

# Fwd: UKS31685

*by Sss Ccc*

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## **Creative Change and Innovation (UNILEVER )**

## Introduction

The present study has focused on the process of change management and the technological advancement of Unilever and its possible effects on the company's performance. Change management through implementing new innovative techniques can also impact on the product range and the company's overall performance. The customer demand and the leadership process in the company have been highly influenced by the change management which has also brought new opportunities to the company. The current report has stated an overview of the company's profile and helped in identifying the customer demand and their expectation level. The implementation of technological advancement and changed management has increased the development process of the company. Also, it has been obtained that a change in management may lead to some issues in the future. The suggested strategies for the company to hold the necessary objects have been discussed.

## Overview of the UNILEVER Company- Brief overview of the company

<sup>1</sup> A British multinational organization in consumer goods is Unilever. The headquarters of the company is in London, England. The company sells various types of products like consumer goods, food, care, beauty, drinks, baby products, and other things. In the world the largest producer of soap is Unilever. The company provides its services across 190 countries. On 1929 2nd of September the company started its journey 93 years ago. The current CEO of the company is Alan Jope. In 2022 across the world approximately 148000 employees were working under the organization. In 2022, the total revenue of the company was £60.073 billion. The mission and vision of Unilever are to meet the needs of everyone in all aspects to help people get more from life and look good and feel good (Unilever PLC, 2023).

## Analysis of Consumer Demand

### *Change in consumer demand affecting the business of Unilever*

In the era of modernization, the demand of consumers is frequently changing. Specifically, after covid-19 organization like Unilever needs to cope with <sup>3</sup> the changes in consumer behavior to be competitive in the market. The main is that Unilever needs to focus on Changes in consumer behavior as follows:

**Marketing:** After the pandemic the company Unilever has to change the whole marketing process. Because of various restrictions and rule of government traditional way of communication and interaction with people was not possible so they develop new strategies of marketing to reach their

consumer via digital presence. Most people spend their time on social media and for celebrity marketing, influencer marketing is one of the best methods selected by Unilever to reach their target audience (Mehta *et al.*, 2020). Thus, with just one click the company presents its brand-new products, services, creativity, and innovation to worldwide customers. Along with the change in marketing the change in technology also occurs.

**Technological advancement:** Because of changes in consumer behavior. IT infrastructure needs to develop and it is in an advanced stage to understand the trend in the market to analyze the changes in the use of AI, and IoT is necessary for Unilever to meet the changes in the market and be competitive. The website and digital media need to be up to the mark to provide all kinds of information and services to them in just one click. For that regular maintenance and training to employees are also provided by the company.

**Consumer service:** The time Company has an idea about what its customers want is easy to provide the service. After Covid-19 the change in customer service and demand needs to be recognized by Unilever. In addition, most of the customers now focus on gaining personalized experience and they also want to enjoy home delivery service after the pandemic. As an example, the demand for hygiene products also increased after Covid-19 so it is the responsibility of Unilever to understand what kind of service they are asking for and provide them with actual service to retain loyal customers. The facilities of home delivery at their time with the help of robotics can be an innovative and revolutionary approach for the company to provide tough competition to its competitors.

### **Main drivers of change**

There are many drivers of change in consumer behavior in the market the main ones are as follows:

**Influence of society:** Societal Influence plays a Vital role in changes in consumer behavior. This can be shown at the time of the pandemic as well. Humans have a tendency to purchase products by the influence of others just to showcase their status. This pressure from society influences the behavior of consumers and they change their purchases.

**Digitalization:** In the era of digitalization people can easily access data. Consumers are aware of what they are purchasing and are able to compare their prices. Digital investment is a necessity for businesses nowadays that have the power to influence consumer behavior by applying AI, machine learning, and other advanced technology (Taufik *et al.*, 2021).

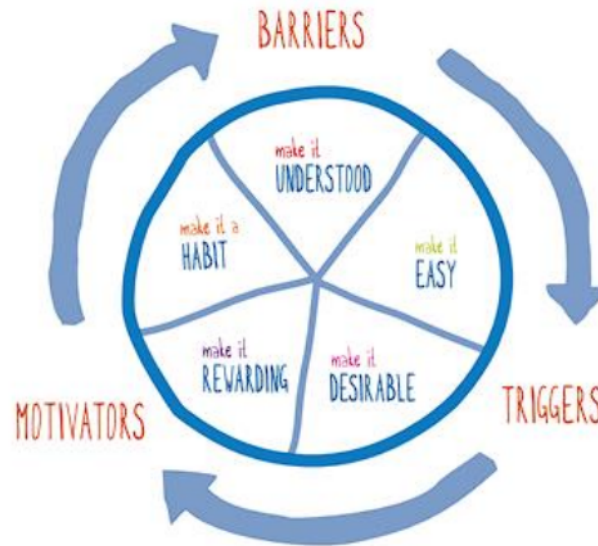
**Changing value:** With the world around people, their values and beliefs are continuously changing. New advancement and disruption have a tendency to provide shape human motivation and behavior, priorities, and attitudes. In the present time economic uncertainty, political imbalance, and increasing cost of living influence cautious consumption. The importance of uniqueness and trust grows along with the voice of each customer.

