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HOW THE BLUE OCEAN STRATEGY HELPS INNOVATE SOCIAL INCLUSION*

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Abstract. This article aims to explore the techniques and features of the Blue Oceans Strategy and provide insights into the applicability of this famous approach. The paper analyzes the concept of the Blue Ocean strategy, its origins and development, the relation of the Blue Ocean's metaphor to innovation, the relation between the Blue Ocean and the Red Ocean strategy, the Blue Ocean strategy, social entrepreneurship, and social inclusion. The article examines examples of the application of the Blue Ocean Strategy in Lithuania and abroad. The scientific discussion on the issue of the Blue Ocean strategy (further - BOS) covers certain benefits present in each manifestation of the examined strategy. For instance, "value innovation" is one of the topics that has developed rapidly over the last two decades. The "value creation" (or "innovation") aims to create new demand through transforming user experience by offering 'scalable personalization' and using ubiquitous smart technologies to turn traditional products into interactive, information-rich inclusion platforms. Therefore, the Blue Ocean strategy presents a systematic approach to making the competition irrelevant. It outlines the principles and tools that any organization can use to create and capture its undiscovered blue oceans. The scope for defining entrepreneurship is broad and results in many definitions. The discussion turns around the concept of entrepreneurship, and the article's authors also engage themselves in the questions of whether and how to confirm the inter-relation of the BOS and entrepreneurial activities. The authors attempt to prove the principle of the Blue Ocean strategy to be perfectly adaptable to non-profit companies. A case study of the arts agency "Artscape" is provided, and the conclusions are drawn from this part. The authors claim that the theory of the Blue Ocean strategy is still relevant and motivating for the current companies, regardless of their legal status – budgetary or NGO.

Keywords: Blue Ocean strategy; Red Ocean strategy; innovation; social inclusion; entrepreneurship

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1. Introduction

Based on 150 examples of strategies accumulated over thirty years in thirty industries, Kim and Mauborgne (2004) argue that future business leaders will move forward not only by defeating competitors but also by creating the so-called blue oceans of undiscovered market space. Such strategic steps, called value innovations, should help overtake competitors, open up new demand, and make drastic value jumps for the company and its customers.

The research aims to investigate the methods and peculiarities of the "Blue" business strategy and provide insights into the applicability of this new approach.

Objectives of the research:

- to present the concept, benefits, and role of the Blue Ocean strategy in marketing studies by analyzing scientific literature;
- to summarize the knowledge of the Blue Ocean strategy and innovation, linking the Blue Ocean strategy with social entrepreneurship;
- to apply the case study method relating it to the Blue Ocean Strategy in practice.

Methodology. The article uses the methods of theoretical analysis, empirical research and case study analysis.

2. Theoretical background of the Blue Ocean Strategy

2.1. Blue Ocean Strategy concept

The Blue Ocean Strategy is meant to differentiate and lower costs to open up a new market space and create new demand simultaneously. It presumes the truth of the hypothetical development and increase of predominance of an 'undisputed market space' that makes competition insignificant. It is based on the view that market boundaries and industry structure are not self-evident and can be regrouped by the actions and beliefs of industry players.

Kim and Mauborgne (2005) mention value innovation as the foundation on which the Blue Ocean Strategy, which is created to satisfy customers, is based. The Blue Ocean Strategy creates an unquestionable market space thanks to valuable innovations. Therefore, value innovation is not only about fighting for market share with other organizations but also discovering new markets and innovative values for both the customers and the organization itself.

Additionally, Parvinen, Aspara, Hietanen and Kajalo (2011) analyze the role of new value-creation mechanisms in a company's sales strategy. Using value creation and strategic marketing as theoretical approaches, they examine the fundamentals of the Blue Ocean Strategy (BOS) and break down how BOS is reflected in sales management activities.

Tabaria, Ziabarib and Radmardc (2014) notice that the Blue Ocean Strategy is a concept dealing with the "value innovation" that question the traditional idea of surrogated value and cost. Value innovation occurs when the company's management decisions lead to cost structure improvements and increased value to buyers.

Raman (2014) analyzes that it is often considered a competitive market to be more effective as it seeks to enter new markets according to the needs raised by consumers. There may be improvements and innovations, such as the expansion of production at the subsystem level, without prejudice to the company's overall strategy.

Rebóna, Ocariza, Gerrikagoitia and Sorzabala (2015) mention that Kim and Mauborgne define the Blue Ocean Strategy as the 'undisputed market space' in which competition is not essential (Kim and Mauborgne, 2007). The

implications of the Blue Ocean Strategy include generating strong growth and high profits for the company in the search for new market positions in which neither direct competitors nor accredited competition rule.

