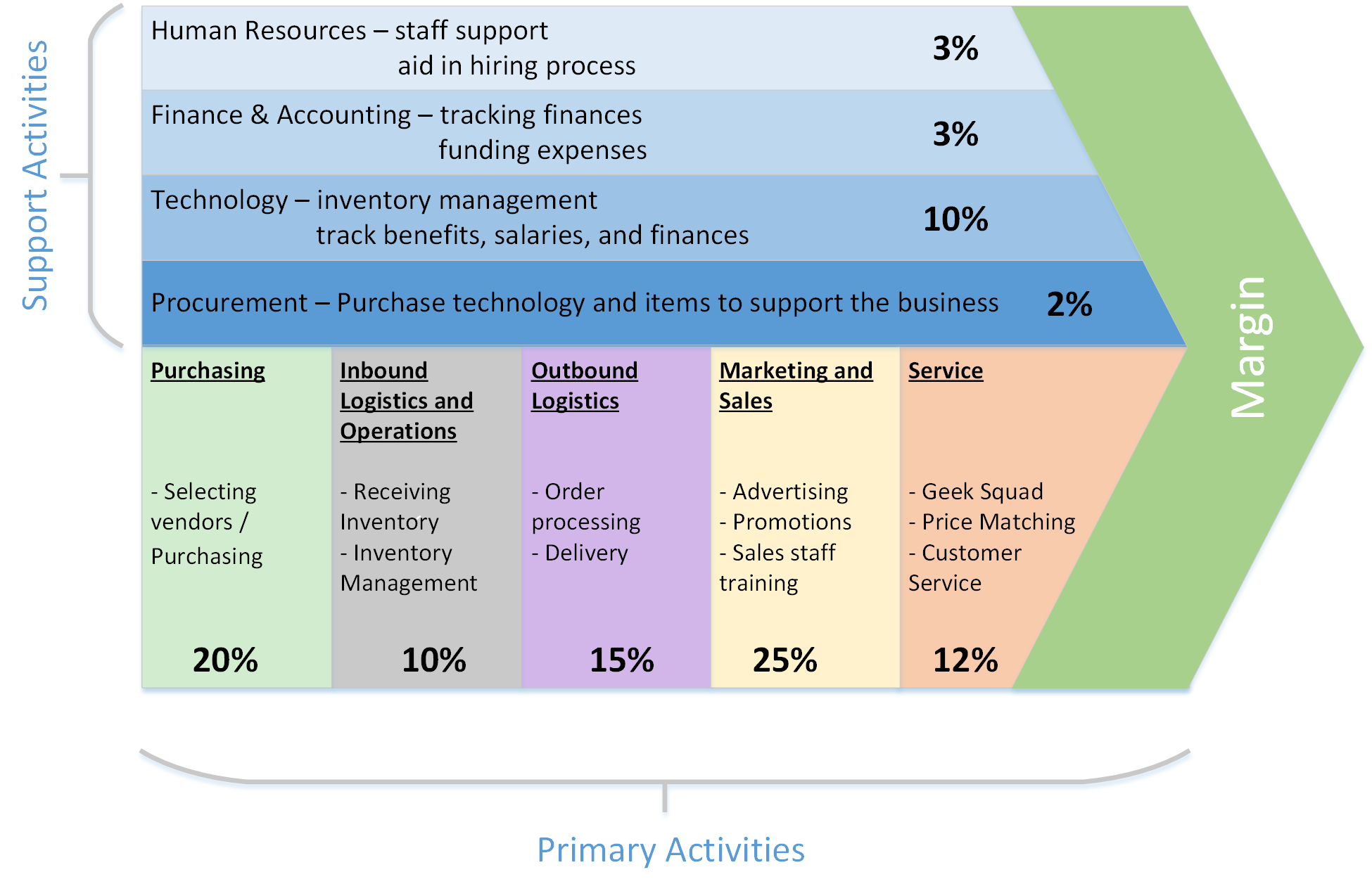
# **ASSIGNMENT 3: Identify IS Application priorities FOR CHANGE**