**Sustainability:** Consumers are more cautious about the environment nowadays. It is the duty of the government, consumers, and organizations to preserve the world for future generations. For that, the needs and demand for sustainable products are at their peak now. Consumers always provide value to a company that is aware of its corporate social responsibility.

### **Overall strategic plan**

For the purpose to adjust with the change the company Unilever needs to develop its strategic plan. For that, they follow five levers for change. The first stage is to understand the change the lever helps to develop awareness and acceptance. This is a crucial step in their strategic planning to get a clear idea of the changing perspective of the behavior. In addition, it is also necessary to understand the relevance of change in the strategy. The second step is to make it easy for the employees of the company to gain an idea of what exactly is required to do. Therefore, it helps to gain confidence and establish convenience. The third step is related to making it desirable. That helps to understand what will be fixed with their desired images. It is related to the self with the overall society. It is necessary to link with the overall goal of the company and be able to evaluate it as per human nature (Behaviour change and - assets.unilever.com, 2023). The fourth step is rewarding that is related to providing rewards to employees to encourage them to adjust to the change that demonstrates the payoff and proof. The final step of strategic planning is to develop habits. That helps to be consistent in the process and helps to ensure reinforcement. The change needs to be understood by the company to be active and attentive in the process. The strategic planning related to marketing, technology, and customer service all need to be developed as per the market requirements. It is necessary to communicate the whole plan with employees in the organization to meet organizational demands and understand the customer-changing behavior aspects.

# UNILEVER'S FIVE LEVERS FOR CHANGE



**Figure 1: Changes in Unilever**

(Source: Behaviour change and - assets.unilever.com, 2023)

## **Analysis of Technological Advancement & Change Management**

In the UK the impact of climate change and environmental pollution has increased in such a way that business companies are developing environment-friendly innovations to make the atmosphere cleaner and greener.

### ***PESTLE analysis***

**Political factors-** The post-pandemic period in the UK has served as a turmoil situation in the case of maintaining political stability. The pandemic impact, Brexit issues, and Russia Ukraine war are the predominant factors for the business companies to develop strategies effectively. Unilever has to develop innovation strategies according to the present situation in the UK.

**Economic factors-** In the post-pandemic period the gradual lowering of inflation (0.2%), and improving the employment rate can be effective for Unilever to develop product innovation in a cost-effective manner. The products have to be cost-effective to attract all ranges of customers.

**Social factors-** Social awareness about environmental concerns and developing health and hygiene in lifestyle has been found among the new generation of the UK. The increase in educational awareness and social standard of living can be helpful for Unilever to reach its target audiences (Laursen and Andersen, 2023).

**Technological factors-** Technological innovation such as digital technologies, and software development has intruded into the business space which can be beneficial for Unilever.

**Legal factors-** The employment regulation in the UK is very strong according to the employment act 2010. Unilever has to develop concerns on legal issues.

**Environmental factors-** The environmental issues in the case of climate change, and the increase of pollution have to be taken into consideration before developing product and marketing strategies in the case of Unilever.

Technological advancement and the change management process has been incorporated into business development to gain a competitive advantage in the working process of the business field. In the case of Unilever, the use of technological innovation has been incorporated in the development of customer service and understanding the real-time data visibility of customer demand. Especially in the post-pandemic period customer retention has become a priority in the business effectiveness and innovation implementation process( Kerr *et al.* 2020). The use of "software development", and "Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools" such as Machine Learning algorithm (ML), and Robotics technology to assess the customer demand and expectations from the business companies has been developed in Unilever.

The global network innovation development has been facilitated in the UK in case of Unilever to make sustainable development in business service management. "*Automated technologies*" have been developed in the Unilever company to bring innovation and satisfy the customers. The UK **Material Innovation Factory (MIF)** has incorporated robots to do material chemistry work to reduce time and manual handling of working operations. The process of data collection from the market to assess the marketing planning of product development and innovation implementation according to customers' changing demands in the post-pandemic period can be successfully and rapidly conducted with the involvement of *robotics*. As per Clapp *et al.* (2021), the AI Hub of the

Unilever company has created a revolution by introducing robotics technology for product tests. With the incorporation of robotics in the chemical process of data collection, within 1 year almost 12000 product tests have been conducted by Unilever successfully.