Alam and Islam (2017) analyze that the Blue Ocean Strategy is a concept that allows organizations to think and innovate in their business to help develop financial and economic sectors, which is a significant concern for the company to create sustainable profit. The Blue Ocean Strategy offers consumers a framework to establish undisputed market space and change concentration from the current competition to creating innovative value and demand. In contrast, the traditional participants of the Red Ocean Strategy are accustomed to the competition. Several organizations in many sectors apply this strategy to gain more success in their business.

Shafiq, Tasmin, Takala, Qureshi and Rashid (2018) state that competition becomes irrelevant with the Blue ocean strategy, not just as warfare with other organizations' markets or industries. The Blue Ocean creates an undisputed market space through value innovation.

Rezeki, Sentanu, Sanawiri, Shankar and Nguyen (2019) mention that the Blue Ocean Strategy hints at a business opportunity as an item with no challenge or less challenge. That is the procedure, which revolves around scanning a business that does not exist yet, and many firms do not have an assessment weight. Inside the consortium in its current state, most companies operate under exceptional conditions that challenge them and try their best to grab a piece of the cake.

Rahman and Choudhury (2019) notice the Blue Ocean Strategy is a theory that allows one to think and innovate for future business and helps a company get backing from financial and economic segments. Blue ocean strategy deals with the problem of success because the organizational model "makes competition insignificant."

Shafiq, Tasmin, Qureshi and Takala (2019) analyze the Blue Ocean Strategy as a coherent strategic model for constructing new markets and industries, where demand is created rather than fought, and competition becomes unimportant. The Blue Ocean Strategy has five shapes: creating a new undisputed market space; competition doesn't matter when making a new demand; differentiation and cost achievement breakthrough; and value price compromise.

Yunus and Sijabat (2021) analyze that the Blue Ocean Strategy can impact competitive advantage, which can determine the company's performance. This concept helps to review relevant articles on the Blue Ocean Strategy and link them to the firm strategy, competitive advantage and efficiency.

Sang and Kimitei (2021) notice that the Blue Ocean Strategy - in terms of latitudes and unexplored waters in the ocean - represent undiscovered and untapped market space characterized by demand generation, highly profitable growth and no competition.

Summarizing the analysis of the scientific literature, it can be stated that the Blue Ocean Strategy is identified as a market for a product or service in which it is minimal or no competition. This strategy is designed to find opportunities where very few businesses are in a given sector, and there is no pricing pressure. In a business world where companies try to outperform their competitors through various advertising, pricing, and other tactics, a Blue Ocean strategy takes a different approach to market and survive.

2.2. Blue Ocean Strategy and innovation

As the founders of the BOS Kim and Mauborgne (2005) call this type of innovation "value innovation", they say it needs to synchronize "utility, cost, and cost positions" (p. 12-14). This innovation is similar to what is known as "frugal innovation" (Philipson, 2020).

Hong, Chai and Ismail (2011) insist on the idea that, instead of focusing on competition in existing markets, the Blue Ocean Strategy provides the value of innovation to create undisputed market space and break free from competition to achieve very profitable and sustainable growth. Therefore, once again, value innovation is a cornerstone of the Blue Ocean Strategy which means pursuing differentiation and low cost at the same time to create a leap in value for both buyers and customers for the company to emerge from the competition and create new customer demand and the undisputed market space.

Subedi (2013) also confirms that the Blue Ocean Strategy is focused on serving new customers to create a new demand rather than competing with existing markets by providing cheaper or better versions of existing products.

Bourletidis (2014) also comments that the Blue Ocean Strategy suggests that the organization should create new demand in an undisputed market space rather than competing face-to-face with other suppliers in the existing industry. Thus, the cornerstone of the Blue Ocean Strategy is “value innovation”. The blue ocean is created when a company achieves value through innovation that simultaneously creates value for both the buyer and the company. Innovation (product, service or delivery) must increase and create value for the market while reducing or eliminating the features or services that are less valued by the current or future needs.

Agnihotri (2015) also agrees that the Blue Ocean Strategy can be created through radical innovation, disruptive innovation, frugal innovation, a purely differentiated strategy, and a targeted differentiation strategy, not just value innovation. Thus, we propose that the method applies to value innovation and all types of invention.

Jedi, Zade and Rahmani (2015) propose that, generally, innovation is a basis for the Blue Ocean Strategy. It is called 'value innovation' because companies focus on shortcomings in this strategic competition rather than fierce competition, creating value for customers and a firm. Value innovation also leads to a new and non-competing environment and a lack of focus on competition. It is critically essential that value innovation equally emphasizes both value and innovation. Value without innovation means focusing on technology, the innovation market and prospects that might not respond to current customers' expectations. In this case, a distinction should be made between value innovation and technological innovation.

