Introduction to operations and supply chain management

Engineering

Case Study: Green Reverse Logistics in the Electronics Industry Number Question The first stakeholders to benefit from the recycling and refurbishment of the electronic products are the electronic manufacturers including Samsung and its business partners in other industries such as jewelry. This is especially true because the “ take-back” programs enable the companies to have access to cheaper and more easily available raw materials obtained from recycling of plastics and circuit boards. The second group of stakeholders set to benefit is the societies using the electronics. This group would benefit from the Green Reverse Logistics by having electronics products that would otherwise pose health risks in landfills, being taken back to the factory to leave the lands free for other economic activities (Partridge, 2010).

Thirdly, the specific consumers usually benefit from better, more functional electronic products by replacing their outdated versions with new ones. Finally, by absorbing the waste plastics and circuit boards of dysfunctional products, Samsung is technically saving the relevant governments of resources which would otherwise be used to maintain an eco-friendly environment (Partridge, 2010). This implies the electronics manufacturer has technically eliminated the need for governments in charge of its markets to create awareness on the need for environmental conservation and or to set up waste recycling plants such as plastic incinerators.

According to Partridge (2010), building sustainable supply chains differs from good business practices because the former is more comprehensive. Sustainable supply chains involves incorporating ecologically and financially worthwhile practices in the core of supply chain processes, from R&D stages,

to raw material selection, to production, packaging, haulage, storage, delivery, consumption and disposal. In contrast, good business practices are rather secondary to the production and supply of products.

Question # 2

Samsung would still have implemented the Take Back and Recycling programs in markets where there are limited regulations, as a way of capping costs of production and keeping in pace with rapidly evolving technologies in the electronics industry. As Partridge (2010) noted, technology and electronic products are normally affected the most by rapid development of more sophisticated gadgetry. Constant evolution of technologies would have pushed Samsung into adopting Take Back and Recycling program on the basis of keeping the cost of production and distribution considering that procuring new supplies is usually costlier. The same case applies to ATCLE, whose refurbishment policy is even clearer. Out of the need to maintain cost overruns at their lowest level, the company has set up collection points for products which the consumers no longer need with a view to retrofit, repair or remove functional parts of products for use in manufacturing new products. Brian Morris is categorical that ATCLE takes back outdated and worn-out products because it is aware that the unwanted products would be beneficial to it cost-wise either as a whole or in parts particularly for products whose refurbishment would be unreasonably costly (Partridge, 2010).

Question # 3

I believe sustainability will become a core measure of operations and supply chain management alongside cost, quality and delivery because it has

substantial impact on the latter factors. Sustainable supply chain controls and practices will enable organizations to not just limit their overall expenditure and carbon footprint in the fight against global warming, but also in optimizing their distribution and consumption practices so as to realize sustainable profitability. As such, companies with highest sustainable policies will be ranked best in terms of supply chain performance.

Reference

Partridge, A. R., (2010). Green Reverse Logistics Brings Many Happy Returns. Retrieved from