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## **PART 1. BUSINESS PROCESS INTEGRATION ANALYSIS**

### **1.1 Perform a value chain analysis (20%)**



Best Buy must choose vendors based on the quality of the product as well as the price. If they choose an overpriced vendor, it will cost them in profit. If the price is good, but the quality is lacking, it could still affect their profits if they cannot sell the items or lose customers because of selling substandard products. Much of Best Buy’s products come from their key suppliers, such as Apple, Samsung, HP, Sony, and LG Electronics (Pearson, 2015). They also have a number of exclusive brands, such as Insignia, Dynex, and Rocketfish that are mostly manufactured by vendors in Southeast Asia (“BBY-2013-10KT”, 2013). It is the responsibility of the vendor to ensure the products meet all regulations before they are shipped. Best Buy’s Global Import Compliance Department makes sure the vendors have all of the proper forms filled out prior to shipment. Products are shipped via ocean freight and air freight. EDI technology is used for supplier purchase orders to plan for shipments. Best Buy’s freight forwarders DHL ISC and Expeditors International get the shipments to the Best Buy receiving center (Best Buy, 2018). For domestic product shipment, the vendors ship to a Best Buy delivery center or at times to a store directly (Best Buy, 2016)

Since customers can order items multiple ways from Best Buy, their inventory management system has to keep real-time track of their stock levels. When items are received and stored in one of their distribution centers, it has to be added to the system. Online orders can be shipped from a warehouse or a store, so the system has to be able to tell which location has the item in stock and is closest to the customer. When an item is out of stock in the store, the sales staff also have to be able to help customers get that item from another location, whether it is another physical store or warehouse. They can have it shipped to the store they are assisting the customer from or to the customer’s house.

An advantage Best Buy has over their competition is their trained sales staff. Making sure their sales team is knowledgeable about the product can be key to getting people to buy from them instead of Amazon or Walmart. Their new marketing strategy that just went into effect May 9, 2018, is centered around this. It is titled "Let's talk about what's possible" and it focuses on helping customers understand the technology the company is selling. They want to be seen as an “inspiring friend” (Bornhoft, 2018).

Another competitive advantage the company has is with the services they offer. Price matching is an attempt to avoid the showrooming effect where customers look at the products in their store and order from a cheaper company. The Geek Squad protection plans have been a great source of revenue as well as being a selling point for their products. They are expanding their Total Tech Support service this year to even support items not bought from the company (Keyes, 2018).

Each of these stages in the value chain is important. Their tech support is arguably the only product that could be offered without shipping, warehousing, and inventory management. Though it is primarily in place to service products bought from the retailer. Adding the option to service outside items is a new offer and won’t necessarily be a large portion of their revenue. Marketing and sales help people know about the company and ultimately buy from them. The services can be a marketing tactic and a product that produces revenue.

The Human Resources department supports the staff throughout all stages of the value chain. It also aids in the hiring of new staff members to support the value chain. Finance and accounting is needed for tracking finances to fund the purchasing of inventory, shipping costs, advertising campaigns, staff training, and salaries. They also keep track of profits and losses to keep track of how the company is doing financially. Technology is required for inventory management which is handled throughout the value chain. When products are shipped to Best Buy, they must be logged into inventory. They must be tracked as they are moved into warehouses or stores. Sales staff rely on it to help their customers purchase products. It also used by human resources to keep track of employee benefits and salaries. It is also used to keep track of the company finances. Best Buy must procure the technology used throughout the value chain and for support services. They also have to procure things to keep the business running, such as lights, air filters, wires, etc. These items would be used throughout the value chain in warehouses, stores, corporate offices.

Marketing and sales provides the biggest value since it is what gets the customer to buy from the company. Selecting the appropriate vendors and the products to purchase is a very close second. If the price or quality is bad, people are not going to want to purchase the products. Outbound logistics is also important these days since customers put a high priority on getting items quickly. Amazon is providing some very tough competition in this area with their one and two-day shipping. The service provided by the company is also very important. It can make a huge difference on if the customer will do business with the company. Good inventory management allows for speedy deliveries and also ensures customers are able to purchase an item they want and not buy it from a competitor. In order to have a good inventory management system, the technology must be in place to handle it.