The development of AI Hub has been helpful to assess real-time data insight to prototype innovation and make efficient, effective changes in e-Commerce. The use of renewable energy resources and recycling has been an aim of Unilever to protect the environment and develop a sustainable approach to business. The use of sustainability innovation in packaging and carbon-free emission development has been incorporated in the creative innovation approach of Unilever to make a clean future and make the environment 100% free of fossil fuel and petro-chemical. Digital innovation has become a priority of the marketing management of business companies (Unilever.com, 2022). In Unilever, the incorporation of E-Commerce technology, and digital marketing development has been introduced to get an idea of consumer preferences in the post-pandemic period. The social media and digitalization process of assessing customer data has become helpful for Unilever to connect with millions of people in social media platforms. The idea of recent trends, the working process, and new launching products of the competitors can be witnessed via social media accessibility and constant presence in Instagram, and FaceBook.

As per Kpoku (2021), the automated technology of Machine Learning algorithms and deep learning is useful to bring new products in the market rapidly and effectively after going through safety tests. "*Big data and Blockchain technology*" has been used by Unilever to develop operation management and product development effectively. Innovation can be found in the product development of Unilever as the *first zero salt range of stock cubes* has been used in this company. In the product development process the use of technological advancement is mainly augmented reality, 3D printing has been incorporated in Unilever to make the products more sustainable, cheaper and rapid test oriented to gain customer loyalty.

Changed management in Unilever has made a rapid development in the business process and adopted new changes efficiently. The technological advancement has helped in identifying the new technologies in order to implement in the business procedure and improve the profit scale and the productivity level.

***Changing the communication process***



The involvement of new technologies in the communication process has highly changed the process of communicating with the customers and others. The arrival of social networking sites, developed chat apps or chatbots has made it easy in communicating with the people. This change has brought fast, effective, unified and more deliberate (Purwaningrum *et al.*, 2022).

#### ***Improving business operation***

Business procedure nowadays has become dependent on the business productivity software. The change management of the company has included new innovative tools and techniques which have made the productivity level grow efficiently.

#### ***Reducing risk factors***

It can be said stealing the information of the company was easy in the past days and now through the new technology and change management Unilever has made the security process safer by including AI tools (Hanelt *et al.*, 2021). The risk factors have become decreased and keep the essential information of the employees and about the company safe and secure.

#### **Impact of Change and suggestions for the future**

**Impact for change** - The change in the use of technology and innovative techniques will help Unilever to operate effectively in the current market competitive landscape. With the use of new technology and innovative practices, the company will be able to gauge the demands and the needs of the customer and the employees in a better way and frame its policies in such a way that meets the needs and demands of the customers and the employees effectively (de *et al.*, 2021). The change in technology will help the organization to lower the cost of the different business Kpoku, O.K., 2021 activities which will lower the cost of products of Unilever and maximize the profit. Technology integration in the organization will help the management to have increased control of the activities and processes of the organization.

**Suggestion for future** - The company can first identify the new technologies and the innovative way in which the technological change can be used in the organization which will result in value maximization of the product and sustainable growth for Unilever. Unilever has to identify the key business activities that need the support of the new technological change which will be helpful in streamlining the complex activities and making those activities more efficient. The technology change has to be implemented in the organization in such a way that the technological gap in the organization can be addressed so that the entire business benefits from the use of the change in

technology. Unilever should try to make necessary changes in the procedures and policies in the organization to integrate the change in technology efficiently in the company (Wessel *et al.*, 2021). The Human resources of the organization have to be properly trained about the new technological changes and the innovative practice adopted by the organization so that the issue of knowledge gap in the employees about the new technology is addressed.

### **Conclusions and Recommendations-**

In this report the development of the innovation management, creativity and change management perspective have been discussed in the case of Unilever. The drivers of change in Unilever and the way the company has attracted customer loyalty has been introduced in this report. The change management attributes and the innovation technologies has been analysed in this report to assess the effectiveness of Unilever company towards the customers. Recommendations and suggestions of future trends have been incorporated in this report for Unilever to develop in future with technological innovation and change the situation. The future trend of customer service, blockchain technology has been evaluated in the case of Unilever.

### **Recommendations**

The recommendation for Unilever in developing change can be the following-

- The customer data insight has to be collected effectively to gain the competitive advantage in the business field of consumer satisfaction process using innovation. The trend of Modern comfort foods, irresistible vegetables, Feel-Good food contrasted with organic flavor has to be introduced in Unilever to satisfy customers with changing need and demand (Unilever.com, 2022).
- The sustainability and waste management program has to be conducted efficiently to include 100% sustainability innovation in business for the future growth, profitability, acceptance and popularity maintenance.

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