**Introduction - About Pause for Paws**

Pause 4 Paws (COMPANY), part of COMPANY, is a consumer-focused international branded beverage business operating in more than 12 countries and employing over 1200 people collaborating internationally in the knowledge that local knows best, creating brands that people love.

We’re proud of our unique culture at COMPANY; it’s a culture that’s low on policies, processes and politics and big on collaboration, diversity and individual empowerment.

COMPANY and Catco have partnered together on their ambition to strengthen our Commercial capabilities, specifically within the area of Distribution Management.

**About International Markets**

COMPANY is a business division within CatCo comprised of approximately 7000 people, based across 22 countries. Our teams in these countries are hired locally to drive profit and growth across over 18 emerging global markets.

We are coming together with our Commercial colleagues in CatCo markets, to drive excellence in our commercial and distribution management capability.

**About Pause 4 Paws**

Pause 4 Paws is a business unit within Catco with approximately 44 people based in the United States and Europe.  Our teams in these key countries are hired locally to drive the overall business growth across European developing markets including France and Portugal  This region has 12% of the World’s population, though overall GDP contributes only 5000 globally, however, considered to have the fastest growing rate.

Our teams operate in highly entrepreneurial commercial environments. They work with high levels of autonomy within their own unique structures and models to create a bespoke approach for their market strategy.

**About the Target Audience – our Commercial Managers**

Typically, the route to market for the geographies covered by this brief is via a distributer, who will have its own commercial organisation, therefore our team is primarily focused against leading and directing the distribution partner. That said, in some more developed markets, our team is in direct contact with customers usually in partnership with the distributer team. Our Commercial Managers are dedicated to optimizing our distribution channels, driving value and managing the relationships with our distribution partners. The Commercial roles across our markets have local nuances with different job titles but the core responsibilities are universal and are detailed in Pause 4 Paws’ pawbook.

There are approximately 22 commercial roles across International Markets (IM). All of our Commercial teams are based in their local market, with the exception of one team who manage a large collection of small overseas markets based from the London, England. All commercial roles are ‘in-market’ focused with market KPI’s and objectives that only relate to the markets they manage. Our geography offers limited opportunity to connect in person with peers across markets.

Across the population there are varying skills and experience levels ranging from entry level to Director. We also include all heads of markets (Market General Managers and Regional General Managers) as being part of our professional commercial community.

**The Brief**

We strive to enhance the capabilities of our Commercial Managers, responsible for Distribution Management. CatCo years ago, following a strategic review of our vision, we recognized the need to build the capability of our commercial function. A comprehensive overview of our ways of working with the Distributor Partners took place. Tools and processes were created and a review of the skills and knowledge needed for effective execution also took place. Thus, Distribution Management Excellence (DEX) was born.

The next stage of DEX is to create a structured learning academy which provides the framework, tools and resources for our commercial community to structure their learning. The academy should become the mandatory pathway to support our business objectives of excellence in distribution management.

The academy and the skills it will build need to be sharply focused against our objectives for this group of markets; firstly, developing relationships and consistent ways of working with our distribution partners that create focus on our brands and their in-market execution; secondly, delivering the targeted level of consumer and shopper engagement in the market by creating and focusing on “model execution standards”, especially at the point of purchase; finally, creating incremental financial value. Of course, these three objectives are entirely interrelated.

We now invite you to a tender process which will identify the learning partner we work with to create the DEX Academy.

The vision is a self-sustained learning experience designed to elevate the skills, knowledge, and expertise of Commercial Managers responsible for Distribution Management. The program should be tailored to meet the diverse needs of our global team, guiding them along the necessary learning steps to excel in their roles and drive business success.

The foundational work for the Academy is complete, comprising universal competencies for the roles and proficiency levels described. We have also begun to create a suite of tools and best practise processes that should be used by the commercial community. It will be necessary to incorporate these tools and processes into the learning experience, with the objective of driving adoption as well as understanding. Our Competency Model is attached in Appendix 2.

Prior to DEX investment, there was limited need and purpose for the commercial community to come together. The introduction of DEX learning has brought the community together in the pursuit of consistent best practice standards. This has been received as high value and will continue hand in hand with the DEX academy development.

**Desired Program Overview**

The Global DEX Academy represents a strategic investment in the professional development of our Commercial Managers. By offering a progressive learning journey, supported by a robust infrastructure and collaborative culture, the Academy sets the stage for ongoing innovation, growth, and excellence in Distribution Management.

The Global DEX Academy is envisioned to be a structured, progressive learning journey, guiding managers through distinct levels of proficiency such as Foundation, Intermediate and Advanced. Each level should build upon the previous one, equipping managers with increasingly sophisticated capabilities and strategic insights to effectively manage distribution channels and drive growth.

**Key Features**

**Customized Learning Paths:** Managers to have access to personalized learning paths aligned with their proficiency level and developmental needs. These paths should comprise a blend of virtual modules, live webinars, workshops, case studies, and simulations, providing a holistic learning experience.