### **1.2 Evaluate IS/IT Support For Value-Chain Processes & Integration (20%)**

Best Buy’s, eCommerce, omnichannel customer-centricity mode, and strong supply chain foundation are key pillars of success and are the primary factors that aided the organization in achieving consistent growth over the last several years (O'Brien, 2018). In 2011, Best Buy began to shift its IT focus from utilizing a proprietary system to employing an interdependent integrated architecture platform. A distributed and service oriented system that is highly available and scalable, to establish a pattern for innovation that is scored by the marketplace and defined after products are created, and essentially driven by consumer demand (Basho Technologies, 2012).

Best Buy implemented Basho’s Riak KV multi-cluster replication technologies, a cloud based, distributed NoSQL system to facilitate the data flow of its product catalog in the e-commerce system, thereby establishing and supporting data visibility for various departments within the organization (Basho Technologies, 2012)). Moreover, the product catalog contains relevant information about the products available for purchase, therefore unlocking the product data center provides immediate business value, which supports the business decisions for Best Buy’s marketing and promotional activities (Crabb, 2014). Best Buy removed the organizational silos for its store operations, merchandising, and logistics, therefore these departments are no longer managed as distinct functions to create visibility for these business areas to sense, react and respond dynamically and effectively to business processes that continuously change, states (O'Marah, 2017).

Best Buy’s utilizes several of Oracle Retail integratable and scalable solutions within their enterprise resource management (ERP) platform to assimilate business information for its merchandising, supply chain, distribution, finance, human resources, and store operations providing the functional areas with the necessary tools to track and manage the organization’s growth. The Oracle Retail Merchandising System, formally known as Retek, enables Best Buy to “manage, control, and perform seamless execution of day-to-day merchandising activities, including purchasing, distribution, order fulfillment, and financial close,” according to (Citrix , 2005) & (Oracle, 2018).

In addition, Best Buy’s uses Oracle Retail Advanced Inventory Planning software to ensure that customers are able find available products and to optimize the movement of their inventory, thereby improving demand forecast and management of its inventory (Oracle, 2017). The Oracle Retail Advanced Inventory Planning software, allows Best Buy to utilize a time-phased approach to guide its inventory ordering, allocation, replenishment, and delivery strategy at all levels in their distribution network.

Oracle Retail Demand Forecasting tool improves Best Buy’s insight for potential inventory problems, and enables them to streamline their forecasting processes to respond effectively to consumer demands. In addition, the Oracle Retail Replenishment Optimization tool, also referred to as inventory planning, equips Best Buy with the ability to balance its inventory and establish targeted inventory levels, therefore providing management with the visibility to efficiently improve marketing and merchandising business processes for planning promotional campaigns (Hubbs, 2018).

Best Buy has partnered with SPS Commerce, which provides support for its international community development and improve their international trading partner relationships. SPS Commerce, offers Best Buy an electronic data interchange (EDI) “multi-tenant cloud-based solution is flexible enough to cater to …changing business needs,” according to (SPS Commerce [1], 2018). Best Buy employs SPS Commerce to manage trade requirements and order fulfillment standards electronically to support its supply chain vision.

SPS Commerce, also integrates the EDI operations for Best Stores and Best Buy.com, supporting EDI fulfillment and the following common trade EDI documents, according to (SPS Commerce [2], 2018):

* Purchase Order (EDI 850)
* Invoice (EDI 810)
* Advance Shipping Notice (EDI 856)
* Product activity data (EDI 852)
* Purchase Order Acknowledgement (EDI 855), and
* UCC-128 Labels (EDI 001)

Enabling Best Buy to set up an EDI business to business gateway (B2B) for managing orders, shipments, payments, and returns, while maintaining EDI compliance. This partnership extends Best Buy’s trade partner visibility into order and shipment status to support and enhance its fulfillment strategy and distribution network to drive retail performance (SPS Commerce [2], 2018).

Furthermore, the success of the Best Buy experience is driven by the organization’s fulfillment strategy, which incorporates a collaborative approach across the enterprise to support the activities of demand planning, product placement, and the customer experience teams (O'Brien, 2018). Therefore, “leveraging the supply chain dynamically in a way that emphasizes what each network node is great at,” states (Forte, 2018).To effectively determine which elements in the supply chain to leverage for its stores for customer same day delivery or pick-up, and efficiently maintain bulk and high-volume items within the distribution centers to achieve and provide a seamless customer experience (O'Brien, 2018).