Soudi (2017) states that a company must constantly respond to demanding customers; on the other hand, it must adapt to the constant paradigm shift and react to a rapidly changing market. The issue is not just about implementing different strategies but about strategies compatible with the competitive environment that will allow a company to increase its market share. The question to be asked at this stage is: why compete in a highly segmented market? Companies are not focusing on new innovative segments that can offer a unique market position over competitors.

Muhammad, Tasmin and Qureshi (2018) notice that innovation is essential for the competitive advantage and success of an organization. All organizations need innovation to improve market share to be growing. Organizations get motivated by internationalization and competition to increase innovation and competitive advantage, as indicated earlier (Muhammad, Tasmin and Qureshi, 2018).

Leavy (2019) mentions that the Blue Ocean Strategy focuses on value innovations that reveal a new demand aggregated by redefining the category, such as the case of the “Cirque du Soleil” - the kind of entertainment that combines circus and theatre - and disruptive innovations tend to focus on creating new demand that expands the existing service market. Another example can be the Southwest Ryanair cheap flights business. Value creation (or “innovation”) aims at creating new demand through the transformation of user experience by offering "scalable personalization" and using ubiquitous smart technologies to turn traditional products into interactive, information-rich inclusion platforms, as LEGO does with robotic toys.

Hanggara (2019) notices that the return on innovation results from the interaction between the business environment and companies' innovation strategies and opportunities.

There are many industries where the Blue Ocean Strategy (BOS) are already affecting the surrounding environment. That is why our research explores innovation and the effectiveness of innovation in various innovation areas, applying the Blue Ocean business environment. The relationship between the BOS and innovation performance has been identified by the BOS dimensions earlier. Determined by the need to analyze the strategy as the open source for innovations, BOS can be used to improve innovation efficiency in the future.

Hanggara (2019) notices that BOS shows that organizations must create new demand in an undisputed market rather than direct competition with other suppliers in the existing sector. The BOS is used as a base for making the value of innovation. BOS is created when a company achieves a novel value that simultaneously creates another value for both buyers and businesses. Innovation (in products, services or delivery) must increase and create market value while reducing or eliminating features or services that are less valued in current or future markets.

Rebbouh (2019) intends to say that, to provide theories with some key terms that are important when considering the importance of BOS to present some discussions on this concept, and give the experience of companies in applying the Blue Ocean Strategy, some new non-competitive business niches are being offered. This author considers the Blue Ocean Strategy as a new direction for organizations, which can be applied as a strategy to rely on innovation to create value for the customer.

Subagio (2020) states that the concept of "value innovation" is one of the topics in the strategic area that has developed rapidly over the last two decades. According to Leavy (2018), the value innovation has three main options for the application: the Blue Ocean Strategy (Kim, Mauborgne, 2005); disruption innovation (Christensen et al., 2003) and the value of co-creation (Prahalad, Ramaswamy, 2004). All three have certain features in common that set out the perspective of value innovation.

Hajar, Alkahtani, Ibrahim, Darun, Al-Sharafi and Tiong (2021) mention that the concept of value innovation is a summary of analytical results of 150 strategic steps involving more than 30 companies worldwide. A business survey has been launched in 30 industries and around 100 companies to quantify the impact of value innovation on company revenue growth and profit. Hajar, Alkahtani, Ibrahim, Darun, Al-Sharafi and Tiong (2021) argue that the logic of value innovation is not the creation of new technologies, competencies or market leadership but the effective use of those technological and managerial linkages between value innovation, construction of new needs and the change of the market where competition is not relevant.

Scarlat, and Panduru (2021) believe that existing companies' products are pretty innovative if sold alongside annual subscriptions for services provided. There are always individual customers whose purchasing decisions are not necessarily taken by end-users or their associations.

Unsal, and Altindag (2021) are convinced that it is essential that companies can adopt strategic approaches that are open to new ideas, be innovative and capable of creating new ones and operate under changing conditions to increase their productivity. In addition, managers should innovate and should be able to use modern management methods instead of conventional methods. In today's competitive environment, it is increasingly essential for companies to have managers who are open to new ideas, are knowledgeable about the Blue Ocean Strategy, and understand elements of the theory of entropy. Today it is also crucial for companies to create an innovative corporate culture to achieve success.

Sang, and Kimitei (2021) confirm BOS as the undiscovered and untapped market space characterized by demand generation, highly profitable growth and no competition.

