumers needs and wants are full filled through some combination of products and services. Marketers must carefully execute their offerings and it should not dissatisfy the customer. Marketing will be success only when it accepts to satisfy the needs and wants through exchange relationships. Marketers want
to build strong relationships by giving or delivering superior customer value and marketing consists of actions taken to build and maintain desirable exchange relationships with target audiences involving a product or services. By creating these relationships sellers must search for buyers and identify their needs and plan for good market offering and the potentiality of exchanges required with adequate support. This is the right time for providing such support and positioning the brand.

Position statement based on the following three critical questions:-
1] How you define yourself
2] What makes you are special
3] What unique value or benefits you deliver.

If any organization wants to be successive on the above, they must adopt a strategy like speed to market. Because consumers are more enthusiastic in experiencing new tastes with in short span of time, no one will wait for weeks or months. Whether it is apparels, mobile phones, laptops, life style products like cloths, watches and many more, product information’s are available online; shopping malls are the best place to choose the right product with desirable specification. This has created new trend in retail sector, also most of the organizations divide their sales force to concentrate on particular category like “Modern Trade, General Trade and HORECA”. If you want to successive in this category, marketers must adopt latest communication strategies to get or pull more customers to your place, but how?

B2B INITIATIVES

Globalization and the essentialness of advanced technological tools in information technology and telecommunications have forced companies to change their traditional business practices. Today B2B revenue is exceeding US$200bn. According to B2B market forecast reports it may reach US$225bn by 2018. US and China are growing markets. Next to these, countries like Spain, Mexico and India are showing positive trends, with CAGRs of 10.5%, 7.2% and 6.9%, respectively.
Companies, traders, institutions and distributors are now changing rapidly their business process or systems. Most of the marketers are using online advertising and marketing techniques to increase their representation for existence in global level. Globalization and the essentialness of advanced technological tools in information technology and telecommunications have forced companies to change their traditional business practices. As the marketing environment has become more dynamic and advanced, organizations are realized to develop and maintain long term relationship with their existing customers. This concludes the usage of online services and significant importance given to “e-commerce” and associated services by governments.

E-COMMERCE (E-COMMERCE) OR ELECTRONICCOMMERCE

Simple website is not going generate the business or an opportunity. For that need of various tools that will generate an opportunity to earn money and action program enable customers to bid for any item they like, calculating shipping cost, taxes and total cost of the product at the time of delivery. This has become very popular. Nowadays it is essential for a business to have a web presence of some sort. At the least a business should have its own website and maintain it making provisions for timely updating. This is doing by the best professional companies. While developing the site adequate care should be taken, while creating domain name and contentment as well as ensuring navigability of the site so that viewer’s interest is retained. At the other end of the business action program can be used in reverse actions where suppliers bid to supply. More sophisticated purchase management systems adopted, but small firms are rarely in a position to get suppliers to agree for reverse bidding process. Once the firms turn over will big then it will be an advance tool to save time and money; e-commerce is most advanced tool in today’s B2B transactions and e-commerce has been divided into five categories like B2B, B2C, C2B, C2C and C2G.

- **B2B (Business-to-Business):** Means manufacturer sells the goods to distributors, distributors to retailers and retailers sell goods to end user. Other than manufacturer another two persons doing the business down the line before reaching to end user.

- **B2C (Business-to-Consumer):** Means here consumers directly purchasing from the manufacturer or authorize agents through internet and make the payments through their net banking account/credit/debit card. Without the interference of third person transaction will be finish with in minute.

- **C2B (Consumer-to-Business):** In this phase any person can post his quote [tenders/bid] for any project in the world through online from his home/office. Within span of hours time companies review the consumer’s requirements and bid on the project. The consumer reviews the bids and selects the company that will complete the project. E-lance empowers consumers around the world by providing the meeting ground and platform for such transactions.

- **C2C(Consumer-to-Consumer):** Through this system one can sell/buy his products [car/scoter/house hold articles etc] through online and receiving or sending and paying money through free classifieds.

- **C2G (Citizen-to-Government):** are other forms of e-commerce that involve transactions with the government—from procurement to filing taxes to business registrations to renewing licenses. There are other categories of e-commerce out there, but they tend to be superfluous.

INTERNET MARKETING

The internet is a media in connecting citizens and organizations. Internet is rapidly matching these business counterparts in both innovation and impact across the world, citizen groups and social entrepreneurs are setting the agenda for social change. The internet marketing space is full of people and intermediate so that they can make additional money by telling about the latest scheme and advantages in works automatically and brings thousands of dollars every day. Email is popular with digital marketers, rising an estimated 15% in 2009. Below picture shows the current trend of internet users in African continent.

With the support of internet marketing strategy and advertisement, consumers will get more awareness about the current trends. Marketers are facing a more intelligent and more impatient audience of consumers. Every email sent to a potential or current customer could be considered email marketing. Sending email messages with the purpose of enhancing the relationship of a merchant with its current or previous customers or the purpose of acquiring new customers.
or convincing current customers to purchase something immediately.

