

# THE AGGREGATE OF PROFESSED FIRM CULTURE ELEMENTS

Author: Kiril Dimitrov

*Abstract: The current article explores interesting, significant and recently identified nuances in disclosing the professed firm culture in the virtual realm. Its emphasis is set on two exotic instruments – organizational mantra and memorandum that senior managers in business organizations may use to successfully clarify and communicate what is their business and why they enter it.*

*Keywords: Strategic management, organizational culture, official culture, professed culture, corporate culture, firm culture.*

*JEL: L29, M14, L26.*

## INTRODUCTION

High quality business dreaming comes to be a strong prerequisite for: (a) establishment and further development of successful starting companies, and (b) undertaking deliberate transformations in already existing business organizations. The management aim of achieving and maintaining high quality levels for the business dreams may be pursued persistently by means of adequate creation and elaboration of a semantical network, consisting in specific elements of professed firm culture that should be unique for each entity. Traditionally, dominating short-termism in strategic planning processes and their observed indirect relationship with current profit margins in the companies prevents their senior managers from paying the necessary attention to efficient and effective covering of the first pace in strategic management. Even the new generations of managers enter the business field with the inclination of neglecting this important aspect in their work, before all because of the dominating theories and market paradigms, lectured at business universities, describing as heroism the fast accumulation of profit, circumventing enacted economic laws and desires to escape the creation of win-win situations with certain constituencies, characterized by establishment of long-term relationships and acceptance of stable responsibilities. This is the reason why this article aims at disclosing a richer bundle of professed firm culture elements that may be used by managers to express their ideas about how things should be done in their entities with regard to dominating attitudes to diverse constituencies and justifying the existence of their companies.

## **1. A starting point of analyzing professed culture in business organizations**

Traditionally the elements of official firm culture may be presented as a negligible part of the topics included in some modules that are not always presented in all curricula for different specialties in the field of Business and economics, i.e. Introduction to management, Economics of the enterprise, Business management, Cross-cultural management (Organization/ Firm culture), Strategic management (Corporate/ Business strategy), Entrepreneurship and sometimes Marketing and advertising. Furthermore students' encounters with this first stage of strategic management, provided by the respective lecturers, most times are restricted to:

- Disclosing theory in a succinct way by providing a single way (or at most uncritical skimming through several ways) of formulating traditional company documents, such as a mission statement, a vision and rarely a credo;
- Supplying the students with appropriate experiences as independently composing individual or team course works, elaborating business plans for the creation of new companies and developing practice-oriented small projects, intended to improve the performance of existing organizations.

Thus, strategic short-sightedness is engrained in the professional programming of students through the content transmission in the educational process, overemphasizing the limited short-term oriented functional approach to business, dominated by fads as marketing, innovations, project working and startups. Instead, a more careful and proactive approach to exerting the first pace in strategic management during key marker events as the establishment of a new company or leading a change initiative in an existing entity, is needed.

## **2. The use of concrete company documents as professed culture expressive means**

The results from a performed scientific project allowed to identify an array of fifteen elements of professed culture (Dimitrov, Ivanov, Geshkov, 2015; Dimitrov, Ivanov, Geshkov 2016; Dimitrov, Ivanov, Geshkov 2017) (see figure 1) that may be categorized in two groups:

- *The first one, comprising potential firm documents, identifiable as (sub-)topics, independent, dependent or mediating variables, empirical results and recommendations in deliberately searched and analyzed scientific articles, dissertations, books (book chapters), dissertations and blogs of prominent professionals from selected electronic, academic databases or provided in the University library, i.e. a declaration of company mission, an organizational vision, a credo, a motto, a manifesto, corporate/ firm official philosophy/ policy, firm values, corporate principles, company purpose and slogan (\*\*, 2018a; \*\*, 2018b; \*\*, 2018c; \*\*, 2018d; \*\*, 2018e; \*\*, 2018f).*
- *The second one contains a variety of electronic firm documents that are not widely dwelled on theoretically or the interest to their essence and development is lost in*

*time, but all these are accessible on the surveyed companies (sub-)sites that were identified during the probatory empirical research of a small sample of business organizations from diverse economic sectors, i.e. firm's history, general company related information semantically grouped under the summarizing label of "For us...", an official code of conduct or ethical code, "a should-be carefully selected bunch" of important characteristics, outlining the official organization culture, intentional disclosure of company initiatives in the sphere of corporate social responsibility and sustainability orientation in the performed business activities.*



Figure 1. The array of professed firm culture elements, identified in the aforementioned scientific project

That is why it may be concluded that the aggregate of possible elements of professed firm culture, disclosed in the virtual realm is a complex result both from theoretical research and managers' practices in the field of strategic management. Such an exploration approach brings about thorough identification of target attributes, related to design and electronic disclosure of professed cultural attributes for companies, operating in Bulgaria.

According to a very good definition (Zlatev, 1999), the construct declaration of company mission represents a specific purpose that: (a) possesses three basic characteristics (social orientation, identity and value orientation); (b) is applied as a means of declaring firm's attitude to some constituencies (owners, clients, personnel and local community); (c) serves as a means of proclaiming management considerations in the sphere of organizational survival and development; (d) requires analyzes of certain factors (development tendencies for the respective economic branch, recent company history, business environment specifics; distinctive competence for the company to use in the competitive struggle) and (e) may be specified by the use of key adjectives (short, original, inspiring, orienting and elevated). The mission itself seems to be a complex construct, a morphing structure and a moving target that becomes evident from diverse approaches to its design, based on: (a) theories, exploring the reasons for its creation (Bart, Bontis, Taggar, 2001); (b) problem based theories in elucidation of its essence (Abell, 1980); (c) theories, determining its components (Want, 1986); (d) theories, forming the attitude to target constituencies (Pearce, 1982); (e) theories, substituting the declaration of mission with other related constructs (Mintzberg, Quinn, 1996); (f) theories, formulating a list of desired characteristics (Stone, 1996).