In 2018, Best Buy recently upgraded their Oracle E-Business Suite (EBS) instance from 12.1.3 to 12.2., states (Sorenson & Vanamala, 2018). The Oracle EBS provides various software modules to support and manage Best Buy’s complex business environments and optimize business processes, according to (Oracle, 2016) ,which include:

* **Customer Relationship Management (CRM)**: Enabling Best Buy to manage and analyze business data and customer interactions to develop and improve its customer service relationships to increase customer retention and drive sales growth utilizing effective order capture and fulfillment strategies.
* **Service Management:** An information service management (ITSM) tool to govern and direct the service activities for the Geek Squad installation, protection, replacement, and product exchange plans. Therefore, providing the Geek Squad with consistent, accurate, and actionable data to manage task and offer targeted technical services. This allows Best Buy to extend their value proposition to its customers, facilitate sales growth, and generate a new revenue stream.
* **Procurement Management**: Offers Best Buy the ability to manage and analyze sourcing, vendors and procurement operations to leverage and streamline procure-to-pay processes, and identify inefficient procurement processes to achieve a positive return on investments.
* **Financial Management**: Allows Best Buy to govern its income, expenses and assets to strategically maximize profits to ensure sustainability by effectively managing accounts receivable, vendor reconciliations, risk analysis, and product life cycles activities for pricing and promotions.
* **Human Capital Management:** The human resource management system (HRMS), allow human resources at Best Buy to manage the processes for its recruitment, payroll, employee incentives and development initiatives. In addition, the HRMS allows management in perspective business areas to forecast labor and workload demands to create and assign staff schedules to meet business objectives.

The Best Buy Learning Management Systems (LMS), is utilized mainly for behavioral improvements for retail sales associates to improve communications between its customers to sales recommendations of “premium networking products, the My Best Buy Credit Card, and service plans” to facilitate sales, states (Freifeld, 2016). Best Buy’s LMS e-learning platform primarily consists of videos, PowerPoint presentations with test or assessments to validate employees’ proficiencies for products and processes. Best Buy job training benefit was reported by 284 employees to date, and according to (Glassdoor, 2018), Best Buy received a 3.2 rating out of 5 stars. Many of Best Buy employees stated that training opportunities were rushed, limited and varied based on the manager indicating that training is not standardized across the organization to fully support enterprise-level objectives.

### 1.3 So what?

From Part 1.1 we evaluated Best Buy's activities and mapped out the firm's value chain in a diagram, 18% is allocated into support activities, 20% into purchasing, 10% into inbound logistics and operations, 15% into outbound logistics, 25% in marketing and sales, and 12% into service.

We need to change Best Buy's business process support and put more support in Best Buy's inventory management system to keep track of stock levels in real-time. This is an important business process as it is important to know how much stock Best Buy has for their consumers and if they are out of stock, to help the consumer find a nearby Best Buy store that has stock of the demanded item. That way they can fulfil the demand of their consumers. Additionally, more support is needed in Geek Squad's Total Tech Support service. It is one of the keys to reduce and hopefully stop the showrooming effect. Additionally, the tech support is Best Buy's product that does not need to be shipped, warehoused, and managed in inventory which is very strategic to keep consumers from showrooming.

In 1.2, it is strategic for Best Buy to shift their IT focus from utilizing a proprietary system to utilize an interdependent integrated architecture platform. They implemented Basho's Riak KV multi-cluster replication technologies which was very strategic on their part as it is a cloud based distributed NoSQL system that facilitates data flow of its product catalog in the e-commerce system. It helps establish as well as support data visibility across various departments of the organization. Additionally, Best Buy utilized integrated and scalable applications from Oracle's enterprise resource management (ERP) platform for the integration of business information to help provide support in functional areas of the necessary tools for tracking and managing the organization's growth. Best Buy also utilized Oracle Retail Advanced Inventory Planning software to help customers find available products as well as optimize Best Buy's inventory movement which allows Best Buy to utilize a time-phased approach for their distribution network levels. Oracle's Demand Forecasting tools were also utilized to improve insight for Best Buy's potential inventory problems and strategically allows Best Buy to streamline their forecasting processes for effective response to consumer demands. It was also strategic of Best Buy to partner with SPS Commerce to gain support for their international community development and improvement of international trading partnerships. Best Buy also upgraded thier Oracle E-Business Suite instance to help support and manage Best Buy's complex business environments and optimize business processes. Best Buy also utilized a Learning Management System to help improve communications between retail sales associates and customers.