**Africa Top 10 Internet Countries**

**2012 Q2**

![Bar chart showing the top 10 internet countries in Africa for 2012 Q2](chart.png)

Source: Internet World Stats - [www.internetworldstats.com/stats1.htm](http://www.internetworldstats.com/stats1.htm)

157,335,675 Internet Users in Africa estimated for June 30, 2012

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**SMS MARKETING**

An SMS Marketing campaign involves collecting mobile phone numbers usually by customer options using a keyword sent to a short code which adds their number to a messaging platform database. SMS Marketing is one of the newest and fastest growing types of marketing because it offers low cost, high return on investment, and places promotions and updates in the pockets of potential customers. According to BiztechAfrica-African Startup Launches SMS Marketing Platform for Businesses-African entrepreneur NatalinoMwenda launched Rasello, the first platform allowing African small businesses to communicate directly with clients through online and SMS broadcasts.

Registered in Singapore but currently operating in Tanzania, Kenya, and Uganda. Indeed, Africa has one of the lowest Smartphone penetration rates in the world, at 5.1% and they are planning to aggressively expand in “Kenya, South Africa and Egypt or Morocco” this year, targeting the Middle East and North Africa where internet penetration around 35% across the region, is almost triples the general internet penetration rate in Africa, which sits at around 13.5%, according to Internet World Stats. While the highest internet penetration rates on the continent, Egypt and Morocco’s respective 21.7% and...
15.7% win out over Kenya and South Africa’s respective 10.5% and 6.8%.

MOBILE MARKETING

Mobile marketing is commonly known as wireless marketing. Mobile marketing via SMS has expanded as a new channel to reach consumer and this type of services typically run off a short code, but sending text messages to an email address is another methodology. The mobile operators vet every short code application before provisioning and monitor the service to make sure it does not diverge. Today mobile is part and parcel every common man’s life. Africa is an increasingly mobile continent, making smart mobile application development is one of the continent’s next big industries. The mobile
application space is set to boom across Africa, as enterprises and developers lead the world in bringing to market unique mobile applications suited to a developing market. There are several reasons for this - crucially, Africa is a mobile continent. Mobile devices are becoming smarter, faster and more affordable; Smartphone adoption is growing by around 15% year on year across the continent and mobile bandwidth has become better and more affordable. In addition, mobile applications are particularly relevant in South African and pan-African context, where young, increasingly tech-savvy and often geographically dispersed population is fast seeing the advantages of self-service and mobile business. Advanced, user-friendly mobile apps will be the next customer service excellence differentiator. To maintain competitive advantage, enterprises will increasingly roll out mobile consumer apps to maintain their competitive lead, and to deliver services. We foresee that many operators will see this as a new way of doing business. Many small businesses opt to share a short code in order to reduce monthly costs.

DIRECT MARKETING

As far as direct marketing is concern I think DELL computers is the best example, it directly connect with customer and carefully targeted with individual customer or consumers to obtain immediate response and cultivate long lasting customer relationship. Mr. Michael Dell is start selling is Dell computer when he was 19 [1984] and today he is doing business of 19+billion. To achieve this what strategy he adopted in his organization, direct interaction with his customers through online support was the secret of his success and it creates a long lasting customer relationship on one side and quick response to customer’s needs and wants during interaction with the customers through online chatting other side. They think customer is god, it is hard to argue with success but Michael Dell has been very successful. This shows his hungry for success.

DATABASE MARKETING

There is one more example in B2B is database marketing, an organized collection of data about individual customer or prospectus countries including geographic, demographic and psychographic behavioral data. Good customer database is strong foundation of a company. A company having a snapshot of customer database then it will be easy for an organization to understand their customer “Needs and Wants”. Customer evaluation is the difference between all the benefits and all the costs of a market offering relative to those of competing others to the extent to which product’s performance meets the expectations of buyer. The aim of customer relation management is to produce high “Customer Equity” is the combined discounted customer life time values of any companies’ present and potential customers. Customer equity will be yardstick of company performance than present sales or market share. Sales and market shares are only for record purpose but customer equity is the only instrument which indicates company’s present position as well as future.

There are so many countries slowly opening to this trend in African continent, in such countries Tanzania is ahead in the race in east African region. Especially banking, insurance and mobile industries growth is significant in Tanzania also Tanzania is accessible to central African countries [DRC] by road. Secondly tourism industry is most attractive and European’s most preferable destination in east African region is Tanzania because of “wild sanctuaries and Kilimanjaro” for trucking. South is already engaged in these activities especially in Johannesburg, of course Tanzania is low-developed, but this country is fast growing and developing country in east Africa.

Moreover, market segmentations are based on a single variable, and for the following two segments are used as key elements.

1. Developing and offering differentiated products catering to the needs of various segments

2. Assessing the monetary value of the firm’s customers.

Nevertheless, focus group participants recognized the opportunities of other database marketing applications. Therefore, these modest beginnings may form the starting point for further developments.

