IACCM

International Academic Symposium on Commercial Management

Bringing together academics and practitioners to promote research and best practice in commercial management.

Macdonald Berystede Hotel & Spa, Ascot, UK
18 November 2006
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The papers in this volume were submitted to IACCM’s International Academic Symposium on Commercial Management, held as part of the EMEA Commitment Management Conference at the Macdonald Berystede Hotel & Spa, Ascot, UK, on 18th November 2006. The symposium was run in association with the University of Manchester.

The term commercial management has been used for some time, while the job title commercial manager (and/or commercial contract manager) can be found across a spectrum of industries, especially those that are predominantly project based, for example, Aerospace, Construction, IT, Pharmaceutical and Telecommunications. Despite this, to date, these terms have no widely accepted definition and, as a direct consequence, there is a paucity of research categorised as commercial management; these proceedings seek to address this omission.

Commercial organisations increasingly use projects as tools, contributing to the execution of organisational strategies, to address corporate objectives, goals and missions (Lowe and Leiringer, 2006). Based on the fundamental assumption that the key objective for any commercial organisation is to generate profit, commercial issues, and thus commercial management, play an integral part in this. In particular, Lowe and Leiringer contend that the commercial management function is vital in linking operations at the project level and multiple projects (portfolios/programmes) at the organisational level with the organisational (corporate) core of the company. The function, therefore, can be found at the interfaces between organisations as well as between divisions within an organisation.

There are compelling arguments for considering commercial management, not solely as a task undertaken by commercial managers, but as a discipline in itself, which bridges traditional project management and organisational theories. While differences in approach and application both between and within industry sectors have been established, sufficient similarity and synergy in practice has been ascertained to identify a specific role of commercial management within project-based organisations. These areas of similarity encompass contract management and dispute resolution; whereas the areas of divergence include a greater involvement in financial and value management within construction and bid management within defence/aerospace (Lowe and Leiringer, 2006).

The purpose of the symposium was to provide a forum for the dissemination of research specific to commercial and contract management, and to communicate this research to both academics and practicing commercial and contract managers across a spectrum of industries. It also launched IACCM’s global interface with academia: building courses and research projects that ensure heightened recognition of commercial and contract management as a profession and its status on a worldwide basis.

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