Business Decision Making Project Part 1

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In the business world, it is inevitable for a problem or issue to arise. It is up to management and its staff to come up with a solution to solve the problem. There are number of ways that an issue can be resolved, but before coming up with a solution or admitting that there is a problem, important data must be gathered. With the data that is gathered, it is then that management or leadership is able to start coming up with solutions that work best for the business. A good example of this can be seen with Apple Inc. Apple has seen its ups and downs throughout the years and have come up with ways to try and solve them. According to Rene Ritchie, in 2016 Apple faced some real problems that had to be addressed in 2017. The problems included shipping, the horn effect, services experience, and what’s NeXT (2016). In the following discussion, we will discuss the company, the problem, research variables, methods of collecting data, and the analyzation of the data collection methods.

**Apple Inc.**

Apple Inc. is an American technology company that specializes in the design, development, and selling of consumer electronics, computer software, and online services. It was founded in April 1, 1976, in Cupertino, California by Steven Jobs, Ronald Wayne, and Stephen Wozniak (CNN Money, 2017).Apple is most famously known for its iPhone, iPad, Macintosh computers, and apple watches. It was the first successful personal computer company and the popularizer of the graphical user interface (Levy, 2017).Apple had it start in Steven Jobs garage, with the help of Stephen Wozniak. Their first model came out in 1977, which was a stand-alone machine in a custom-moldedplastic case, color display, and other features (Levy, 2017). Steven Jobs understood that in order for the company to grow, it would require great leadership and management. Steve Jobs recruited Regis McKenna, a well-known public relations specialist, to represent the company and secured an investment from Michael Markkula (Levy, 2017). Apple became an instant success when Wozniak invented a disk controller that allowed for information storage and retrieval. Apple established a commanding presence among educational institutions, contributing to its platform’s dominance of primary-school software well into the 1990’s (Levy, 2017). Apple continued to flourish with the launching of its popular products, like the iPod and iPhone. All this success does bring up problems and concerns that need to be addressed for the company to continue to see growth and success. Some problems this company faces are shipping, the horn effect, services experience, and what’s NeXT.

**Shipping**

Steven Jobs favorite saying was, “great artists ship” (Ritchie, 2016). Current CEO, Tim Cook, and COO, Jeff Williams, have pride themselves in the logistics and supply chain management. Lately, in this area they have been plagued by problems. Apple has been plagued by supply problems, like the Apple Pencil, iPhone SE, iPhone 7 Plus, Apple Watch Series 2, and AirPods. This can be due to inaccurate demand forecasting, higher component constraints, or lower yields than expected (Ritchie, 2016). Some problemis related to last minute issues, changes, resources, and priorities(Ritchie, 2016). This can cause for Apple to not sell as many products as they should. In turn, this can make for a bad customer experience.

**The Horn Effect**

Apple is known for its many products that it creates. Its most popular product is the iPhone. It makes more money from the iPhone in a month than they make from Mac all year (Ritchie, 2016). This does not mean that neither of their other products are important, but just not the main focus. There has been a lack of updates on the Mac Pro, Mac Mini, and iMac. Apple's last major updates also made all of those computers into computing appliances, unable to be updated(Ritchie, 2016). With the lack of updates for these products, the consumer is having to get them from other companies. With the horn effect, it could break apart a lot of hard-won gains Apple’s made over the last decade (Ritchie, 2016).

**Services Experience**

Apple has been failing in its services experience. The company is known and famous for sweating every detail from the packaging to the pristine picture. According to Rene Ritchi,services has had to transform from content contract negotiation and file delivery to a range of businesses vaster and more complex than perhaps any other organization (2016). It should enhance and make delightful the experience by including a high-profile, public-facing vice president of services experience.

**What’s NeXT**

NeXT was able to get Steven Jobs further. NeXT and a few other key technologies and insights perfectly positioned Apple to ride the mobile revolution into unprecedented success (Ritchie, 2016). With NeXT, Apple was able to obtain macOS, and eventually, iOS, watchOS, and tvOS. With the current iPhone, watch, and Apple TV the technology behind them will reach its limit and can take them no further (Ritchie, 2016).This causes a major concern as it can cause for the company to not go any further in the business. Apple will need the next NeXT, and the next big insight, to ride that next wave (Ritchie, 2016).

**Research And Data**

As previously mentioned, one of the main problems that plagues Apple Inc. is its shipping of products. This can be due to last minute issues, changes, resources, and priorities. For this research, the focus would be put on why they are having this issue. One of the most noted problem is the last-minute issues they seem to be facing when launching a new product(s). A good example can be seen with the latest release of the new iPhone 8. According to Mike Wuerthele, “Timothy Arcuri from Cowen & Company issued a note to investors saying that Apple is still working on increasing yield issues in the Touch ID solution and possible issues with the layered motherboard” (2017). This issue will push the mass production from the normal July or August timeframe to October or November (Wuerthele, 2017).

For the qualitative data research, there are multiple methods that would help in the collection of this shipping issue data. The first method, face-to-face personal interviews, is the process of collecting data directly from the subject on a one-on-one and face-to-face interaction (Anastasia, 2017). Qualitative surveys are another good method in collecting data. It includes paper surveys, questionnaires, or web-based questionnaires. Questionnaires often utilizes a structure comprised of short open-ended questions that require the respondents to provide detailed answers (Anastasia, 2017).

In analyzing the methods of gathering data, face-to-face interviews is an excellent choice in obtaining the information needed. In this format, the interviewer is able to probe further by asking follow-up questions and getting more information in the process (Anastasia, 2017). The data would be highly personalized when using this approach. It is important that the one who is conducting the interview have good skills in order to elicit the response that is needed. Finally, with this method the interviewer is able to have an accurate screening. The individual that is being interviewed is unable to provide false information, but the data would be inaccurate and misleading which can lead to hurting the business.

**Conclusion**

All businesses face problems and situations that effect the day-to-day business. Apple Inc., as popular as it is, faces issues every year when launching new product(s). Some current problems it faces include shipping issues, the horn effect, services experience, and what’s NeXT. The collection of data is important in understanding the who, what, and why the situation is occurring. With face-to-face interviews and questionnaires, it can bring up a better understanding and solution to solve or prevent the problem. In turn the business grows, profits increase, and clients have a better experience.

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