The construct "Company vision" seems to be in the same inconvenient situation as the previously analyzed one, revealing the lack of consent in relation with its operationalization. Lynch (2000) defines it as a specific influence that the group of organizational decision-makers exerts on the existence of the respective firm, based on dominating view of life and management philosophy. That is why the vision is accepted as a key prerequisite for performing high quality design of the possible and desired company state in the future or formulating the firm's purpose. The enrichment of vision contents in different directions represents a main stream in the scientific literature, achieved by adding company values (Hussey, 1998) and professed future (Big hairy audacious goals) (Collins, Porras, 2002). On the contrary, the desires to limit the nuances in the meaning of vision and to subordinate it hierarchically to mission (Zlatev, 1999; Campbell, Tawadey, 1992; Sheaffer, Landau, Drori, 2008) also exist.

The company credo – an effective professed culture element, setting an organization's convictions, goals, responsibilities and philosophies, is characterized by greater consensus around the nuances, embedded in its meaning, because it is more infrequently applied by business organizations in comparison to mission and vision (Métayer, 2002; Parker, 2012), and its existence is marked by the overexposure of a magnificent example, provided by the founder of a great company (\*\*\*, 2018h). Nevertheless, some identified differences, related with its length (wordcount), still cannot be missed (Parker, 2012; Vogan, 2006).

Firm's motto is used to express in a succinct way, by means of a phrase or sentence that contains a belief or an ideal, how a company describes itself in how they feel they should do business (\*\*\*, 2008). It incarnates a belief or ideal and help in motivating personnel members. It is close to a slogan, but the last one is always related to a certain organizational campaign, used to attract loyal customers with catchy sentences (\*\*\*, 2013).

There is no hesitation in relation with producing a manifesto that is intended to build and maintain a strong, long-term emotional bond between a target business organization and its constituencies by means of creating a succinct company identity disclosure, formulating its dominating beliefs, and justifying the reasons why to pursue a certain cause, because of the existence of only one main contributor for this element of professed firm culture (Bell, 2016).

No matter the open discussion on corporate/ firm official philosophy/ policy, there are several themes that should be included, as follows: the essence of the desired relationships among the company and its constituencies, formulated purpose with respect to growth and profitability, design of key corporate policies in certain spheres (management style, personnel, finances, marketing and applied technology) and declaration of basic firm-level values (ethics, beliefs, unwritten rules of behavior) (Paunov, 1995).

The use of firm values and corporate principles in practice seems to be very bewildering, because an unbiased analyzer remains with the impression that a great deal of senior managers simply do not differentiate between the two constructs, i.e. one used item may be included in both lists. Furthermore, it seems that many managers are not aware of what is the essence and what are the nuances of meaning, embedded in these principles and values, since in most of the cases no descriptions are provided to them (Zlatev, 1999; Dimitrov, Ivanov, Geshkov, 2016; Dimitrov, Ivanov, Geshkov, 2015).

Similar to the aforementioned situation, the company purpose frequently is not structured in the right format, stimulating people to undertake action in a certain direction to achieve something (Zlatev, 1999).

The following elements of professed firm culture are not presented theoretically in scientific books and articles (\*\*\*, 2018a; \*\*\*, 2018b; \*\*\*, 2018c; \*\*\*, 2018d; \*\*\*, 2018e; \*\*\*, 2018f). That is why their essence and important characteristics are derived from surveying the structure and content of websites, belonging to 660 companies, operating in Bulgaria (Dimitrov, Ivanov, Geshkov, 2017; Dimitrov, Ivanov, Geshkov, 2016; Dimitrov, Ivanov, Geshkov, 2015):

- Firm's history in most cases is represented by a summarized information of several paragraphs, disclosing key events from organization's life stages that may be presented even on an axis and marked by specific time units.
- "For us..." represents general company-related information, semantically grouped under this summarizing label, describing activities, main products and related services.
- An official code of conduct or ethical code, informing the constituencies about should-be typical behaviors of company's employee in the process of performing the needed business-related interaction.
- "A should-be carefully selected bunch" of important characteristics, outlining the official organization culture, i.e. embodying senior management aspirations of how things should be done in the respective company.

- Deliberate dignified disclosure of undertaken company initiatives in the sphere of corporate social responsibility and sustainability orientation even without differentiating between the two spheres.

The results from the conducted empirical survey of the internet sites of companies-members of several employer organizations in Bulgaria<sup>1</sup>, reveal that the professed firm culture is presented most frequently in the internet by means of official company documents as: “For us... (About us...)” (91,9%), “Mission” (15,9%), “Our (organizational) history” (14,8%), “Corporate social responsibility, sustainability” (11,9%), “Vision” (8,1%), “Firm/ our values” (6,2%), “Corporate/ firm/ official philosophy/ policy” (4,2%) and “Corporate/ firm principles” (3,4%) (see table 1). The sum of the percent data from the most right column exceeds one hundred, because each surveyed business organization may apply more than one official firm document for public proclamations of key facets in its unique company culture. The survey results showed that this option is widely used by the senior management teams of the explored entities. The existence of a rarely applied firm document for characterizing a target professed firm culture – a manifesto, is identified through theoretical research, although it is not applied by surveyed entities. Furthermore, it is beheld that 45 of the surveyed companies do not disclose professed firm culture documents on their websites.

