Symantec: Case 3

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The Problem

The problem with Symantec is the communication within the entire organization. Not due to one specific person's fault, but due to the rapid growth and acquisitions of additional companies that Symantec went through, their organization and therefore communication could not properly keep up. There should have been plans set in place before acquiring multiple companies and bringing on large numbers of people beforehand. This was not the case though and because of the poor initial planning the method Symantec has been running with has been "firefighting". When problems pop up, they work to fix it but there are no retroactive solutions to get ahead of these problems. These companies that they have acquired have basically stayed as their own company and continued using whatever communication methods they used before. Therefore, there are multiple "companies" inside Symantec that is leading to communication issues. Due to this Symantec needs to look at solutions to fix the poor communication and organization throughout the company.

Porter's Five Forces

Competitive Rivalry: Competitive rivalry is high for Symantec. There will always be new companies developing software in a similar manner to Symantec.

Threat of New Entrants: For Symantec, the threat of new entrants is high. Since software development is in high demand there are always companies and individuals trying to get their foot in the door. Software development is more about people since the technology is relatively easy to use. Therefore, if a talented team is setup, new entrants can be quick to pop up.

Threat of Substitutes: The threat of substitutes for Symantec is also high. They are not necessarily in a niche market so there are a lot of similar software packages out there. Also, with the threat of new entrants being high there is always opportunity for other companies to startup and produce something relatively similar to what Symantec provides.

Bargaining Power of Suppliers: This is as low as it can get. Because Symantec produces software there is not anything needed to be supplied.

Bargaining Power of Consumers: The bargaining power of consumers is also low. Symantec matches the prices with the market to stay afloat. Therefore, there is not much wiggle room for consumers to bargain. They will most likely be paying around the same thing anywhere they look on the market.

Stakeholder Analysis

Shareholders: The shareholders are anyone the owns shares of Symantec. They are only in this position for one thing: ROI. They want to see money being returned after their initial investment. Whatever decisions made by Symantec will directly affect how much money the shareholders gain or lose, so they have a vested interest in the decisions made by Symantec.

Employees: Employees are the most impacted stakeholder in this situation. The communication issues are directly impacting them since they need to work together to make money. Good internal communication leads to higher sales and higher sales leads to more profit, which is the main goal of the company (Goldratt 60).

Customers: Depending on what is decided by Symantec customers could be directly affected. If the communication systems are improved the customers waiting period for

desired software could be decreased. Also, they when inquiring about software and their potential purchases, Symantec can get back to them in a better, timely manner. Without these improvements, customers would possible stop coming to Symantec for software due to their poor communication internally and externally.

Do Nothing Option

The first option is the easiest option for Symantec and that is to do nothing and remain the same. They seem to have liked this option over time due to not changing anything when steadily growing. This option allows software to be developed without hitches of trying to alter how the company communicates and works together. Mix and matching of interesting means of communication will remain the same, but the workers and managers will have and idea of how to deal with it. The do-nothing option would let them focus on other internal fires they may need to put out. It would also not increase costs whatsoever so the risk on a monetary level is nonexistent.

Option A: Pick One System and Upgrade

For this option, Symantec would either pick Novell or HP and work with one of those providers to obtain their best communication services. This option would allow the company to not have to completely overhaul their systems and shock their employees. One problem with this issue will be the usage of the MIS division. They would have to be in charge of this transition and would not be able to fight a lot of their other fires that they typically have to tend to.

Option B: Outsource

The third option for Symantec would be to outsource their communication methods to a new company. Instead of trying to balance two systems together over

multiple divisions, one system can be selected to streamline communication for Symantec. This would basically get rid of any typical communications that currently pop up for Symantec. As of right now they expect issues and with a new system that caters to the needs of Symantec, they would not have to expect problems and the MIS division can focus on other issues throughout the company.

Recommendation

My recommendation to Symantec would be to outsource their communication to a separate new company. Some may argue this might cost more, but currently Symantec is paying for two outdated systems through two different companies. Even for HP and Novell, running these outdated systems could become costly. Moving to one system, through one provider, would be more cost friendly for both the provide AND Symantec. They would no longer be paying for two separate, outdated services.

One problem that may arise when changing systems is management and the employees getting used to the new methods. That should not play as a large reason to not do it though, since even an upgrade with HP or Novell would require members of Symantec to get used to the new systems.

A larger issue that could arise is the transition from two systems to one completely different system. Initially this does look incredibly problematic, but with a transition plan in place these issues can be minimized. What they should do is contact the outside provider and work with them to get a plan to get their employees on the new system. Then for a period you overlap the old systems with the new and forward communications to the new systems. You also send out notifications to clients, so they are aware of the changes. It is extremely important to get this right because they did not

the first time and if it is just thrown at the employees, it will not function correctly

(Morgan 80).

Each problem that could possible arise has ways to be ready for and move past with a good plan in place. Allowing time for the transition to take place will benefit the company vastly and may possibly even save them money now, and in the long run.

Goldratt says it best when he lists companies' main focuses, with communication being one of them. He questions what the main focuses do and responds to himself with "They enable the company to make money" (Goldratt 47). Focusing on overhauling the communication services with one outsourced service would best serve Symantec.

Works Cited

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