Asa, Olivier, Gebhardt and Kapolo (2021) highly estimate the value of innovation and consider it as a fundamental theory of the Blue Ocean concept. These two words must interlink for value proposition and cost differentiation because they depend on each other. If innovation is linked to value, it leads to the total balance, where value is enhanced but not relevant and not necessarily driven to compete in the market space.

Hammer (2022) emphasizes that in the ever-changing business world, the search for so-called 'Value Innovation' or 'Blue Oceans' is crucial for the competitiveness of companies. Three examples from Amazon, Apple and Alibaba illustrate how customers can become 'dependent' on innovative value-added services using a platform that integrates all services. Price elasticity on the buyer side is reduced, and additional consumption is generated this way. Meanwhile, convenience and an unconditional focus on all companies' services is paramount for customers.

2.3. Blue ocean strategy versus Red ocean strategy

Kim, Mauborgne (2005) describe how the Blue Ocean Strategy has become the result of fierce competition in a rival pool of a bloody red ocean. Based on a study of 150 strategic steps (more than 100 years in 30 industries), the authors prove that long-term success is not about fighting competitors but about creating blue oceans that are untapped new market areas ready for growth. The Blue ocean strategy,

Table 1 below summarizes the different features of market transfiguration and views on the competition, cost and value creation in the Red Ocean (Red Ocean Strategy) and the Blue Ocean development (Blue Ocean Strategy).

Table 1. Red Ocean Strategy versus Blue Ocean Strategy

Red Ocean Strategy	Blue Ocean Strategy
Compete in existing market space	Create uncontested market space
Beat the competition	Make the competition irrelevant
Exploit existing demand	Create and capture new demand
Make the value-cost trade-off	Break the value-cost trade-off
Align the whole system of a firm's activities with its strategic choice of differentiation or low cost	Align the whole system of a firm's activities in pursuit of differentiation and low cost

Source: Kim and Mauborgne (2004).

Kim and Mauborgne (2017) draw our attention to the fact that within the Blue Ocean, a company does not directly seek to compete for competence; however, this is why not knowing the theory, companies become stuck in competition. The Blue Ocean Strategy can also create a competitive advantage.

To make the theory clear, it should be noted that the Red Ocean Strategy works in the existing market areas where products, strategies and competitors are already known. Low price and quality are some of the factors behind the competition. The market is crowded, and the goal of all companies is to gain a little more market share every year. All actors' positions are well known, making it almost impossible for new entrants to settle and compete. Profits and growth are limited due to intense competition.

Indeed, once all the criteria are set, the competition becomes irrelevant. Nevertheless, creating a Blue Ocean requires thorough analysis, precise risk management, and some assets.

The Blue Oceans can embrace all the industries that do not exist today - including an unknown market space, unexplored and uncontaminated by competition. Like any blue ocean, it is vast, deep and powerful in terms of opportunities and profitable growth.

2.4. Blue Ocean Strategy, social entrepreneurship and social inclusion

When discussing the social side of the BOS, Dehkordi, Rezvani and Behravan (2012) add that they believe the construction of the Blue Ocean is not a static process.

Lohtander, Aholainen, Volotinen, Peltokoski and Ratava (2017) state that the Blue Ocean Strategy is meant for a company to create a deeper understanding of the business environment.

Albayrak, and Beybur (2018) invite the companies to be different from their competitors in the way the Blue Ocean is and accept the obligation to examine what their customers' "needs are and preferences" are.

Islami, Mustafa and Topuzovska Latkovikj (2020) discuss that with the growth of the global market and the internationalization of companies, the uncertainty of companies is increasing. Like many other issues that raise the need for a clearly defined action plan, the importance of strategy today is greater than ever. Also, is it worth answering the question of the importance of a well-developed strategy? The first challenge companies entering the market face is finding a way to survive in that market. Statistics and research show that around a third of new European companies do not reach the second year of their existence, and 50-60 per cent fail to survive the seventh year (Islami, Mustafa and Topuzovska Latkovikj, 2020).

Yeshitila, Kitaw, Jilcha and Muchie (2020) conclude that a business strategy is one of the most critical management tools to steer the business in the right direction and a tool to sail the "business ship" before the flood and the Pacific Ocean swallows them all. The current reality of the business environment dictates that business competition exists in one form or another. Thus, businesses need to analyze the internal and external markets in which they operate and shape their business strategy as required. The business strategy gives companies a "radar" to navigate the market environment "sea", peacefully suppressing the effects of the "sea wave" so that the company can serve its customers strategically and in a unique location, to achieve its establishment goal.