Table 1. Frequency distribution of the use of specific company documents for professed culture disclosure  
\$x\_1m Frequencies

1. What are the types of documents used to describe the professed culture of a company in internet?		Responses		Percent of Cases
		N	Percent	
Professed culture - documents <sup>a</sup>	Vision	50	4,9%	8,1%
	Mission	98	9,6%	15,9%
	Motto	17	1,7%	2,8%
	Credo	6	0,6%	1,0%
	Corporate/ firm/ official philosophy/ policy	26	2,6%	4,2%
	Firm/ our values	38	3,7%	6,2%
	Our history, presented even on an axis, marked by specific time units	91	8,9%	14,8%
	For us...(About us...)	565	55,6%	91,9%
	Code of conduct, Ethical code	5	0,5%	0,8%
	Corporate/ firm principles	21	2,1%	3,4%
	Purpose	5	0,5%	0,8%
	Firm/ corporate/ organization culture	6	0,6%	1,0%
	Corporate social responsibility, sustainability	73	7,2%	11,9%
	Slogan	16	1,6%	2,6%
	Total	1017	100,0%	165,4%

a. Dichotomy group tabulated at value 1.

<sup>1</sup> The surveyed companies belong to local employer organizations as Association of the industrial capital in Bulgaria, Bulgarian outsourcing association, Bulgarian association of information technologies, Small and medium-sized companies, included in GEPARD annual rating, Bulgarian - Swiss trade chamber, German - Bulgarian industrial trade chamber, Chamber of the Spanish industry and trade in Bulgaria and Bulgarian defense industry association.

### 3. Rarely applied elements for disclosing professed firm culture in the internet

Two exotic elements of professed firm culture, that may be used in the internet by the companies, are outlined here, i.e. organizational mantra and memorandum (memo). These items were identified after the completion of the aforementioned scientific project through extensive research in the British space of Google during an Erasmus+ lecturing mobility visit in Nottingham Trent University, Nottingham city, United Kingdom Great Britain and North Ireland, realized by the author (\*\*\*, 2018g). Different approaches to exploring the nuances in the meaning of the term “organizational mantra” are applied.

*First, the organizational mantra is detected to embody the second step in a top-five list of the most important things (steps) an entrepreneur is expected to accomplish in a timely manner in order to achieve initial competitive advantage and retain sustainable success for a target starting company, generated by Guy Kawasaki – a world renowned business guru and university lecturer (see Kawasaki, 2004). The analysis, provided here, is based on the potential relationship between religion and magic, on one hand, and successful business operation, on the other hand. That is why the Kawasaki (2004) proposes the following definition for the term mantra: “A sacred verbal formula repeated in prayer, meditation, or incantation, such as an invocation of a god, a magic spell, or a syllable or portion of scripture containing mystical potentialities.” Another nuance in its meaning is revealed by Snow (n.d.) who associates it with words or phrases, deliberately repeated to facilitate organizational transformation. Yekutieli (2014) adopts a limiting approach to necessary elucidation of the aforementioned term, even limiting its meaning to “a word or sound repeated to aid concentration in meditation” (“a few core power words”), relying on its Sanskrit definition, i.e. “a thought behind a word or action”. Mantras serve organizations as decision, communication and alignment tools with an emphasis on who they want to be, and not on what they want to do, thus continuously energizing the employees with clarity, conviction and passion about the firm (see table 2). So it seems that repetition, conciseness, simplicity, clarity, conviction, emotionality, sweetness, power, preciseness, sincerity, memorability, actionability and passion are to be main characteristics for this company document, applied to express important features of a target professed firm culture (Yekutieli, 2014; Mooney, n.d.).*

Table 2. Kawasaki’s top-five list of the most important things an entrepreneur must accomplish when starting a firm and other elucidations of organizational mantra

Steps	Description
(1)	(2)
1. Make meaning	1.1. Make the world a better place. 1.2. Increase the quality of life. 1.3. Right a terrible wrong. 1.4. Prevent the end of something good.

Continued...

(1)	(2)
2. Make mantra	1.1. It evokes great power and emotion. 1.2. It should be short, simple, catchy and sweet. 2.3. It communicates an important theme of the starting company's culture. 2.4. A means, disclosing to the employees what value is to be held sacred in the company by searching answers to questions: Is it to be open? Does it help solve a problem? Does it create new ideas? What the company stands for? What is the common philosophy to bring to life and promote through the venture?
3. Get going	3.1. Think big – set your sights high and strive for something grand. 3.2. Find a few soulmates – the team makes the company work. 3.3. Polarize people by catalysing passion – pro & anti, without any offense. 3.4. Design different and not by the rules of the current management fad (4 basic approaches: i want one; my employer couldn't or wouldn't do it; what the hell - it's possible, tough times & not proven markets; there must be a better way). 3.5. Use prototypes as market research - a product or service should be revised only because customers already love it.
4. Define your business model.	4.1. Who has your money in their pockets? - defining the customer and the pain that he feels. 4.2. How are you going to get it into your pocket? - creating a sales mechanism to ensure that company's revenues exceed the costs.
5. Weave a MAT (milestones, assumptions, and tasks)	5.1. Determine major milestones the starting business has to meet <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Examples: Prove your concept; Complete design specifications; Finish a prototype; Raise capital, Ship a testable version to customers; Ship the final version to customers; Achieve breakeven.</li> </ul> 5.2. Formulate consciously assumptions to build into the adopted business model <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Examples of determining factors for the assumptions: product or service performance metrics, market size, gross margin, sales calls per salesperson, conversion rate of prospects to customers, length of sales cycle, return on investment for the customer, technical support calls per unit shipped, payment cycle for receivables and payables, compensation requirements, prices of parts and supplies.</li> </ul> 5.3. Define the tasks that have to be accomplished for the purpose of creating an organization. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Examples: renting office space, finding key vendors, setting up accounting and payroll systems, filing legal documents, purchasing insurance policies.</li> </ul>
Sources: Kawasaki (2004); Yekutieli (2014).	

