

Jess westerly at kauflauf gmbh essay



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Before joining Kafuffle, Westerly had held a similar position with a rapidly growing CRM software service provider in the United States, where she had demonstrated great she was recruited by Kafuffle. Tim Order was especially impressed with her analytical capabilities and her keen grasp of market evolution.

Her background included a bachelor's degree in computer science, a joint master's degree in systems design and marketing, and two years' experience with Microsoft before graduate school. She was drawn to the opportunity at Kafuffle because it seemed to combine her interests in computers, management, and international business.

She turned 29 in February 2011 and moved to Heidelberg in March to begin her career at Kafuffle. Nester's joined the other new managerial hires in a rigorous two-month orientation program at Kafuffles Heidelberg headquarters, followed by several weeks visiting Erns in the field. During this time she gained a sense of the corporate culture, which was deeply imprinted despite the relatively short time since Kafuffles founding. In addition to spending their first two months at headquarters, all management-level employees returned there for annual conferences and other events.

Nester's was struck by how solution-oriented and relationship-driven the organization was and the extent to which its culture emphasized norms of collaboration, technical excellence, and mutual respect. She had also never been in an organization that was as anarchically or in which informal networks were so key to getting things done across divisions. Colleagues

repeatedly described the Kafuffle culture as unique and pervasive. Many joked that “ no matter where in the Enroll you live, if you work for Kafuffle you live in Heidelberg.

She also noticed that Kafuffles field consultants were spending a large portion of their time n relatively small accounts. Her detailed calculations showed that shifting toward larger customers with larger user groups would eventually yield higher profit margins for Kafuffle. (Each individual user increased the revenue stream from a subscription client, but required only minuscule additional development and/or storage costs.) Eager to test her findings, she started working on a proposal during her orientation.

She gathered extensive data to support her idea, and validated it by talking with several people inside the company as well as with classmates and former colleagues reduce owner for CRM applications in the computer and office supplies group. Shortly thereafter she sent out her ill-fated memo to the field sales force.

Kafuffle Gumbo Rhea subscription software-as-a-service model was in its infancy when Kafuffle’s founders left SAP to start the new company in 2002. SAP was a top-tier global provider of turnkey hardware and software solutions for customers seeking the most up-to-date enterprise management systems.

In contrast, subscription software, like Kafuffles, ran on clients’ existing hardware and Internet connections, using cloud- based software and data storage facilities. This required a much smaller initial investment by the customer and all but eliminated internal software maintenance expense,

which was covered in monthly subscription fees. Additionally, the subscription model promised continuous software updates to meet customers' emerging needs. The founders positioned Kafuffle to disrupt established firms like SAP and Oracle, beginning with CRM applications created largely for German auto parts manufacturers.

They set up shop in Heidelberg, a university town north of SAP's headquarters in Walldorf, and before long began expanding to other industries and industries operating across the globe. The venture offered a broad range of CRM and ERP (enterprise resource planning) products to a customer list that ranged from auto parts manufacturers and distributors to providers of computer and office products and, more recently, suppliers of medical devices. Kafuffle's open platforms allowed existing customers and new adopters to develop their own applications alongside the company's regular releases.

The earliest developers and sales specialists were a small group of former SAP employees and computer engineering graduates; almost all of them German men. Together they created a culture hardheaded by small-company friendliness and deep pride in superior software engineering. Kafuffle emulated the youth-oriented, anti-hierarchical ethos of many successful Silicon Valley startups.

Most employees considered the resulting work atmosphere an important part of their professional image and experience.

Nevertheless, over time, the company's private investors began to insist on more structure and stricter controls. As a result, after about two years, a few

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“grown-ups,” including Christofis and van Horn, were brought in to build a sales and marketing capacity as powerful as the product development team. The two also served in the office of the CEO along with the Director of Development/Customer Support and the two founders, who were now respectively CEO and Managing Director. Strong incumbents such as SAP and Oracle represented the early competition for Kafuffles disruptive software solutions.