Mars Incorporated Business and Marketing Analysis

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ISO 9001 and Product Recall Standards

ISO 9001 ensures that all products meet quality standards and requirements. Quality control of an organization makes sure that products are safe for the consumer and do not cause any harmful consequences. Sometimes, it is seen that a whole batch of products can be damaging and harmful to consumers. In this case, the batch is recalled to ensure that customers are safe from more potential damage. When products are called back, the company is responsible for rectifying the mistake. The company is responsible for satisfying its customers again.

Mars Chocolate Recall Overview

A product recall occurred when a batch of Mars chocolate that was manufactured in a factory in the Netherlands was called back. The chocolate had some harmful ingredients that were quite damaging to consumers. The whole batch was recalled to investigate what was wrong with the product. The product is already considered safe for the stomach and intestine. The product didn't contain any ingredient that was harmful to consumers, particularly children. But suddenly, it was discovered that particles of plastic were found in the chocolate. To deal with the issue, Mars chocolate was recalled. In January 2016, Mars Corporation found pieces of plastic in its chocolate bars. It was an alarming situation. The company had to recall its products to investigate the issue and avoid damage to its image.

Discovery of Plastic Contamination

On January 8, a customer in Germany complained that a piece of plastic was found in the chocolate bar. The customer registered the complaint with the company directly. As per the complaint, the company had violated ISO 9001, and serious actions could be taken against the company. Small pieces of red plastic were found in the chocolate bars. After investigating how they were included in the chocolate bar, Mars Corporation found out that these small pieces came from a cap of a pipe. The cap was unintentionally and mistakenly included in chocolate bars during the production process. The cap was ground, and small pieces of the cap were included in chocolate bars. Those small pieces were

detrimental to health. These pieces could get stuck in the throat, causing one to choke. The company instantly took action to rectify the serious mistake it had made (The Guardian, n.d.).

Scope of the Affected Product Batch

It was noticed that all products manufactured between the fifth of December 2016 and the eighteenth of January 2016 had plastic pieces mixed with the rest of the ingredients of chocolate bars. The batch of chocolates was manufactured in a Netherlands factory. The product was sold to about fifty-five countries. The entire batch was called back. The batch included about four million bars sold to about fifty-five countries. This was a large recall. The entire product line was recalled by Mars Corporation. The company recalled Minimax, Milky Chocolate, Snickers, Mars, and Celebrations back to the facility.

Corporate Response and Consumer Safety

The company took immediate action to deal with the issue. Although the recall incurred the cost of about ten million dollars, the company still preferred the health and safety of consumers over the cost of the recall. The company made sure that new batches of the product didn't contain any such ingredient and that they were safe for consumers. The company took immediate proactive action to rectify the mistake. I feel that this event caused damage to the reputation of the company. The production manager was responsible for overseeing the production process. The quality management was also responsible since it didn't check final products before they were shipped to customers. Quality management should have traced plastic pieces before customers had to discover them. I feel the huge recall affected the reputation of the company for delivering safe products. But instantly taking corrective action showed that the company paid serious attention to customer complaints (Hammar, 2016).

Quality Assurance Improvements

After the product was recalled, the entire production facility was rechecked so that such incidents wouldn't happen in the future. The production manager and quality assurance unit were given clear instructions on how to avoid such events in the future. The good thing that Mars Corporation has is the recall process. The recall process is fast and timely. A quick and responsive recall process assures consumers that the company would take serious action if they registered any complaints. The recall of the entire line of products causes a huge loss of sales. However, the timely corrective actions saved the company from disgruntled customers.

Lessons from the Mars Product Recall

The huge loss in sales and the cost of the product recall could have been avoided if the production managers and employees had avoided grinding the plastic cap into the chocolate ingredients. If the quality assurance team of Mars Corporation had already traced pieces of plastic in the batch before products were shipped to different countries, the huge cost of recall could have been curtailed. But the company responded very positively to customers' complaints. It instantly recalled the product and carried out a detailed investigation into why the event happened. The company also assured its consumers that such an event would not take place in the future. However, one negative impact the event left on consumers was that they refrained from purchasing products from Mars Corporation because the event was still fresh in the minds of customers.

References

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