*The second approach in outlining the nuances of organizational mantra relies on its deliberate differentiation in comparison to important related constructs* (see table 3). For example, some authors consider that it is oriented to only a single constituency – the employees (Kawasaki, 2004) or simultaneously to two constituencies – employees and customers (Ray, n.d.). Furthermore, it is considered to be derived from the mission, other strategic planning documents or by employee brainstorming sessions, designed by senior management in the business organization. That is why organizational mantra may be classified as a secondary company document, although its great contribution to achieving



excellent market performance by a target firm cannot be underestimated. Its volume is measured by Wordcount number according to the rules of “western culture” with a lower limit of just two words and an upper limit of only one text line (one page line).

Table 3. The relationship between the term “Organizational mantra” and related constructs

Criteria of comparing	Organizational mantra	Related constructs
(1)	(2)	(3)
Predominant orientation to a certain constituency	The company employees. Definition: “It’s a guideline for what they do in their jobs”. Example of Nike’s mantra: “Authentic athletic performance.”	The customers of the company. Definition: A tag line (a message in company advertisements) “It’s a guideline for how customers to use the company’s product or service. Example of Nike’s tag line: “Just do it.”
Level of analysis (the business organization as a whole vs just the marketing sphere in the firm)	The organizational level only	Marketing mantra – company’s brand positioning statement or a core thought, aligning the brand and business goals, and related strategic moves in the marketing sphere.
The length of professed firm culture element (Word count)	In business, a mantra encapsulates or fully describes a company mission statement in a succinct and memorable way (2-5 words or one line phrase).	A mission statement for the business organization: – frequent need of interpreting the embedded meaning in the paragraphs, - rarely the employees know it by heart and recite it when needed - a length of at least several lines
Differentiating mantra from slogan	It achieves the same results as a slogan but also defines your employees’ roles in the company. It is more fundamental to a company’s internal purpose	Slogan - an advertising or marketing tool intended to influence the potential customers to think highly of a target firm, its products and services, and their usage. Example: - Nike’s slogan “Just do it” (customer orientation) - Nike’s mantra: “Achieving athletic excellence” (orientation to both employees and customers)
Differentiating mantra from company philosophy	It epitomizes company’s philosophy.	Company philosophy – relationships with constituencies, formulated goals in relation to growth and profitability, firm policy design in spheres as management style, attitude to employees, finances, marketing and technology) and declaration of company values

Continued...

(1)	(2)	(3)
Level of analysis (the business organization as a whole vs career self-management)	The organizational level only	Career mantra – a means of perceiving yourself as a marketer, product or brand that allows you multiple summing up your values whenever a potential change in career path or direction has to be undertaken. It represents a set of three steps: 1. Consider Your Values 2. What Problem Can You Solve? 3. Make It Actionable
Differentiating mantra from motto	It is more fundamental to a company's internal purpose	Motto – a content, liable to marketing exaggeration.
Differentiating mantra from conventional wisdom	Dominating unusual beliefs in business organizations that contribute to the achievement of massive results.	Conventional wisdom - often yields conventional results.
Level of analysis (the business organization as a whole vs the personality of the entrepreneur)	The organizational level only	Business mantras of entrepreneurs: 1. Fun should come first. (Barbara Corcoran, founder of The Corcoran Group and Shark on US Shark Tank) 2. Be obsessed. (Grant Cardone, founder of a \$500 million real estate empire, NYT bestselling author of "Be Obsessed or Be Average") 3. Train staff to leave your company. (Craig Handley, co-founder and CEO of ListenTrust)
Sources: Kawasaki (2004); Articulate_ (2018); Johnstad (2016); Ray (n.d.); Paunov (1995); Warchol (2017); Snow (n.d.); Mason (n.d.); Oracles medium (2016).		

*The third approach seeks the appropriate object of application for the construct that varies in the scientific literature between five situations, as follows – a starting company (Maurer, 2014), a startup (Johnstad, 2016), an existing company with its own business tracks (Yekutieli, 2014), a mix of two of them (Kawasaki, 2004) or a mix of all of them (Walter, 2014). Diverse examples of organizational mantra are shown in table 4.*

Table 4. Examples of organizational mantra

Companies that adopted this approach	Examples of mantras
(1)	(2)
Google	Don't be evil
Mary Kay	Enriching women's lives
Federal Express	Peace of mind

Continued...