## **PART 2. ANALYZE THE FIRM'S IS/IT APPLICATIONS PORTFOLIO**

### **2.1 Map IS Applications To The Application Portfolio Grid (30%)**

**Table 1 Application Portfolio Grid of Best Buy**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **High  *Contribution of IS/IT to business now* Low** | | |
| **High** | **STRATEGIC** | **HIGH POTENTIAL** |
| ***Contribution of IS/IT to business in the future*** | \* Direct Marketing and e-commerce system  \* Advertising and promotion management  \* Customer Relationship Management  () Supplier Relationship Management  \*\*Mobile phone sales system | \* Learning Management Systems  ? Online customer specification system  ? Production Design |
| \*\*Product database/inventory Management  \* Order processing  \* Warehouse management  \* Store management | \* Payroll and Personnel systems  \* General Ledger and Budgeting  \* Office Systems |
| **Low** | **KEY OPERATIONAL** | **SUPPORT** |

**Description and justification of systems listed:**

**Learning Management Systems:** This system supports the behavioral improvements of employees. It add values mainly for the future development of the company, so we categorize it as high potential.

**Online customer specification system:** This system can help the company to serve its online customers better by collecting customers’ data and preference, etc. It is high potential because the data can potential support the CSF to increase consumer experience.

**Production Design:** This suggested system is intended to corporate with the suppliers to design Best Buy-specialized products, which is only available in Best Buy. Its value is to increase the market share in the future.

**Direct Marketing and e-commerce system:** It provides direct access for new customer acquisition. It supports the CSF to achieve business growth.

**Advertising and promotion management**: This is to provide support for customer promotions. This is strategic as it can support business growth by exploring new customers and increasing retention of existing customers.

**Customer Relationship Management:** This helps Best Buy to effectively manage its relationship with its customers. An effective customer relationship management system can increase the shopping experience of its customers and increase the retention rate.

**Supplier Relationship Management:** We propose this system to manage the relationship between Best Buy and its suppliers. This supports the CSF :(1) keep and increase profitability

**Mobile phone sales system:** We intend to increase mobile investments in order to simplify and improve research, discovery, and checkout processes since traffic for mobile phones is growing much faster than traditional desktop traffic

**Product database/inventory Management:** This system is key operational since it supports Best Buy to effectively and efficiently manage its product database and inventory. We suggest this system could be improved as it is common for customers to see out-of-order items and it is difficult for customers to get accurate inventory information.

**Order processing**: It supports Best Buy to manage and process all its orders. This system is key operational since it is key to the current operation of Best Buy.

**Warehouse management/Store management**: These systems support Best Buy to effectively manage its warehouses and physical stores, its logistics network and product distributions. It is key operational as it adds key values to the current business.

**Payroll and Personnel systems:** This system controls employee payments and generates payroll reports for auditing. This system is a support system because it is does not add value to the company, but it is required for the smooth running of the company.

**General Ledger and Budgeting**: This system controls the ledger and budgeting records of the company. This is a support system since it does not add value to the company, while it is required for the smooth running of the company.

**Office Systems:** This system helps the company to effectively and efficiently control its office platform and routine operations. This is a support system since it does not add value to the company, while it is required for the smooth running of the company.

### **2.2 Identify New Applications or Gaps in the Portfolio (10%)**

For tech investors, once the smartphone boom is over, it is difficult to see what changes will be made in the future to replace it. Initially, people thought that smart watches and other networked devices, such as wearable clothing and smart glasses, would fill this role. Shortly thereafter, many people viewed virtual reality and augmented reality as the next major event. Facebook’s Oculus is expected to lead this path. Recently, networking/smart speakers are filling this gap.

