

Case study

An eCommerce company, Northwind Trading, has been operating successfully for the past four years. Sales have been steady through this time, with some small seasonal fluctuations. However, last month's sales figures showed a downward trend for the first time, and the company also noticed that several customers posted negative comments on social media about the online store.

Ali, the Northwind Trading website administrator, reported that the eCommerce website was redesigned a month ago. The redesign included implementing a new checkout process that now requires the customers to register before completing the sale. The registration was implemented because the marketing team needed to collect customer data for promotional purposes and to track purchase history. Ali has not noticed any technical issues with the website. Pages are loading slower than he would wish, however he expects that the performance will be dramatically improved once he has completed the optimization of all the product images.

According to the report completed by Sua, the sales manager, there aren't any obvious problems with the sales. However, Northwind Trading management believes that "it is better to be safe than to be sorry" and decide to investigate the situation before the sales problem gets any worse.

1. Project Overview

This project focuses on identifying and analyzing the root cause of declining sales and increasing customer complaints at Northwind Trading. The analysis uses both qualitative and quantitative techniques, stakeholder mapping, and the RACI matrix to propose actionable recommendations.

2. Tools and Techniques Used

- **Quantitative Techniques:** Sales data analysis, statistical sampling
- **Qualitative Techniques:** Customer feedback analysis, user role analysis
- **Root Cause Analysis:** 5 Whys method
- **Stakeholder Analysis and Mapping:** Power-Interest Grid
- **RACI Matrix:** Responsibility assignment

Here is a brief brief outline of each technique:

Quantitative Techniques: Utilize statistical methods and data analysis to identify patterns, trends, and anomalies in numerical data, such as sales figures, customer metrics, and performance indicators.

Qualitative Techniques: Gather insights, opinions, and feedback through interviews, surveys, and observations to uncover subjective factors, perceptions, and underlying issues that may not be captured by quantitative data alone.

Statistical Sampling: Statistical Sampling is a method used in research and data analysis to gather information about a population by examining only a subset, or sample, of its members. Instead of analyzing every individual within a population, statistical sampling selects a representative group based on predefined criteria.

Root-Cause Analysis using the 5 Whys: The 5 Whys method involves asking "why" repeatedly to uncover the underlying cause of a problem or issue. By iteratively probing deeper into the root cause of each answer, you can identify the fundamental factors contributing to the problem.

User Role Analysis: User Role analysis involves identifying and understanding the needs of different users. It helps with making sure that the provided solutions match user expectations.

Stakeholder Analysis and Mapping: Stakeholder analysis involves identifying and assessing stakeholders' interests, influence, and involvement in a project. Stakeholder mapping visualizes the relationships between stakeholders and their level of influence or interest in the project, helping prioritize communication and engagement efforts.

RACI Matrix: The RACI Matrix is a project management tool used to clarify and communicate roles and responsibilities for project tasks. It assigns each stakeholder a role (Responsible, Accountable, Consulted or Informed) based on their involvement in each task.

3. Project Deliverables

- **Deliverable 1** - Qualitative and Quantitative Analysis and Recommendations.
- **Deliverable 2** - Root Cause Analysis
- **Deliverable 3** - User Role Analysis
- **Deliverable 4** - Stakeholders Analysis and Mapping
- **Deliverable 5** - RACI Matrix