(1)	(2)
<i>Nike</i>	Authentic athletic performance
<i>Apple Computer</i>	Think different (served simultaneously as a slogan and a mantra)
<i>Target</i>	Democratize design
<i>Disney</i>	Fun family entertainment
<i>Starbucks</i>	Rewarding everyday moments
<i>IBM</i>	Think
<i>Vince Lombardi's Green Bay Packers</i>	Winning is everything
<i>Facebook</i>	Mobile first (in 2012) Move fast with stable infrastructure (recently)
<i>Kaltura</i>	Being open, flexible, and collaborative
<i>Contently</i>	Be awesome
<i>Huge</i>	Make something you love
<i>72ANDSUNNY</i>	Be brave and generous
<i>Sprinklr</i>	Embrace the suck
<i>Dyson</i>	Celebrate naiveté
<i>Oneupweb</i>	Be relentless
<i>Nitro PDF</i>	No bullshit
<i>Huge</i>	Make something you love
<i>Stylecaster</i>	Style to the People
Sources: Mason (n.a.); Oracles medium (2016); Kawasaki (2004); Yekutieli (2014); Walter (2014); Snow (n.d.).	

*The second exotic element of professed firm culture, i.e. memorandum (memo), is not created mainly for this purpose, and its application in professed firm culture disclosure seems to be secondary, although its importance need not be underestimated for at least two reasons:*

- The urgent necessity of improving “culture-strategy” relationship in the company by mitigating “management-employee” cultural differences, contributing to smouldering contradictions or emerging sharp conflicts even among more constituencies as in the case of James Damore’s Google Memo, entitled “Google’s Ideological Echo Chamber”, expressing his discriminative opinion to gender issues that finally led to his being fired from the entity, and the timely design and communication to the employees of another memo as a sensible managerial response to this unpleasant situation by Google’s new Vice President of Diversity, Integrity & Governance Danielle Brown (Conger, 2017; Romano, 2017; Wiener, 2017).
- If the relationship “culture-strategy” is modified to “culture-tactics”, it seems that the significance of memorandum increases, becoming an evident element of professed firm culture network in the virtual realm. This official firm document may be viewed as an intersection between the dominating culture in the entity and

strategic management implementation at low levels of organizational structure, because the format and the soul of the enacted company documents to some extent specify and even in some cases establish rules for solution of frequently occurring situations or repetitive issues, arising during the realization of different projects from the current portfolio of the business organization (Paunov, 2005). The memorandum may be applied to disperse written information about a great deal of business situations as needed organizational policy changes, personnel changes, project status update and recommendations for increasing the performance, requested employee meeting attendance, pending changes to work procedures or practices, etc. (Heaps, 2018; \*\*\*, n.d.) In a case the memo outlives the current situation, because it brings about the achievement of success and there is a shared perception of this success, than it gradually becomes perceived by the consitiencies as the right way to think, feel and act in relation with similar issues (Schein, 2004).

The analysis of memorandums has at least five aspects: (a) determining the format of the document (M Libraries Publishing, n.d.; WebGURU, n.d.), (b) steps that have to be followed in composing this firm document (WikiHow, n.d.; Laux, 2017), (c) disclosing its main characterisitcs (M Libraries Publishing, n.d.; WebGURU, n.d.), (d) length of the document (more frequently up to one page and in rare cases up to ten pages) (Romano, 2017; WebGURU, n.d.) and (e) recommendations or strategies to achieve higher results from its use (\*\*\*, 2018i; \*\*\*, 2018j).

## Conclusion

This survey revealed the enriched spectrum of professed firm culture elements (see figure 2) that may be used by senior managers in contemporary business organizations, built to last, pursuing rigorously a sustainable competitive advantage and demonstrating flexibility and resilience under the unpredictable influences of the contemporary turbulent business environment. The already presented analysis of key, recent scientific and business-related publications from selected electronic academic databases and the internet permits expressing several considerations regarding the realizations and wise use by senior managers of professed firm culture elements:

- Still it is not clear how many elements of professed firm culture should be used simultaneously by one entity in order to achieve success.
- Overlapping in the nuances of meaning and contradicting assumptions of the established hierarchy among the researched constructs are still observed.
- The advantages and disadvantages of all the elements of professed firm culture are still not proven by greater number of entities from different regions of the world, sectors of the economy, or big, small or edium-sized companies.
- The potential effects of cultural differences at national and branch levels on the use of the professed firm culture elements in the enriched bundle are not identified.