Although it is still too early to write an obituary for the first two technologies, neither technology seems to change the situation like a smartphone; smart watches are mostly derivative products and have limited functionality compared to smartphones, and smartwatches have so far failed Popular in a meaningful way.

Perhaps the next big thing is the connected home, and the general Internet of Things. If so, the connected speakers may be the beginning of a larger, more comprehensive solution, but so far the scope of the technology has been more limited.

It is worth noting that some companies have begun to diversify from smartphone hardware. Although Alphabet is moving in the direction of full hardware and software integration with Pixel phones, hardware has never been a large part of the company's revenue, and more is to achieve the goal of increasing the number of search engines and advertising revenue.

At first glance, Apple faces the greatest risk because the iPhone accounts for most of the company’s sales; however, the company is rapidly gaining high profit margins from Apple Music, Apple Pay, and Apple Care. Subscription income. In 2016, this sector became Apple's second largest sector, followed by a 23% increase, significantly higher than the 6% overall growth.

So Best Buy may consider a new application in some VR device such as Oculus and improve the experience of shopping. Also the application may become a new economic growth point like Apple Music, Apple Pay, and Apple Care.

### **2.3 So what?**

Based on current systems which are online customer specification system, production design, direct marketing and e-commerce system, advertising and promotion management, customer relationship management, learning management system and supplier relationship management, Best Buy also need a new application in the newest area which is virtual reality (VR) to maintain the advantage in competition.

**PART 3. Identify and justify priorities for change (20%)**

From our previous analysis, we have identified the following Critical Success Factors (CSF) for Best Buy:

* CSF 1: Sustain and increase profitability
* CSF 2: Increase the market share in the future
* CSF 3: Achieve business growth
* CSF 4: Improve inventory turnover rate
* CSF 5: Efficient and effective inventory management and logistics
* CSF 6: Agile pricing of products and services
* CSF 7: Increase consumer experience
* CSF 8: Excellent in-person services to its customers

We have proposed weighting factors to each CSF according to their priorities. Based on the relevance of each IS applications with regard to each CSF, we have scored each IS applications in the table below. With our analysis, we are able to identify the six IS applications with top priorities:

1. Order processing 476
2. Direct Marketing and e-commerce system 475
3. Warehouse management/Store management 464
4. Product database/inventory Management 448
5. Supplier Relationship Management 423
6. Production Design 406

Table 2 Scoreboard analysis of the IS application portfolio for their impact in achieving key CSFs for Best Buy.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | CSF1 | CSF2 | CSF3 | CSF4 | CSF5 | CSF6 | CSF 7 | CSF8 | Totals |
| *CSF Weight* | *10* | *9* | *8* | *8* | *7* | *7* | *6* | *6* |  |
| Learning Management Systems | 7 | 5 | 8 | 6 | 8 | 1 | 9 | 10 | 404 |
| Online customer specification system | 8 | 7 | 7 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 10 | 10 | 356 |
| Production Design | 9 | 10 | 10 | 1 | 2 | 4 | 8 | 8 | 406 |
| Direct Marketing and e-commerce system | 10 | 8 | 9 | 8 | 9 | 8 | 7 | 1 | 475 |
| Advertising and promotion management | 9 | 8 | 9 | 7 | 1 | 1 | 7 | 4 | 370 |
| Customer Relationship Management | 6 | 9 | 9 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 10 | 10 | 355 |
| Supplier Relationship Management | 9 | 9 | 9 | 7 | 8 | 8 | 1 | 1 | 423 |
| Mobile phone sales system | 9 | 9 | 9 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 9 | 1 | 325 |
| Product database/inventory Management | 8 | 8 | 6 | 8 | 9 | 7 | 8 | 4 | 448 |
| Order processing | 9 | 8 | 9 | 8 | 4 | 6 | 10 | 8 | 476 |
| Warehouse management/Store management | 10 | 6 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 8 | 7 | 1 | 464 |
| Payroll and Personnel systems | 3 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 55 |
| General Ledger and Budgeting | 3 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 111 |
| Office Systems | 2 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 35 |

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