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Title	The role of management control systems in the strategic management of a project business company. A case study on a project-based company implementing a value sales strategy		
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Abstract

This thesis has attempted to provide basic insight into the nature of the strategic management process in project-based companies. Especially, the role of management control in this process was to be investigated. Moreover, determining how project-based companies use different kinds of management control systems to formulate and implement strategies was looked into. The levers of control –framework by Robert Simons was chosen to be used as the starting point for the study. The framework provides an interesting view on how to analyze management control functions with the focus on strategic control. Further, project business is a world of its own and it has many defining features that determine how they must do business. These features will be studied to a considerable extent and their influence to the strategy process is explained in this thesis. The research method used is case study, the company in question being a mid-sized project business company that operates in the field of information and communications technologies. The strategy process of the case company is analyzed thoroughly, using the levers of control -framework as a tool to divide the various systems in use into coherent groups to enhance the effectiveness of the analysis. The purpose of this is to guide the process of introducing a new strategic direction i.e. turning the company from a resource provider to a valued partner. Overall, the goal is to provide some empirical evidence on how project-based companies might deal with the aforementioned issues.

The case company has a history typical of many Finnish companies operating in the field of information and communications technologies sector: developing from a small and local resource provider to a global operator, offering its services to several high profile corporations. Succeeding in the global markets requires innovative and effective strategies that are implemented with great conviction and by the entire company. The value sales -concept is something that project-based companies are more or less compelled to add to their strategy portfolio, in one way or another. The results of this study imply that project-based companies provide, in the main, a suitable premise for implementing the principles related to selling value. Their organizational structures appear to allow for the necessary measures to be taken readily and effectively. At least, the case company's management control systems appeared to be in support of the requirements of value sales and they also seemed to provide a good starting point for the development of the additional control mechanisms required by value sales. However, due to some external factors studying and analyzing the transition into this new strategic domain could not be analyzed in its entirety and with the kind of precision that was sought after.

Key words	Strategy process, management control, project business, value sales, levers of control
Further information	