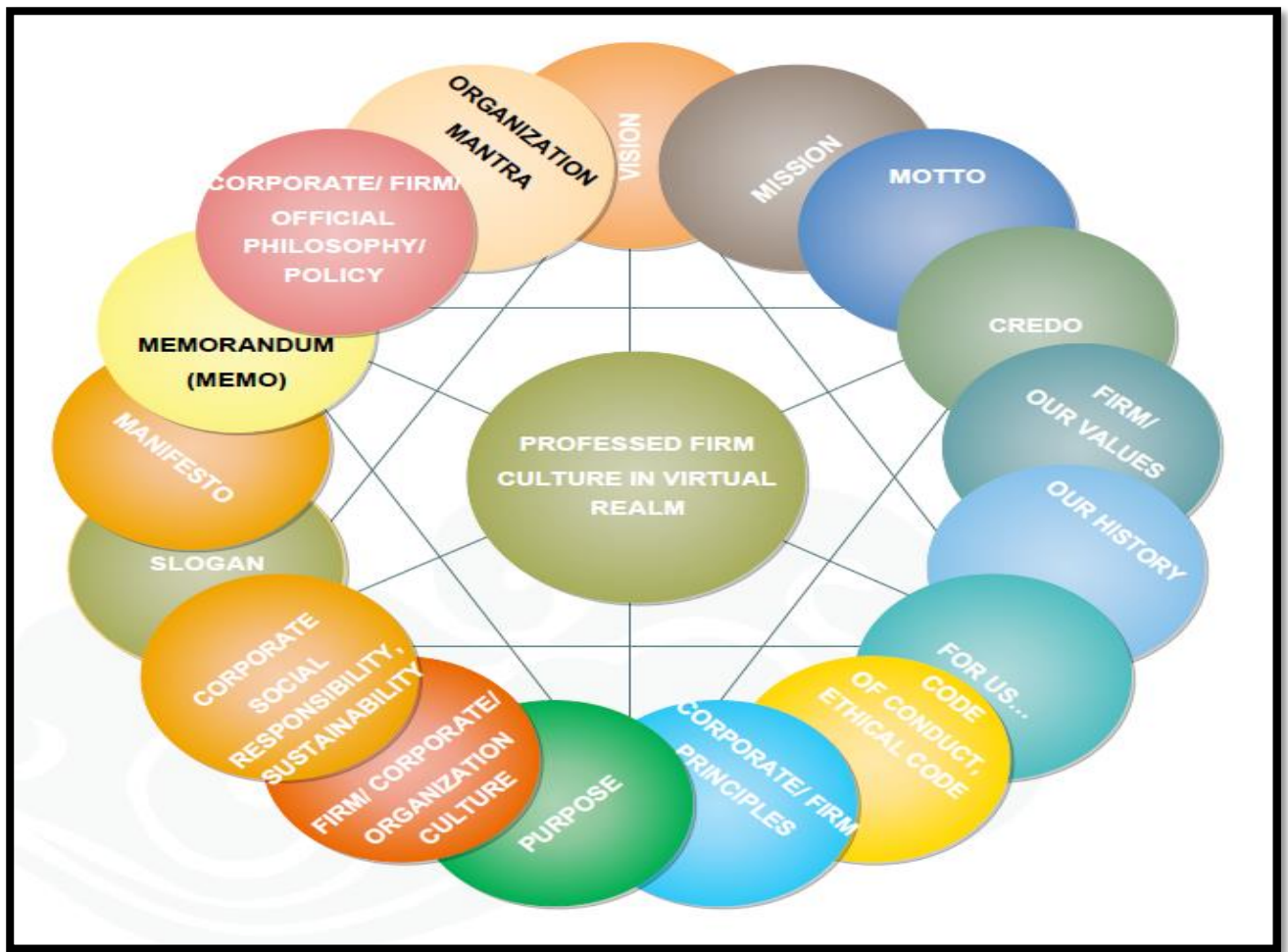


Figure. 2 The enriched bundle of professed culture elements.

- The emerging ways of transferring company information electronically, including in the sphere of professed culture, also contribute to complication of future research initiatives and activities.
- The innovations of website design may also be determined as an important factor, influencing the perceiving of company-related information by different constituencies on the internet.
- Important changes in teaching curricula should be undertaken to reveal this diversity of approaches to constructing the professed culture of a company, i.e. to express publicly one's own business dreams.

## REFERENCES

1. Abell, D.F. (1980) Defining the Business: The Starting Point of the Strategic Planning, Prentice-Hall, Englewood Cliffs, NJ, Available at: <http://www.iese.edu/research/pdfs/DI-0862-E.pdf>, accessed on: 4/27/2018.

2. Articulate\_ (2018) Brand position: how to find your marketing mantra, available at: <https://www.articulatemarketing.com/blog/brand-positioning-marketing-mantra>, accessed on: 4/27/2018.
3. Bart, C., Bontis, N., Taggar, S. (2001) "A Model of the Impact of Mission Statements on Firm Performance", Journal of Management History (Archive) merged into Management Decision, Vol. 39 Issue: 1, pp.19-35, available at: <http://www.emeraldinsight.com/doi/abs/10.1108/EUM0000000005404>, accessed on: 4/27/2018.
4. Bell, J., (2016) Goodbye Mission Statement. Hello Manifesto, a post in Culture University – awareness, education, impact, 4 pages, available at: <http://www.cultureuniversity.com/goodbyemissionstatementhellomanifesto/#more1448>, accessed on: 4/27/2018.
5. Campbell, A., Tawadey, K., (1992) Mission and business philosophy, Butterworth-Heinemann, Oxford.
6. Collins, J., Porras, J., (2002) Built to Last: Successful Habits of Visionary Companies, Harper Business Essentials, (chapters 3, 4, 5, and 11).
7. Conger, K. (2017) Exclusive: Here's The Full 10-Page Anti-Diversity Screed Circulating Internally at Google [Updated, 08.05], Gizmodo, available at: <https://gizmodo.com/exclusive-heres-the-full-10-page-anti-diversity-screed-1797564320>, accessed on: 4/27/2018.
8. Dimitrov, K., Ivanov, I., Geshkov, M. (2017) Exploring the professed firm culture in the virtual realm, 3d phase deliverable for University project, presented and defended on a session of UNWE's Programme Scientific council, held on 10th of May 2017, a hard copy submitted in UNWE's library (in Bulgarian).
9. Dimitrov, K., Ivanov, I., Geshkov, M. (2016) Exploring the professed firm culture in the virtual realm, 2d phase deliverable for University project, presented and defended on a session of UNWE's Programme Scientific council, held on 27th of April 2017, a hard copy submitted in UNWE's library (in Bulgarian).
10. Dimitrov, K., Ivanov, I., Geshkov, M. (2015) Exploring the professed firm culture in the virtual realm, 1st phase deliverable for University project, presented and defended on a session of UNWE's Programme Scientific council, held on the 19th of May 2016, a hard copy submitted in UNWE's library (in Bulgarian).