1. **Global Collaboration Platform:** A centralized online space to foster collaboration and knowledge sharing among managers located in different countries. Here, managers could access learning materials, engage in discussions, share best practices, and seek guidance from peers and subject matter experts. We currently use the Rockstar Learning Platform and are open to continue this or try something new and bespoke.
2. **Progressive Proficiency Levels:** The Academy should offer a structured progression through proficiency levels, culminating in mastery. Each level to be curated with the help of our SME’s to develop key competencies in Distribution Management, from foundational concepts to advanced leadership and strategic thinking skills.
3. **Self-Driven Learning Approach:** Managers are empowered to take ownership of their learning journey, with self-paced modules and resources available on-demand. Progress tracking tools should enable managers to monitor their advancement, complete assessments, and receive feedback from mentors.
4. **Continuous Evaluation and Recognition:** Regular progress reviews and checkpoints allow managers to assess their development and receive feedback for improvement. Recognition mechanisms, such as badges and certificates, celebrate milestones and motivate managers to strive for excellence.

Whilst we will maintain an open mind on content, and expect any partner to help guide this, it is likely that the final Academy will consist of modules that fit into three broad categories: generic modules that help our team develop their operational and management capability; generic customer management modules that support the team to step up their ability to impact distributers and customers; finally, there will need to be some modules that support the implementation of specific Pause 4 Paws DEX processes and tools.

**Benefits**

* **Enhanced Performance:** Equips managers with the skills and knowledge needed to effectively build relationships with our Distribution Partners, manage distribution channels, optimize supply chains, and drive business growth.
* **Global Cohesion:** Fosters collaboration, knowledge sharing, and a sense of community among managers across different countries, promoting a unified approach to Distribution Management.
* **Talent Development:** Provides a structured pathway for talent development, enabling managers to progress through proficiency levels and achieve mastery in Distribution Management.
* **Long-Term Impact:** Establishes a sustainable learning framework within the organization, ensuring continuous skill development and readiness to adapt to evolving market dynamics.

Our aim is to find a solution with a high success of learning transfer. We are looking for a blended approach and encourage you to consider combining virtual modules with live webinars, workshops, and discussions led by subject matter experts, who we will make available to you.

Land Lady, an external consultant, has been working with various parts of the Catco organisation for the past 9 years, and has played a significant role in supporting the DEX programme over the last 2 years. Land Lady will be available to work with you to support the development and delivery of the Academy.

The blended approach should allow for both self-paced learning and real-time interaction, catering to different learning preferences and providing opportunities for deeper exploration of topics.

Below are suggestions to help align your proposal with our thinking and should not be treated as a check list of must have components. We are happy to receive your recommendations on approach and deliver through partnering additional 3rd parties:

**Virtual Learning Modules**: Develop or identify off the shelf virtual learning modules that cover the essential interpersonal skills and capabilities required for effective Distribution Management, as per our capability framework. These modules should be accessible on-demand to accommodate different time zones and schedules.

**Case Studies and Simulations**: Incorporate case studies and simulations that reflect real-world scenarios and challenges faced by the managers in their roles. This experiential learning approach allows managers to apply their knowledge in practical contexts and develop problem-solving skills. We can provide SME’s to inform this creation.

**Peer Coaching and Mentoring**: Establish peer coaching and mentoring relationships among the managers, where more experienced managers can provide guidance and support to those who are newer to the role or facing specific challenges. This peer-to-peer learning fosters collaboration and strengthens the sense of community among the managers.

**Continuous Evaluation and Feedback**: Implement mechanisms for continuous evaluation and feedback to assess the effectiveness of the learning program and make necessary adjustments. This can include post-training surveys, performance metrics, and regular check-ins with managers to gauge their progress and identify areas for improvement.

**Recognition and Rewards**: Recognize and reward managers who demonstrate exceptional performance and improvement in their Distribution Management capabilities. This can be done through certifications, badges, or other forms of recognition that highlight their achievements and encourage continued learning and development.

**The Proposal**

We appreciate the challenges with proposing a solution design based on limited information, and the need for iterations and complexities which will need to be discussed. Therefore, at this stage we ask you to treat our brief as an ‘ideal’ solution for which you may be able to provide some elements of. I refer back to our opening letter for the scope of what we would like from you:

1. Overview of your approach and methodology for designing and delivering a progressive learning program tailored to our Commercial Managers.
2. Description of the design overview, resources, and delivery methods you would utilize to support managers at each proficiency level.
3. Demonstration of your experience and expertise in developing self-sustaining global learning initiatives, particularly in the field of Distribution Management or related areas.
4. Pricing structure, timeline, and any additional services or support you can offer to ensure the success of the Distribution Excellence Academy.

**Timeline**

| Questions submitted to COMPANY by | 7/1/23 |
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| Tender end date | 8/1/23 |
| Notification of success emailed out by | 8/7/23 |
| Proposed Stage 1 Presentations | 8/10/23 |
| Proposed Final Stage Discussions | 8/20/23 |