**Project 6:** **White Paper**

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**Introduction**

Every second of every day we are faced with fast-paced changes in technology and innovation. As a business, this is even more difficult because the amount of overhead that comes with implementing new technologies may not outweigh the costs in the near term and must be thought of as an investment for the future. In an article published on Market Maven, Angela Hausman states that the use of outdated equipment “doesn’t allow businesses to stay competitive with companies using newer, more efficient technology. These technologies waste minutes and could cost your business thousands of dollars yearly in lost productivity” (Hausman, 2023). This waste in financial spending pushes companies to make difficult decisions of cutting costs in other areas such as hiring employees, employee retention programs, and financial contributions to the community all of which affect the community in which these businesses operate.

Customers depend on this data to be successful, and companies depend on customers to be profitable. When a customer can’t access their data or the process of data management takes longer than quoted due to inefficiencies in the processes of the company, this is a potential loss of revenue. According to Alan Shimel in his DevOps.com article “The real cost of downtime”, the average total cost of unplanned application downtime per year is $1.25 billion to $2.5 billion (Shimel, 2015). The factors that cause such a huge loss can be summed up in three areas: “Cultural inhibitors – 56.7%”, “Fragmented processes – 43.4%”, and “Lack of executive support -26.7%” (Shimel, 2015). In short, the money savings start in the board room and flow to the rest of the company from there. By convincing stakeholders that footing the bill upfront will eventually pay dividends in the future and showing how other companies, especially competitors or others in the company’s market space, have implemented this and shown proof of concept, as well as a strong return on investment, can allow the company to catapult itself into modern times as well as better standing in the black.

**Background and Review Issues of Case Study**

This is where Active International found itself and the heart of the case study on “growing client revenue through high-quality, targeted media campaigns” (*Active International | IBM*, n.d.). Active International “enables companies to maximize the value they receive for assets, increase their return on ad spend, and generate funding for unbudgeted expenses” (Active International, 2023). As a recognized leader in the industry, Active International provides opportunities to change the game in the media industry. “Active’s expertise, which includes corporate trading and consultative work as well as financial business solutions, is all about helping companies create value and achieve more for their stakeholders” (*Active International | IBM*, n.d.). He goes on to break down the company model as “clients exchange their underperforming or undervalued assets for Active trade credits, which they can use to purchase anything from hotel rooms and airline tickets to logistics, security, and telecommunication services and, of course, every variety of media” (*Active International | IBM*, n.d.). This means that they must process large amounts of data and have it ready the moment when a customer requires it. Unfortunately, if the system is still running on outdated technology such as Sun or older IBM servers it makes the process painfully slow as well as runs the risk of loss of data or an even worse scenario, having employees manually edit data in spreadsheets just slows the process further.

The main issue for Active is the handling and processing of data as well as the potential cost of upgrades or conversion. “As more and more business activity is digitized, new sources of information and ever-cheaper equipment combine to bring us into a new era: one in which large amounts of digital information exist on virtually any topic of interest to a business” (McAfee, 2014). This large amount of information is a gold mine for companies who know how to use it properly. Take for example how Sears Holdings, looking for a faster, cheaper way to do its analytic work, set up a Hadoop cluster of inexpensive commodity servers (McAfee, 2014). After implementing Hadoop, according to CTO Phil Shelly, the time needed to generate a comprehensive set of promotions dropped from eight weeks to one (McAfee, 2014).

In an interview with Dennis Quinn, Executive Vice President and Chief Media and Digital Enterprise Office at Active International, comments that “in the national television marketplace each year, whether it’s broadcast or cable, ratings, and delivery has reduced by an average of 11 percent and yet media prices have increased 8 percent compounded” (Kunkel, 2021). The loss of average viewership and the increase in cost to the company drove Active to try to come up with a solution which resulted in XACTV. The newly Active International created XACTV, a service that optimizes media buying, which is helping the company expand into new markets, was in part developed using IBM's cloud technology (*Active International | IBM*, n.d.). “The IBM Cloud helps us get new capabilities to market quickly, which has already helped us achieve return on investment several times over” (*Active International | IBM*, n.d.).

**Analyze and Define Practices that Leaders Use to Create Collaborative and Successful Teams**

- Analyze the leadership practices of the organization during the challenging period.  
- Identify specific actions taken by leaders and their impact on team collaboration and success.  
- Use relevant theories and concepts from the readings to support your analysis.

**Team Dynamics and Composition**

- Explore how the composition of the leadership team influenced outcomes.  
- Highlight unique characteristics of the project team and leaders.  
- Discuss how team dynamics played a role in the overall situation.

**Success Evaluation**

- Assess the success of the project teams in both the immediate and longer term.  
- Discuss any unique issues, challenges, or practices that contributed to success or failure.  
- Use relevant criteria to evaluate the project's outcomes.

**Remedial Principles and Practices**

- Propose remedial principles and practices for the organization based on your analysis.  
- Provide concrete recommendations for improving leadership and team dynamics.  
- Explain the rationale behind each recommendation.

**Conclusion**

- Summarize the key findings of the paper.  
- Reiterate the main lessons learned from the case study.  
- Conclude with a forward-looking perspective on the organization's potential for improvement.

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