11. Heaps, S. (2018) How to Write a Business Memo, WriteExpress, section: Writing tips, available at: <https://www.writeexpress.com/business-memo.html>, accessed on: 4/27/2018.
12. Hussey, D., (1998) Strategic management from theory to practice, Butterworth-Heinemann, Oxford.
13. Johnstad, K. (2016) Workshop: Create Your Own Mantra, BLOG, available at: <http://www.karajohnstad.com/create-your-own-mantra/>, accessed on: 4/27/2018.
14. Kawasaki, G. (2006) Mantras Versus Missions, BLOG, Categories: Entrepreneurship, available at: [https://guykawasaki.com/mantras\\_versus\\_/](https://guykawasaki.com/mantras_versus_/), January 2nd, accessed on: 4/27/2018.
15. Kawasaki, G., (2004) The Art Of The Start. The Time-Tested, Battle-Hardened Guide For Anyone Starting Anything, New York, Portfolio, Penguin Group.
16. Laux, K. (2017) How to Write a Company Memo, BizFluent, September 26, available at: <https://bizfluent.com/how-4797069-write-company-memo.html>, accessed on: 4/27/2018.
17. Lynch, R., (2000) Corporate strategy, Pearson Education, Harlow.
18. M Libraries Publishing (n.d.) Memorandums and Letters, Business Communication for Success, University of Minnesota, available at: <http://open.lib.umn.edu/businesscommunication/chapter/9-2-memorandums-and-letters/>, accessed on: 4/27/2018.
19. Mason, S., (n.d.) What Is a Corporate Mantra?, AZCENTRAL., section Your Business, available at: <https://yourbusiness.azcentral.com/corporate-mantra-11193.html>, accessed on: 30.08.2018.
20. Maurer, S. (2014) Business Mantra - Do you have one that guides your company? SEW – Do You Make Mantra?, Business blog, section: Business tips, 28<sup>th</sup> of April, available at: <https://www.maurer-copywriting.com/make-mantra/>, accessed on: 4/27/2018.
21. Métayer E., (2002) “Company Vision With a Twist”, 16th of November, available at: <http://www.refreshers.com/company-vision-with-a-twist/>, accessed on: 4/27/2018.
22. Mintzberg, H., Quinn, J., (1996) The Strategy Process-Concepts, Context, Caces, Parentice –Hall, Englewood Cliffs, N.J.

23. Mooney, L. (n.d.) How to Write a Good Company Mantra, AZCENTRAL., section: Your business, available: <https://yourbusiness.azcentral.com/write-good-company-mantra-11168.html>, accessed on: 4/27/2018.
24. Oracles medium (2016) 11 successful executives share their business mantras, Business Insider, section: Ideas, December 12th, available at: <https://www.businessinsider.com.au/11-successful-executives-share-their-business-mantras-2016-12>, accessed on: 4/27/2018.
25. Parker, M. (2012) Credo imperative in corporate culture, Financial post, April 2d, available at: <http://business.financialpost.com/executive/credo-imperative-in-corporate-culture>, accessed on: 4/27/2018.
26. Paunov, M. (2005) Organization culture, Sofia, University publishing house "Stopanstvo" (in Bulgarian).
27. Paunov, M. (1995) Strategies of business, 1st edition, Sofia, SD Dino-M, p.168, ISBN 954-90011-1-3 (in Bulgarian).
28. Pearce, J. A. (1982), "The company mission as a strategic tool", Sloan Management Review, Vol. 23 No. 3, pp. 15-25., in: Sufi, T., Lyons H., Mission statements exposed, International journal of hospitality management, 15.05.2003, pp255-262, available at: <http://www.emeraldinsight.com>, accessed on: 4/27/2018.
29. Ray, L. (n.d.) How to Write a Good Company Mantra, Chron article, available at: <http://smallbusiness.chron.com/write-good-company-mantra-38547.html>, accessed on: 4/27/2018.
30. Romano, A. (2017) Google has fired the engineer whose antidiversity memo reflects a divided tech culture. James Damore's sexist screed indicted all of Silicon Valley, VOX, August 8th, available at: <https://www.vox.com/identities/2017/8/8/16106728/google-fired-engineer-anti-diversity-memo>, accessed on: 4/27/2018.
31. Schein E. (2004) Organizational culture and leadership, Jossey – Bass.
32. Sheaffer, Z., Landau, D., Drori, I., (2008), "Mission statement and performance: an evidence of 'coming of age'", Organizational Development Journal, Vol. 26 No. 2, pp. 49-62 in Babnik, B., Breznik, K., Dermol, V., Širca, N., (2014), "The mission statement:



organisational culture perspective", *Industrial Management & Data Systems*, Vol. 114 Issue 4 pp612-627, available at: <http://www.emeraldinsight.com>, accessed on: 4/27/2018.

33. Snow, S. (n.d.) Repeat After Me: Your Company Needs A Mantra, available at: <https://www.fastcompany.com/3000236/repeat-after-me-your-company-needs-mantra>, accessed on: 4/27/2018.