Prince, Chapman and Cassey (2021) argue that the definition of entrepreneurship and the concept of entrepreneurship are highly relevant. The scope for defining entrepreneurship is broad, resulting in many definitions. The authors work on the concept of entrepreneurship to provide a comprehensive but at the same time consistent definition which would cover all entrepreneurial activities. The advantage of this concept is to create the end point of the entrepreneurial process that separates it from the realm of governance.

Abdel-Dayem, Ragheb, Hamaida and Abdel-Bary (2021) show that the Blue Ocean Strategy and niche marketing have had a significant positive impact on business entrepreneurship. These findings suggest companies should use the Blue Ocean Strategy to choose a niche market based on unique advantages and develop high-margin products through product customization strategies.

In their volume, Duncan-Horner, Farrelly and Rogers (2022) provide their insights on the fact that social entrepreneurship is a new social phenomenon that is gaining actual attractiveness for its ability to address complex social and environmental challenges in the face of global sustainability challenges.

3. Research methodology and methods

The authors have examined several theories here and now will move towards the case studies that will help to illustrate the theoretical insights. Some of the elements are explained further (the site "Press academia"):

- A case study is a research methodology that has commonly used in social sciences;
- A case study is a research strategy and an empirical inquiry that investigates a phenomenon within its real-life context;
- Case studies are based on an in-depth investigation of a phenomenon to explore the causes of underlying principles;
- A case study is a descriptive and exploratory analysis of a phenomenon;

- A case study research can be single or multiple case studies, includes quantitative evidence, relies on various sources of evidence and benefits from the prior development of theoretical propositions;
- Case studies are analyses of institutions or other systems that are studied holistically by one or more methods.

3.1. Existing social capital companies applying Blue Ocean Strategy

"Vinted" (second-hand fashion industry)

The first and most relevant example concerning BOS in Lithuania can be "Vinted". According to the site Sifted (<https://sifted.eu/articles/vinted-unicorn-3-5bn-lithuania/>), it was founded in Vilnius in 2008 by Justas Janauskas and Milda Mitkutė. LinkedIn (<https://www.linkedin.com/company/vinted>) also states that currently, the company is led by Thomas Plantenga and Mantas Mikuckas. "Vinted" is the most prominent fashion market in Europe, with 50 million in 16 countries by its popularity. A team of more than 1,000 people from "Vinted" offices in Vilnius, Berlin, Prague, Amsterdam, and Utrecht develops and maintains its Internet platform. "Vinted" is united by a unique work culture based on pursuing high goals, responsibility, co-creation, care and growth. "Vinted" is committed to creating an inclusive workplace where people from all layers of the societal ladder feel part of it. "Vinted" welcomes all suitably qualified individuals, regardless of their race, colour, national origin, nationality, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion/belief, disability or age. According to the data (the portal Sifted), Lithuanian unicorn "Vinted" is now valued at 3.5 billion Euros (Portal Sifted) and became Lithuania's first (and the only) unicorn in November 2019, after the company raised 128 million Euros (Silicon Valley venture benchmarking record). At the time, "Vinted" had 25 million registered users across 11 markets, with 300 employees. Now the company is active in 12 European and US markets with a headcount of over 700. The team has grown by roughly 75 per cent in the year 2021 alone.

"Our investment approach focuses on investing behind long-term macro trends," Carolina Brochado, a partner at EQT Growth who is joining Vinted's board, tells Sifted. Brochado says they see the space Vinted operates in as a €100bn+ market. Growing at more than 35% yearly, it's "supported by secular mega-trends, including an increased focus on sustainability and greater demand for circular fashion." She adds: "With marketplace models, scale enables continued competitive advantage and network effects, which we see in Vinted versus competitors."

Netflix

Another example of the adopted Blue Ocean Strategy with a well-known mark of innovation is Netflix's with its on-demand streaming service. According to Encyclopaedia Britannica ([https://www.britannica.com/topic/Netflix Inc](https://www.britannica.com/topic/Netflix-Inc)), its success would have been hard to imagine when the company started operating more than 20 years ago as a DVD mail-order company. Today, Netflix operates in 190 countries, has about 200 million subscribers and a turnover of 20 billion US dollars. It became a decisive point for creating original content in 2020. They won 24 Oscar nominations, more than any other media company. This has disrupted rental services such as Blockbuster, the entire television industry, and pay-TV channels losing subscribers and trying to emulate Netflix's offering. Netflix is a prime example of the Blue Ocean's strategy. This has created a new market space for the on-demand broadcasting of films and TV series and has successfully changed how we use media. This has significantly increased convenience for the customer by allowing viewers to stream on-demand content. In partnership with TV manufacturers such as Samsung and Apple, Netflix is now integrated into most TVs, and HD-quality streaming will enable viewers to enjoy a high-quality experience similar to a traditional TV experience. Finally, many customer issues have been fixed, such as ad breaks and minimum duration contracts (viewers can cancel anytime). The Netflix case is a clear example of a company recognizing the potential of new technologies (such as faster internet speeds to stream quality content) and changing consumer trends and expectations (digital on demand and digital).

