

Management Consultancy Report for VTech

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Vtech Introduction

- A Canadian technology company providing integrated video intelligence solutions to North American and European markets
- Operation based at three different locations
 - Headquarter + R&D: Canada
 - Sales & marketing: USA
 - Software development: Vietnam
- Supplier: Taiwan & S. Korea

Brief illustrations on products

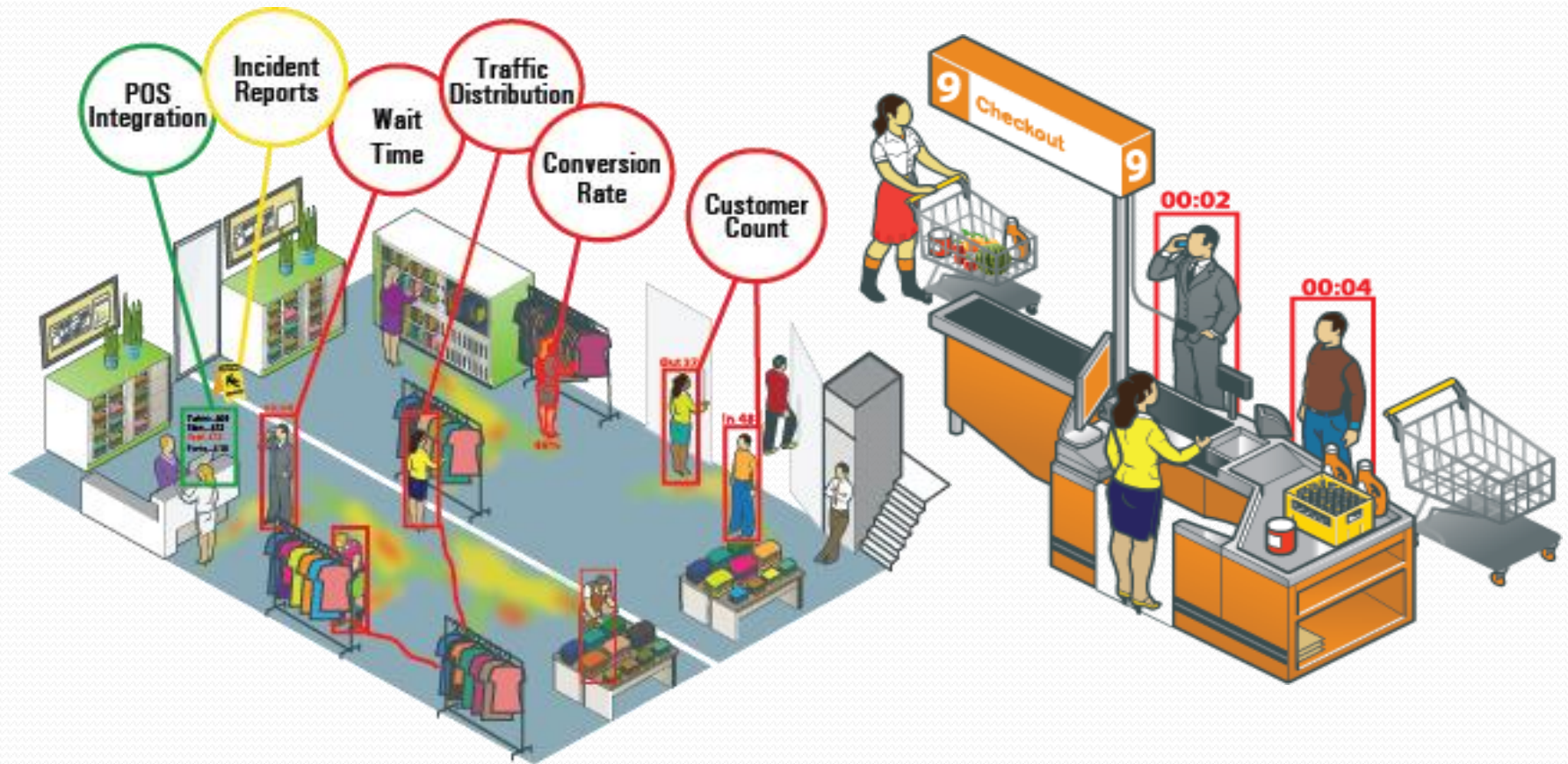


Image source: taken from the real company website

Issues within VTech 1

- Language barriers
 - between Vietnam and North America
 - Vietnam team speaks Vietnamese at work, writes in English
 - North American team uses a lot of jargons
 - within R&D team in head office
 - between R&D team and North Americans
- Result: cost rising due to miscommunications