LATEST INNOVATIONS

BizTalk Framework, which provides specifications for the XML-based messaging implementation needed for transmission of business documents. The following strategies to protect customer’s brand reputation which includes the following

- Observation
- Identification
- Inspection
- Optimization
- Proper utilization of internet
Any organization wants to grow as international brand they must adopt one national policy to create corporate brands. To achieve this invite all the national and regional players to involve and active participation in fine tuning the image building exercise as well as research with regards to quality perceptions of the product. By doing this exercise we can increase export chance as well as profit and market share. By involving in these summits one can realize the competitiveness and cost cutting strategies, exchange devaluing rates, labor related problems and productivity enhancement. This strategy is known as “fast track” strategy and with the use of fast track strategies one can produce trade diversified products with better quality and quantity also able to pay higher wages to his labors to increase national income. The developing countries are using fast track strategies to gain knowledge and access to advance technologies with leading skills of economies. This will attract foreign investors as well as foreign partners with flow of information’s and new ideas especially in high-tech industries to create favorable business climate in import and export transactions with good governance.

NEW ENTREPRENEURS’ OR SMALL BUSINESS UNITS

Entrepreneur means a young personality make readiness to prove his ability by doing business or if we want express in other words, one who want to prove himself, he can do dam good things in his life independently. When he/she start any business finance play vital role and without finance they cannot do any good things, but how he/she get finance as a new entrepreneur. Actually entrepreneurship is not an easy task for all or to anyone. Entrepreneurship is frame of strategy and it teaches young entrepreneurs how to organize, plan and implement their thoughts and ideas execute in the form of new entrepreneurship.

It also emphasizes the young entrepreneur to embark on new business with logical or convincing manner. How finance is more important in business, human resource and natural resource also important. New entrepreneur always try to utilize these resources with the aim of improving national income and economy, he should not try to manipulate or traffic human resource. This is one of key responsibility of a new entrepreneur.

IMPORTANCE OF CONSIDERATIONS

The important considerations of entrepreneur or a business person is to increase the per capita income and contributing for sustainable development for long time not for short time. His planning should be simple and one can easily understandable, also it should involve in constituting changes in the structure of business as well as to society on global basis. Due to this initiative sustainable economies in developing/under developing countries give the best opportunities to expand the market and expansion of business. Due to recession global economy is under unacceptable pressure in reconstructing the damaged environments and it help to solve other problems. Means by solving the problems in a sustainable manner so that it should not hinder the development, it may be related export or export license, branch sales office in various countries to fulfill the needs and demands of the consumers and customers. In the initial stages of business is to earn more profits as well as the return on investments, investors and stake holders.

Today business enterprises in developed countries operate in a more complicated and more regulated environment. Numerous laws and regulations govern their activities and make their directors accountable to a broader range of stakeholders. Sustainable development extends the stakeholder group even further, by including future generations and natural resources.

CONCLUSION

One doubt will comes to our mind when we read the above paper, is there any impact on the transportation industry, if so what? Yes there will be an impact on transportation especially on commodities transportation. All the commodities manufacturers, traders or dealers, agents and exporters and importers will think of shifting towards cheaper transportation or new strategies in logistics and this is a continues process in the logistics or transportation industry. As for as B2B is concern we can see enormous changes taking place and everybody benefited by this changes. Someone may agree or not, but the latest technology is speed up all the daily transactions and it is more beneficial when compare to older systems, the fact is all are agree to adopt new innovations. This latest innovation or advancement of technology will be more supportive to big enterprises, but this will not be supportive to those who are having smaller businesses and they may face more additional challenges. Dell computer is best example to SME’s, as an author I have just mentioned only one, but plenty of SME’s are groaned with an unimaginable speed across the globe. This is high time to think differently to grow, as per Coco Cola slogan “Think Local-Act global” is the right strategy for young entrepreneurs’. Besides
sustainability, reporting smaller businesses will have
to adapt to the new corporate climate or new
strategies with less in-house expertise fewer resources
and less formal management structures than larger
corporations. When we compare the present
integrated policies to decade older [2/3 decade]
policies today we are in much better position with
advance technology and it has been widely accepted
by all groups from rural to urban city.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Here means in African continent, plenty of activities
with regards to research is taking place every year ,
but the research findings will not publish well in time,
this is also a hindering factor pulling back researchers.
Even though whatever the information, facts and
figures I have collected since last two and half year
and my experience since 2005; I have just compiled
in this paper. In my next paper I would like to address
the lapses and come out with latest information’s and
development, however threats to developments in
database marketing were also mentioned, mainly lack
of suitable data, lack of statistical knowledge and lack
of knowledge on the marketing implications of client
data and the results of statistical analysis. These
potential lapses need to be considered when applying
database marketing especially in African firms.
Financial constraints seem to be less problematic

FURTHER SCOPE FOR RESEARCH

Plenty of opportunities for further research especially
in transportation industry, B2B and CRM with latest
innovations, facts and figures, of course development
especially in East, West and South African countries.
In Northern part of Africa gulf traders and European
marketers influence is more and political instability is
pulling back researchers compare to East and South.
Transportation and B2B are the prime areas for
further research along with cellular industry.

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