3.2. The niches occupied in Lithuania

Saulius Žilėnas, the director of "Reitan Convenience Lithuania", the most popular spot which was called "Coffee Inn" until recently, has led the company for around a year and says that now the biggest ambition is to ensure the leadership of the "Caffeine" network and to increase the awareness of the Narvesen brand so that it becomes more modern, more suitable for those looking for food products (Verslo Žinios). We remind our readers that "Reitan Convenience Lithuania" acquired "Caffeine" in 2019. The BOS had a complete set of reasons to be applied in this case. The weight of kiosks in the business of the country is decreasing. A decade ago, there were over 400 of them in Lithuania, and now there are about 100 "Lietuvos Spauda" kiosks and about 60 "Narvesen" stores.

"We aim to make food products that we are proud of becoming attractive goods. We are also considering various models of self-service stores, which our colleagues in Estonia and Scandinavia are trying; this can certainly be compatible with our business model", the manager says.

The search for alternatives is driven by rising wages and rising costs of energy resources, so automation of processes makes sense. The Danish experience shows that self-service kiosks have prospects.

"We are also looking at sleeping districts where we can offer local cafes; we are experimenting with smaller formats. One such successful one is "Caffeine" near Kaunas Clinics", S. Žilėnas gives an example.

In 2023-2024 they are planning the development of drive-thru cafes, where coffee can be ordered and received without getting out of the car. In addition, they are negotiating with several supermarkets that do not have "Caffeine" yet. From S. Žilėnas, the biggest competition in the coffee shop business among the Baltic countries is in Lithuania. However, we do not have international brands that, for example, dominate in Poland. This gives the company an excellent reasoning space for applying the Blue Ocean strategy. Cafe chains operating in Lithuania are working well. However, there is still room for growth in the market, so "Caffeine" has excellent potential for BOS or niches and trying to stand out not only in the interior but also provide variety in products and their formats.

And now, we are going to discuss a specific segment of the Lithuanian market – the scene of the social movements and initiatives, added by some artistic dimensions, which are always searching for entrepreneurship.

One of the most influential institutions in Lithuania, marking the conjunction of social movement and culture, is the Open Lithuania Foundation (<https://olf.lt/en>). However, the programs at the foundation shifted, and the agendas transformed accordingly.

What should be emphasized while discussing the search for entrepreneurial spirit is that the Blue Ocean strategy principle is perfectly adaptable to non-profit companies. Currently, we might assume that one of the most active agencies combining social and artistic initiatives is the arts agency "Artscape." Affected by the Ukrainian war situation, the company is susceptible to societal changes and is open to implementing the BOS.

3.2.1. The case of Artscape

This company calls itself an agency and proclaims its mission as follows (Portal www.artscape.lt):

"We aim to provide an opportunity for vulnerable social groups to participate in culture and to initiate social change through high-quality art projects."

The article's authors conducted an interview with Aiste Ulubey, the agency's general manager. The company's main unique selling proposition (USP) is the art events dealing with some social stigma.

Aiste Ulubey thinks that their company is unique in this sort of classification; however, in general, the leading flagship company dealing with human stigma in Lithuania is Caritas. As they declare on their site: *"Caritas is an international Catholic organization that carries out humanitarian work worldwide and helps the poor, regardless of race, religion, gender or nationality. Caritas relies on the social teaching of the Catholic Church, which emphasizes human dignity. Caritas Lithuania is a*

voluntary help group, the majority of members of which are more than 95 per cent volunteers. Caritas Lithuania is a public legal entity established by the Lithuanian Bishops' Conference following the canons of the Catholic Church (can. 115 § 3 and can. 116 § 1). It has economic, financial, organizational and legal independence. Caritas Lithuania is a member of the Caritas Internationalis Confederation and the Caritas Europa Region. Caritas Lithuania may also be a member of other national or international organizations. Caritas Lithuania is a community that includes all Caritas structures in Lithuania" (www.caritas.lt).

The authors attempted to identify the values and the activities of "Caritas" and the "Artscape". In this respect, the company "Artscape" is a competing member because their opponent Caritas responds instead to the general human stigmata (refugees, displaced persons and other victims of political and social conflicts). Before the interview, we examined the data provided at our national portal, where all businesses are registered on the Agency "Artscape" specificity.

