Technology Management Plan Of Rustic Americana

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Abstract

Rustic Americana is a subsidiary company of Largo Corporation that deals in American heritage arts. Even though it has an eye-catching art collection, its sales have declined. This document outlines the plans to address the declining sales of Rustic Americana. An overview of its existing technological and human resources is provided. The company greatly depends on its call centre for sales and customer management. This leads to heavy call traffic, which causes network downtime. The business needs to realize the importance of a lost call as a lost sales opportunity and, thus, lost revenue. The plan outlines the existing strengths where proactive improvisation can improve functions. On the other hand, there is also a serious need to upgrade telephone lines and the customer management system. These issues have led to customer complaints regarding delayed order delivery and incorrect information. The business relies heavily on the call centre to address customer queries; therefore, the plan discusses how to use the existing resources more effectively along with much-needed upgrading. The company also needs to emphasize the practices that are morally and ethically suitable in the workplace.

Technology Management Plan

Introduction

Rustic Americana is a subsidiary company of Largo Corporation that works in both the physical and online space. The company sells artwork that represents the cultural heritage of various regions of the US. The company prides itself on its distinctive product line. The business facility houses all functions of the business, ranging from corporate management to warehouse, order shipping and call centre, under one roof. The call centre is the cornerstone of the company's direct marketing and sales. The company has a voice-over-internet protocol and dedicated servers for applications, direct mailing, and calls. The Unix server needs to be upgraded as inventory updating is an issue. The call centre has 40 workstations that are operated 24/7; however, during periods of increased call volume, the number of telephone lines is insufficient and leads to idle workers. The customer management system also needs to be upgraded to a customized version compared to the currently used generic version of

Oracle. This version is made in-house and lacks sophisticated integration and report generation. Largo Corporation is an environmentally sustainable corporation, and its subsidiary, Rustic Americana, follows sustainable practices.

Issue Matrix

Issue	People	Priority	Hardware/ resources
The inventory is not updated	Warehouse Customer service representative	High	IMS- inventory management system CMS- customer management system Bar code readers Outdated UNIX system for inventory management
Call volume high – brings the system down. Fewer lines than available agents Queued incoming calls – will be dropped after six rings.	Call centre	High	Telephone lines Cisco voice over Internet protocol Toll-free number auto-attend direct calls One server for call routing Second, server for voice mailing
Software not customized	IT department	high	Customer support software generic Oracle forms
Staff using data for movies and personal social media.	Call centre	Medium	One cable for calls and data – call overload, data goes down.
No, mobile devices are supported Wireless network options	Call Centre	medium	Wireless Network

Best Practices in IT Management

There is no doubt that technology integration is the modern method of increasing efficiencies and reducing costs in both the private and public sectors. Technology integration requires informed decision-making as it may put new management processes for quality and service delivery in place.

For the public and private sectors, technology is an investment; therefore, important information regarding the cost of technology vs the benefit of technology cannot be forsaken. If investment in technology does not improve the quality of service, reduce cost, and shorten the period of service delivery, it means that the technology systems are ill-designed (*GAOREPORTS-T-AIMD-97-38.Pdf*, n.d.).

For technology integration to be successful, it is utterly important to include the stakeholders or their feedback regarding the company process and interaction with technology. Customer feedback can be the quickest method to identify where the problem is, such as delayed customer service. Any contractors that are employed for the technology infrastructure should be reliable and consistent. Stable contractors can make all the difference in case of a service or hardware malfunction (*Gao-14-596t.Pdf*, n.d.).

A manager's vision is crucial to the organization, as it provides a sense of direction for all to perform their jobs. It can challenge the processes and bring the required change for enhanced quality and service delivery. However, respective departments should be allowed to make decisions as it leads to both ownership and accountability. Developing trust with the team as a manager is key to inspiring motivation (Witt, 2016).

A person in the organization operates in the context of relationships that they have with their customers, co-workers, society, and the employer. The processes and relationships within an organization need to follow an ethical and moral code. With technology growing as an essential element to organizations, clear communication of practices in terms of their moral and ethical importance should be communicated within the organization. Ethics refers to the obligation to behave in a way justified by the role. Ethics provide the foundation for morals and help in deciding what is right and wrong. Actions have consequences, and only moral actions can bring positive, happy consequences. In the technology-based work environment, carelessness with its usage can lead to moral or ethical issues, as general rules may not hold. Care must be taken regarding how technological resources and assets are utilized (*How Ethical Theories Apply to IT Professionals by Brannon C*, n.d.).

Operational Improvements

In most organizations, the problem may not be the availability of resources but their inefficient use. Another issue with an organization that declines in performance over time is its inability to make necessary investments, declaring them as costs. Rustic Americana handles native art and employs online and physical spaces to carry out its operations. The call centre is vital to its functions, where some major hiccups have appeared. To break it down, the first issue present is the need to upgrade the system so that the benefits of a client-server system can be reaped using a database server. Even though the CSR updates inventory on the IMS from their terminal, with the slow refresh rate, it does not appear to other CSRs and leads to incorrect information being given out to the customers. This

will lead to customer dissatisfaction with the overall experience of the organization. The IT department needs to take the lead on the matter of the required upgrade. The call centre is a key customer interaction point. Even with a brilliant catalogue, if incorrect information is provided, it can lead to poor customer-business relations (Sharp, 2003).

With dedicated servers for calls and mail, the issue is to improvise and make certain changes for the increased outcome. During periods of high call volume, there are fewer lines and more idle staff. This needs to be fixed as there are two losses here: one, during the downtime of the network and missed calls during high call volume, all potential orders are lost; two, the staff that is not attending the calls is not adding any value to the company. A stable vendor and an addition to the number of telephone lines are needed. Here, the ethical and moral responsibility also lies with the staff; the use of data for their personal purposes brings down the system, and they need to realize how much this hurts the company. This also requires putting into numbers the losses the company bears because of downtime. If upgrading the technology is an investment, its return cannot be justified without knowing how much loss is generated during the network failure. With the business considering the call centre as its strength, its manager needs to chalk out the ethical and moral work protocols and the minimum upgrade needed to improve the call centre so that it works at its optimum capacity. With the company already using computer telephony integration, ideas such as interactive voice response and cloud-based computing should be considered for eventual integration and seamless execution. With such options, the customers can also opt for a callback rather than waiting in queue to talk to the CSR (*Computer Telephony Integration: 12 Ways It Improves Customer Experience*, n.d.).

Currently, generic database forms are used for customer management; however, with cloud computing and the latest software that provides all-in-one functions, one cannot deny the importance of customized software that can not only provide required snapshots of employee performance but also integrate the customer data. The ‘homegrown’ version of this only provides basic functions and fails to provide high-level integration; therefore, this needs to be outsourced for an improved version. The role of mobile devices cannot be overlooked but can be a medium-term goal depending on improved hardware and software resources.

Conclusion

The rationale of call centres is to increase the value of the customer experience, but with existing practices, it is doing the reverse for Rustic Americana. Delayed orders and incorrect information lead to poor customer service, which no other business can mend. Businesses thrive on the good word of the customers. With ever-increasing uncertainty and growing reliance on online business models, poor service will be a disaster. As Rustic Americana is already facing declining sales and complaints, the company cannot turn a blind eye towards the issues. It is vital to improve and upgrade the call centre on a priority basis. Equally essential is the moral and ethical conduct of the employees.

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