



## THE TIMES 100

### BUSINESS CASE STUDIES

## Strategy and tactics- NATS

NATS is a global air navigation provider. As well as managing 15 of the UK's busiest airports, NATS projects currently include air traffic controller training and redesigning airspace in Hong Kong; providing start-up training for ATC and safety management in Slovakia; as well as providing and integrating all ATC equipment for the new control tower at Manchester airport.



**Strategy** - A strategy is the plan by which aims and objectives will be put into action. NATS' strategies centre around three key areas:

- *Innovation* – developing new and creative products and services to retain market position and grow the business
- *Partnerships* – creating alliances to strengthen its position and open up new markets
- *People* – enhancing the organisation's skills and competencies so it has the resources to meet challenges.

NATS is moving from a UK-focused business to a global one. For example, new contracts for consultancy services in the USA, Middle East and Asia-Pacific have contributed to forward orders worth £495 million. NATS' strengths in innovation are helping to deliver ground-breaking products and solutions. These will help it compete and establish the business as a market player in other countries, ensuring continued growth and expansion. For example, the 'Heathrow Dashboard' now provides live, real-time data on arrival and departure delays to help air traffic control operators make decisions. NATS' Human Resource Management strategy is focused not just on attracting but also retaining people with high levels of skill. NATS needs people with scientific or engineering backgrounds, as well as wider business skills such as finance, administration, intelligence gathering or sales. With its increasingly global markets, NATS people have the opportunity to work around the world. NATS training and development schemes enable the organisation to continue to develop the competencies which give it competitive edge and drive its vision forwards. People may join NATS at all levels – from school or college as air traffic controllers or engineering technicians or as graduates on its science or engineering graduate schemes. Effective strategies require careful assessment of the progress made during the timescale of the strategies being set.

**Tactics** - Tactics are specific programmes of work or activities which help to achieve objectives. They may be customer-focused or operationally based. Around 26,000 flights a day cross European airspace – at different heights and along different routes. NATS solutions which support its strategy of innovation focus on making the most efficient use of this space. For example, NATS delivered a world 'first' by developing an entirely new way of measuring the environmental performance of the airspace network above the UK. The flight efficiency metric, known as 3Di, will help air traffic control to route flight paths as close to the environmental optimum as possible. NATS' regulator, the Civil Aviation Authority, estimates that it will deliver 600,000 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> savings over the next three years, worth up to £120 million. NATS was also involved with British Airways in developing the 'Perfect Flight'. The programme, a UK 'first', involved measuring a trial flight under optimum conditions and flight plan in order to establish the potential for carbon savings. The trial proved that more than 10% of emissions could be saved. NATS is now investigating how it could make this possible for every flight. In line with its HR strategy, NATS opened a new training centre in 2011. This specialised centre of excellence for training engineers and air traffic controllers has delivered cost savings and improved the training environment through the use of innovative simulation technology. NATS recognises that its people are a valuable asset and has therefore also introduced a new performance management and career development programme to enable it to manage and reward its talented people appropriately.



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### Questions

1. What is business strategy?

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2. Using examples, describe the meaning of tactics.

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3. Explain why a business must know its aims and objectives before it can decide upon its strategy.

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4. Analyse the importance of having business strategies.

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### Task

*Radio script* - Write a script for a radio interview with a business guru which demonstrates the meaning and importance of strategy and tactics for businesses. Use examples within the script to aid understanding. Record the interview and save for future reference.

### What have you learned?

*Ready, steady, GO...* write as much as you can about strategies and tactics in 60 seconds. Share with a partner. Have you written the same things? Has your partner remembered something you hadn't?