Sometimes challenges can be turned into opportunities if considered creatively.

For instance, in the Report (digiACT) examining the cultural acts in various countries of the EU responding to COVID in 2020, it is said that:

Initially, the Lithuanian government tried to help the cultural sector survive after it banned all events and cultural institutions from working. The first help came after a couple of months; the open call for new virtual products and digitalization for cultural organizations was announced. This opportunity allowed many organizations to change their course of action by working online and creating new productions. However, many performing artists and technicians found themselves lost because they had never experienced a different pandemic-related field, and there were not many people working in such conditions. Young actors and technicians lost their income and inspiration as the world changed in minutes (...). During the pandemic period, the activity of cultural and artistic organizations increased significantly. In 2021, 368 cultural institutions applied to the Lithuanian Culture Council for funding. Most of them (about 60%) were non-governmental organizations. The Lithuanian Culture Council has funded almost 800 cultural and art organizations in the first half of 2021 (<https://www.ltkl.lt>).

Therefore, the agency such as "Artscape" needs to find the so-called Blue Ocean strategies to create a new value within their services.

As Ms. Ulubey notes, their speciality is not only the urgent response to the stigmatized people but also the language of arts being applied in their projects and the efforts to reach cohesion of several sectors.

As it was explained earlier, it becomes clear that "Artscape" agency has conquered the undisputed market space, as put in the theoretical part. It holds a combination of features that make the competition at least not necessary if not anything else.

Some online psychology channels (portal The Clear Point Strategy) raise general questions to highlight the chosen company's pros and cons. We have used the questions better to identify Blue ocean opportunities within the selected company.

1. What do we do well? Why do customers choose us and stay with us?
We communicate diversity and inclusion based on our values and methods – the values we believe are missing in the Lithuanian context. We are open to different artistic expressions: theatre, contemporary dance, fine arts, etc., with one standard to artistic collaborators: creative production has to be inclusive and enable marginalized communities to speak (give a voice).
2. What do our competitors do? Why might our ideal customers choose a different solution?
Artscape has a team with diverse competencies from artistic, migration, and social field and including beneficiaries (from disadvantaged communities and those with stigma) in the decision-making we believe we are creating creative results that work both in the public eye and makes an impact in communities with stigma. Sense of being proud, a sense of belonging, connecting, and having a voice. The ethical process and inclusion give us support from within stigmatized communities (that makes us proud and humble and keeps us going).
3. Where are the red oceans? Which features and benefits do we compete for head to head with our competitors? We compete in fundraising and visibility.

4. What is our “blue ocean”? What do we provide our customers that no one else can? We are proud of our tailored approach to tackling stigmas (continuously researched beneficiaries, consistently applying the principle 'not to harm') together with innovative artistic means - used theatre methods, documentary theatre, participatory performances, and community theatre.

3.2.2. The project Dance of Freedom as the manifestation of the Blue ocean strategy by “Artscape”

On the Independence Day of Ukraine in 2022, representatives of contemporary art presented an extraordinary spectacle to the people of Vilnius, Ukrainians and all the guests of the capital. The wall of an abandoned 'Moscow house' in Šnipiškės district, transformed into a symbol of Ukrainian strength, became the scene of a unique dance performed at a great height, attached with special equipment.

Ukraine's desire for freedom and peace was conveyed through modern dance by the pioneer of vertical dance in Lithuania, and the only performer of this dance, ballerina Inga Briazkalovaitė. On August 24, 2022, the dancer performed her vertical dance, "Dance of Freedom", by which the artist aimed to honour the defenders of Ukrainian freedom and once again reminded the world that Ukraine's fight for freedom is for all of us.

"I've been willing to express my support for Ukraine with a vertical dance for some time, and there couldn't be a better place than this. After seeing the news about a giant portrait of a Ukrainian volunteer-created by a robot from Estonia on the facade of a "Moscow house", I looked at it and found a special opportunity to implement this idea with an unreal team that believed in my idea", said I. Briazkalovaitė.

So, where do we see the features of the Blue ocean strategy? When it comes to the formula of the ingredients that would allow us to evaluate the coverage of the new 'uncontested' area, we would suggest the following:

- Social Stigma (the “Artscape” is looking at the social stigmata creatively);
- Art professionalism – putting all arts into the interdisciplinary project is also a manifestation of the BOS.
- Education and cohesion – the activities of the “Artscape” are recognizable by a great degree of integrating societal, community and artistic elements into one new product of culture.

According to Kotler et al., each market has four market roles (Kotler, Burton, Deans, Brown and Armstrong, 2015). However, due to the diversity of the companies and the themes of their activities, this analysis is very relative and proves the idea that competition here is insignificantly relevant.