Issues within VTech 2

- Technical gap:
 - No similar video surveillance system available in Vietnam and no simulation available to VN team
 - Software development team can't see the big picture
 - VN team members can only access the limited information pertain to their own parts of work
- Communication media
 - Emails
 - Skype

Issues within VTech 3

- Cultural difference
 - Vietnam vs North America
 - Vietnam:
 - avoid direct confrontation
 - Circle around the problems
 - Need to see the big picture
 - North America
 - Concise and direct, speak right on the point
 - Discuss issues openly
 - Tend to address specifics
 - Within the R&D team
 - Team members are from four different countries
 - Different cultures, different approaches to solving a problem

Issues within VTech 4

- Leadership
 - Weak leadership in Vietnam team
 - The project coordinator has no management experience
 - experiences the culture conflicts herself
 - Obsessed with her own ideas, no knowledge of active listening skills

Addressing the Managerial Issues

- Language Enhancement
- Knowledge Equalization
- Culture Endorsement

Language Enhancement

- Policy
 - Use English as the only and official language
 - Make English the basic requirement for recruitment
 - Hire 10%-20% native English speaking staff

Language Enhancement

- English training
 - Exchange work locations among the branches
 - Invite English experts
 - Annual English competition
- English assessment quarterly
 - Basic request for promotion
 - Be a performance indicator

Knowledge Equalization

- Share the same work platform--ERP (Enterprise Resource Planning)
 - The same standards and management style
 - The same pre-defined process
 - Share the latest information.

Knowledge Equalization

- Technology training at headquarter
 - Emerging technologies, professional regulations, policies and work procedures
 - Training of staff from the different branches
 - Join the practice of VTech family centralization
 - Observe the serious attitude toward VTech's values

Knowledge Equalization

- A powerful marketing team in Canada
 - Co-operate with R&D/AR&D/sales teams
 - Analyze the facial/innate customer needs
 - Provide the current/potential product profiles
 - Direct sales team to accomplish target

Culture Endorsement

- Understand and appreciate individual differences
 - Managers carry out self-awareness activities
 - Understand themselves as an individual
 - Carry out similar self-awareness activities for their employees.

Culture Endorsement

- Create “Family-centered” culture
Nurture it into vision, mission, HR policy and visual identity
 - VTech’s Vision Statement
 - To be a leader in integrated video solutions
 - Mission Statement
 - Innovative, integrated and intelligent video products
 - Optimize its Visual Identity
 - Staff appreciate every detail of Vtech work environment

Culture Endorsement

- Budget to support “family-centered” culture
- Publish VTech Family-centered Culture Magazine
 - Introduce the different cultures
 - Highlight and fuse employees cultures
- Inter-branch training
 - Integrate cultural activities with the training
 - Each branch takes turn to host the event
 - Cultural activities on the final day of the training programs, among branches.

Culture Endorsement

- Assessment of “family-centered” culture
 - Set up an assessment system
 - Get the support from external consultants

Team communication - Roles

- Hughes, Ginnett, and Curphy “5” effective roles:
 - Clear mission and high performance standards
 - Leaders spend time assessing their technical skills
 - Leaders secure resources and equipment
 - Effective leaders spend time on planning and organizing
 - High levels of communication help to minimize interpersonal conflicts

Team communication - Solutions

- Define roles and identify problems
- Address conflicts openly and directly
- In meetings, ensure and reiterate the main points
- Create a teamwork bulletin board, internet msg board, email, team group and member email account, newsgroup, newsletter and blogs

Team communication - Solutions

- Visual messages at strategic positions
- The management and team leaders should listen to their team members. Supportive communication/listening (Whetten & Cameron)
- Implement recognition and/or motivation programs

Positive feedback

- VTech staff loves the staff exchange program.
- First VTech Family-centered Culture Magazine has been published to reflect employees' cultures and the staff exchange program.
- Consulting team has collected more than 60% positive feedback from staff members on recent changes.

Improvements for the future

- Practicing and leading positive changes

Yes

- Focusing on training for the managerial staff



The End



Thank you.