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Symantec Case

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**Executive Summary**

Symantec was founded in 1982 by Gary Hendrix who at the time was an expert in language processing and artificial intelligence. In 1994 Symantec merged with a company called C&E software which was founded by Denis Colman and Gordon Eubanks. The new company kept the name Symantec after the merge Hendrix was the vice president and Eubanks was the CEO. Their headquarters was in Cupertino, California and in 1987 Symantec acquired three companies Think Technologies, Breakthrough Software, and Living Videotext. Once the businesses were acquired, they became Symantec and stayed in their original locations.

Symantec was organized into centralized functions and product groups. There were 5 product groups and they are database management, utilities, project management, outlining, and language products. Each product group controls its own product development, marketing, support, and management. Most of the other functions were handled by centralized departments at corporate headquarters. Within Symantec information flowed across all its boundaries.

In addition to information exchanges there are scheduled meetings and regularly issued internal publications. Each product group holds staff meetings and top executives met weekly. Representatives attend meetings held by product marketing managers to learn about pricing and selling policies. Despite all these communications channels, many employees showed frustration that some information was not shared to certain groups and that certain groups did not communicate enough. Turner thought that these issues were derived from the product groups being far away from each other. On the other hand, Eubanks believed that the groups didn’t communicate beach each group believed that it knew the best way to do something.

**Mission**

Symantec’s mission statement is to help organizations and consumers manage and secure their information-driven world. Their services and software help protect more risks at more points more completely and efficiently enabling confidence wherever information is used or held.

**Five Force Analysis**

Threat of New Entrants: High

With Symantec being a software company that provides applications and systems software, the threat of new entrants is high because the field is full of competitors and more and more join each day.

Threat of Substitutes: High

Software is being designed constantly. Most of the products that Symantec offers will have substitutes available from other companies. This, in turn, will generate a high threat of substitutes.

Supplier Power: Low

Symantec doesn’t require any raw materials sense they build software. This means that there is a lack of suppliers creating a low supplier power sense Symantec doesn’t have to work with them.

Buyer Power: Low

The price of Symantec’s software is based on the market. Since there are so many competitors, the buyers don’t have much power or room to negotiate. Symantec doesn’t want to lose customers, so they will have to price with the market in order to compete.

Degree of Rivalry: High

Many different companies are offering similar products that Symantec offers, and many other companies are beginning to roll out similar products as well. This causes the degree of rivalry to be high and growing.

**Organizational Structure**

The organizational chart that is provided in the case appears functional with sticks and boxes to indicate responsibility flow throughout the company. However, the actual implementation of the organizational structure is accurately described as divisional. Each of their products are grouped geographically, each product group functions individually in development under the centralized corporate headquarters (Morgan). In a true divisional structure this type of centralized managerial parent enacts goals and initiatives to be passed down to the product groups. Each product group drives information upwards to tech support, sales, and customer service after the product development. Each group also lacks communication with each other, and the lack of communication could lead to redundant actions and underutilized resources within the company.

**Stakeholders**

The first stakeholder is the customers. The customers consist of distributors, retailers, and users. The Symantec sales force sells products to distributors, who then sell to retailers, who then sell to users. The second stakeholder is the employees, they consist of product group managers, marketing managers, sales representatives, customer service, sales managers, and executives. The third stakeholder is the CEO Gordon Eubanks. The final stakeholder is the shareholders, these are the people who have invested in the company and have a right to receive a return on their investment.

**Problem Areas**

Symantec and its employees have identified some problems and many of them center around lack of communication and collaboration between product groups. The cause of this problem is the lack of sustainable and reliable IT architecture and support processes. Each product group is located at optimal places around the world making e-mail-based communication a necessity. These systems and tools are failing, and employees have complained that the part of the organization responsible for these issues, MIS, is overwhelmed with incidents without a true process plan which makes them slow at responding to and fixing issues.

**Options**

*Option 1:* Do Nothing

If Symantec chooses to do nothing, then nothing will change with the IT system. The customers will still be able to purchase the products that Symantec has produces and their employees will continue to work under the same system as they have in the past. The employees may remain frustrated due to some information to be continued to not be shared. Eubanks will also continue to run the company as normal and the company will still make money, but growth may not be as high as it could be. The shareholders wouldn’t be affected by this too much, the only issue that this option could cause is slower growth, which could cause some shareholders to retract their investments.

*Option 2:* Update or Purchase a new Email System

Symantec uses email communications for most of their communications needs. If they updated their systems or purchased a new one, then some of their issues with the Novell LAN system could be resolved. Symantec’s current email package is intolerant to noise making it almost impossible to communicate in busy cities with lots of virtual traffic. With the implementation of a new system many of these problems could be resolved. This would also benefit the customers because they would have better customer service. The employees would benefit the most from this change. A lot of the frustrations would be removed with a new system which would also make the employees happier overall. Overall, this would increase the profits of the company and would please the shareholders.

*Option 3:* Update the current Corporate Philosophy Strategy

If Symantec was to go this route, they would have to institutionalize a unified corporate philosophy that would emphasize communication and hold managers and new employees to follow the process. The new policies would meet the needs of any large company and are already supported by Bob Dykes and Kathy Johnson. The customers would be affected by this because the customer support would be better which would make them happy and more invested in the company. The employees would also be affected by a new policy because they would be able to effectively communicate which was their biggest complaint. The shareholders would also gain higher profits due to better communication and increased productivity.

**Conclusion**

The best course of action for Symantec would be to update their current corporate philosophy strategy. This is the best course of action because it would be cheaper for the company since they would be using the existing system while updating it to keep up with the state of the company. This would also mean that Symantec would not have to hire any more employees and they also wouldn’t have to purchase a new system to replace the one that they already have.

This course of action will be the most effective because it will allow Symantec to keep up with technology trends and save money in the long run. The employees would need to be trained on the new system though, but this will still be the cheapest and best option for the company. They will also be more competitive in the ever-changing technology field.