Aistė Ulubey, head of the Artscape arts agency, says: "Art is stronger than any words; it can express what is happening in society – to send a message of solidarity and comfort. The dance performance "Dance for Freedom", which was performed on the fresco "Do peremogi/Iki pergales", invites us to talk about hope and empathy through art. Although the war in Ukraine oppresses all of us, we invite everyone to discover the testimony of our unity and compassion in the work of artists who invite us to create, not destroy."

4. Discussion on a combination of ingredients (Stigma+Art+Action)?

According to the electronic source helping people deal with stigma (www.whocanyoutell.org/what-is-stigma), the latter is a degrading and debasing attitude of the society that discredits a person or a group because of an attribute (such as an illness, colour, nationality, or religion). The resulting coping behaviour of the affected person results in assumed stigma. This perceived or internalized stigma by the discredited person is equally destructive whether or not actual discrimination occurs. Stigma destroys a person's dignity, marginalizes affected individuals, violates fundamental human rights, markedly diminishes the chances of a stigmatized person achieving full potential, and seriously hampers the pursuit of happiness and contentment. When stigma is associated with a medical condition or disability, it prevents individuals from seeking evaluation and treatment, disclosing the diagnosis to the people most likely to provide support and following treatment guidelines.

Art can become a way to defeat stigmata. Our duty – is to demonstrate our purpose, the portal says. "What is the Change we'd like to see?" First, what is your purpose in using the arts for stigma reduction? Is it simply to raise awareness? To give a platform to artists who have experienced mental illness? Or are you focused on a specific change you'd like to see? If your goal or one of your goals in putting on the event is to reduce stigma, there are

some things you may want to think about. The experts invite us to consider the following learning outcomes from our discussions about using arts for stigma reduction, as well as from the practical experience of WISE and its partner organizations in putting on stigma-reducing arts events.

1. Personal stories and contact are the main things we know to reduce stigma. Alas, the story can be utilized in a variety of ways.
 2. We don't want to limit creative expression or try to narrowly define what "stigma-reducing art" looks like. If ten people look at the same art piece, they may all interpret it differently.
 3. Art in itself is a form of therapy for people. The story may be about that.
 4. Some art may express darkness and may have allowed a catharsis of sorts for the artist. Perhaps the experience of creating the art was part of a recovery process. If there is a story with it, then the story about its creation may have the opportunity to illuminate recovery.
 5. Ultimately, we want to leave it up to the artists to decide for themselves. Do they want to share a story of recovery? Or do they want to let the work stand on its own?
 6. When thinking of aesthetics in the art world, there is no "right" or "wrong" way of expression.
 7. Creating art is often healing, but the experience of consuming it may be different.
 8. Recovery is not linear. Art may show that.
- (Portal Eliminate Stigma)

To summarize, we can say that by identifying our unique selling points and responding to our new audiences, we have a chance to develop innovation in our social initiatives. In the case of the "Artscape" we can see that arts can cure stigmata as the Blue ocean strategy.

Conclusions

The research has aimed to investigate the methods and peculiarities of the "Blue" business strategy and provide insights on the applicability of this new approach. As demonstrated, the strategy's applicability is somewhat relevant and feasible. We proved this by the examples of the artistic socially-charged projects.

Objectives of the research were completed via the application of the various research methods; the knowledge on Blue ocean strategy and innovation was summarized, linking the Blue ocean strategy with social entrepreneurship and proving the fruitfulness of this method in the initiatives of social inclusion; the case study method was applied the concerning the Blue Ocean Strategy in practice, using the specific keywords and demonstrating the ways of managing social stigmata with the help of arts. The "Artscape" case study has shown the ingredients of social innovation, value and undisputed market space.

In conclusion, the authors were trying to explain if and how the doctrine of the Blue Ocean Strategy is still incredibly efficient and promising while trying to find a niche in the densely populated market of socially engaged companies.

With reference to Kim and Mauborgne (2005, 2007, 2017), the authors confirmed that new value and innovation could be found while stopping our search for competitors and starting to construct a new societal offer combining unusual new elements (just like the Cirque du Soleil did) and exploit new innovative features that can be born while applying these BOS principles: creating uncontested market space; making the competition irrelevant; creating and capturing new demand and breaking the value-cost trade-off, together with negotiation of flexible price, which, perhaps, asks for further research.

The novelty of the obtained results rests in the interpretation of the negative societal variables (such as economic or political stigmata) and efforts to transform them into acts of change (such as innovative performances), prompting specific solutions that companies can adopt while managing the shortcomings of their businesses.

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