34. Stone, R. A., (1996). Mission statements revisited. *S.A.M. Advanced Management Journal*, 61, (1), 31-38., available at: [www.google.com](http://www.google.com), accessed on: 4/27/2018.

35. Vogan, P. (2006) Developing Your Company's Credo, (article) *Entrepreneur*, section Leadership, February 17<sup>th</sup>, available at: <https://www.entrepreneur.com/article/83708>, accessed on: 4/27/2018.

36. Walter, E. (2014) Mantras That Guide Thriving Organizations, *Forbes* magazine, section: Entrepreneurs, September 24<sup>th</sup>, available at: <https://www.forbes.com/sites/ekaterinawalter/2014/09/24/mantras-that-guide-thriving-organizations/#4a21bd61429c>, accessed on: 4/27/2018.

37. Want, J.H., (1986), "Corporate mission: the intangible contributor to performance", *Management Review*, August, Vol. 75 No. 8, pp. 46-50, available at: [www.google.com](http://www.google.com), accessed on: 4/27/2018.

38. Warchol, K. (2017) How To Write—and Use—a Career Mantra, *Career Contessa*, section: Advice, subsection: Career fit, December 29, available at: <http://www.careercontessa.com/advice/career-mantra/>, accessed on: 4/27/2018.

39. WebGURU (n.d.) Business Memos, Guide for undergraduate research, available at: <http://www.webguru.neu.edu/communicating-science/communicating/business-memos>, accessed on: 4/27/2018.

40. Wiener, A. (2017) How Silicon Valley's Workplace Culture Produced James Damore's Google Memo, August 10<sup>th</sup>, *The New Yorker*, available at: <https://www.newyorker.com/tech/elements/how-silicon-valleys-workplace-culture-produced-james-damores-google-memo>, accessed on: 4/27/2018.

41. WikiHow (n.d.) How to Write a Business Memo, The Best Way to Write a Business Memo – wikiHow, available at: <https://www.wikihow.com/Write-a-Business-Memo>, accessed on: 4/27/2018.

42. Yekutieli, R., (2014) Be Like Google, Facebook and Apple, and Craft a Company Mantra to Live By, Entrepreneur, section Growth strategies / Project grow, October 28, available at: <https://www.entrepreneur.com/article/238969>, accessed on: 4/27/2018.
43. Zlatev, V. (1999) Boundariless management, Sofia, University Publishing House Stopanstvo. (in Bulgarian)
44. \*\*\* (2018a) EBSCO Host Web, available at: <http://search.ebscohost.com/>, accessed on: 4/27/2018.
45. \*\*\* (2018b) Emerald, available at: <http://www.emeraldinsight.com/>, accessed on: 4/27/2018.
46. \*\*\* (2018c) DOAJ (Directory Of Open Access Journals), available at: <https://doaj.org/>, accessed on: 4/27/2018.
47. \*\*\* (2018d) Google Scholar, available at: <http://scholar.google.bg/>, accessed on: 4/27/2018.
48. \*\*\* (2018e) Ideas: Economics and Finance Research – RePEc, available at: <https://ideas.repec.org/>, accessed on: 4/27/2018.
49. \*\*\* (2018f) - SSRN (Social Science Research Network), available at: <http://www.ssrn.com/en/>, accessed on: 4/27/2018.
50. \*\*\* (2018g) An Erasmus+ lecturing mobility, module “Cross-cultural management”, Master’s curriculum in “International business”, Nottingham Business School, United Kingdom Great Britain and North Ireland, accomplished within the period 23-27th of April, guest lecturer: assoc. prof. Kiril Dimitrov, PhD, University of National and World Economy – Sofia, Bulgaria.
51. \*\*\* (2018h) Johnson & Johnson company credo, available at: <http://www.jnj.com/connect/about-jnj/jnj-credo/>, accessed on: 4/27/2018.
52. \*\*\* (2018i) Writing Business Memos, The Writing Center Guides, George Mason University, available at: <https://writingcenter.gmu.edu/guides/writing-business-memos>, accessed on: 4/27/2018.

53. \*\*\* (2018j) Writing a business memo, Oxford Dictionaries, available at: <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/writing-help/writing-a-business-memo>, accessed on: 4/27/2018.

54. \*\*\* (2013) Difference Between Motto and Slogan: Motto vs Slogan, 14<sup>th</sup> of March, available at: <https://www.differencebetween.com/difference-between-motto-and-vs-slogan/>, accessed on: 4/27/2018.

55. \*\*\* (2008) Tagline, slogan, motto - what's the diff? - Flock Marketing, section The Junk Drawer, December 16<sup>th</sup>, available at: <http://www.flockmarketing.com/tagline-slogan-motto-whats-the-diff-2/>, accessed on: 4/27/2018.

56. \*\*\* (n.d.) Business Communication. How to Write a Clear Business Memo, Tutorial at GCFLearnFree, available at: [https://www.gcflearnfree.org/print/business-communication/business-communication-7?playlist=Business\\_Communication](https://www.gcflearnfree.org/print/business-communication/business-communication-7?playlist=Business_Communication), accessed on: 4/27/2018.

**Information about the author**

associate professor Kiril Dimitrov, Ph.D., “Industrial business” department,  
University of National and World Economy (UNWE) – Sofia, Bulgaria, e-mail:  
kscience@unwe.eu.