

Leo burnett company: virtual team management



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Leo Burnett's (LB) Forever Young global advertising and communication team reported success in Taiwanese market but it was the Canadian market where the team faced difficulties through the different stages of the launch process. Team's poor performance in the Canadian market could be attributed to lack in coordination between LB's London and Toronto team, ineffective project management of customer requests and team resources. A prime reason that affected the team's performance was the missing direct communication protocol between the creative team from London and Toronto offices.

In the present state of the project, it is advised that decentralization of the work be done . The tasks should be assigned similar to the traditional format but with little more involvement of the London team for the Canadian market.

Problems in Output for Canadian Market

The decision to have traditional and non-traditional advertising products for the Canadian market of the campaign divided between the London and Toronto offices respectively was good because this helped to minimize the

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overlap of the work across the two offices. The problem faced in this task assignment was that a miscommunication was created between the team at the two cities about the creative work that was developed at each end. The ideas and concept that was developed by Toronto team weren't incorporated by the team at London. The lag in communication between the team members created distances which affected the work. The team at Toronto didn't wait for the material from the London team to develop the direct marketing material which affected the consistency in the marketing material for the direct marketing and print.

The work assigned to LB's Toronto office required coordination with Ontann Beauty Care(OBC) London and Toronto branch. The website development work required interacting with OBC's London team while the direct marketing work required contacting OBC's Toronto team. The problem from this type of communication between LB's Toronto team and client team was that the work requirements varied between the client teams which resulted in alterations to the marketing material. These alterations were caused due to ineffective client requirement management by LB's team resulting in inconsistency between website and direct marketing material for the client customers.

When the LB's Forever Young global advertising and communication team was planning for the recovery plan for Canadian market, the risks involved were higher with the two teams working on the same task at London and Toronto offices. The difficulties that the team faced were the shortage of time to deliver a final product and the level of information that the two mass media adverting teams had about the product and Canadian market for <https://assignbuster.com/leo-burnett-company-virtual-team-management/>

which the creative concept was designed. The team at London was more aware of the OBC's product features while the team at Toronto was more knowledgeable on the Canadian consumer behavior and preferences.

An unfortunate part of the problem was that key members of the project from both LB and OBC have stepped down from their respective positions. These executives have left at a time when the project wasn't doing good and a lot more coordination and team work was required to make the corrections. These personnel changes affected the communication link within LB and between LB and OBC team. The problem that the team faced at this stage was that the information exchange between the leaving employees wasn't effective to manage the coordination and communication that would be required between LB's offices and also between LB and OBC.

Reasons for Problems

The creative tasks that were distributed between the team at LB's London and Toronto office needed direct communication protocol. A direct communication between the creative directors of the team in the two offices would have helped develop more coordination and cooperation between the team at both locations. The communication protocol that existed involved account supervisor and directors from Toronto and London office. This long communication link caused delay plus the absence of coordination of work between the print and direct marketing material team affected the quality of the product that was designed. The differences between the team members at London and Toronto increased further as there was an absence of face to face interaction. LB's senior management of the project at London didn't try to maintain the level of communication that was required to build the

togetherness in the team towards the project objectives and failed to have a feedback mechanism for the product development.

New executives who were replacing Davids and Forin will require time to establish the understanding and coordination. No face to face meetings or interactions were scheduled to simplify the transfer of these positions. An effective project management for reorganizing the teams and establishing coordination between the team would have helped.

Future Actions

As the global account director for LB's Forever Young global advertising and communication team, I would like to decentralize the team going forward. It would in the best interest of this project that the tasks are assigned in the traditional format.

OBC has decided to decentralize which would mean that the client's local offices would have much more authority thereby it would be important to have an effective coordination at the local level. LB's team should also be decentralized to work effectively with the clients and maintain a cost effectiveness of the project. Maintaining a centralized team structure LB team would add to the project expenses for coordination with the client's local team. The turnaround time for any information would increase LB's team is centralized while OBC's team is decentralized.

LB's Toronto office has the necessary skill set for development for the creative material. The team at Toronto office also has the skills which were missing at the London Branch. With the experience from the failure of the Canadian National Launch, one lesson learnt is that assessing that Canadian

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consumer is closely related to the other Western cultures would be wrong. It would be important to have the mass media marketing done using the local marketing expertise to deliver a product with higher probability of success. These are other factors that suggest decentralizing is likely to give desired results.

The team from London office is also equally important for LB in this project. It should be involved extensively with the team at Toronto because of the high importance of this project to LB. More authority should be handed over to the local team to decide on the Canadian marketing plan. The team from London should act as the global team for this project having the rights to review the marketing material.

It would be highly recommended that MBI process is incorporated to enhance the performance of the team going forward. The MBI process would help in building the coordination across the team members who would be spread across different countries. Using the Mapping process of the MBI process, each time the team members would be added to the team, the differences and attributes of the team members could be reviewed to understand what are their cognitive preferences and cultural assumptions.

As suggested knowledge gained from mapping would help to bridge via preparing the foundation. Bridging the team members would help build the oneness and team spirit that is highly advantageous when working in virtual teams. Bridging via preparing the foundation would most likely be needed but after that either decentering or recentering would be required based on the previous experience with the person and personal attributes.

Recentering would help a lot to LB because of the work that is involved in creative services. Coming to a common idea and common rules of interaction would be needed. Some of these would be needed not just within the LB employees but also between LB employees and OBC's local officials.

Once mapping and bridging is done, integrating is likely to be achieved with further efforts. Bridging itself would solve some of the problems but conflicts are likely to emerge but managing participation, resolving conflicts and building on ideas would be achieved on integrating.

Looking at the MBI process it is clear that this process does resolve the coordination and communication issues that the LB's team had experienced in the project execution in Canada. Opting for MBI process promises enhanced results from the team.

Conclusion

LB's team working on the global marketing and communication plan for OBC's Forever Young product succeeded in one country but fared poorly in the other due to communication and management issues at LB's end. Opting for more effective virtual team management via additional communication between the distributed geographical teams would have changed the project status. It is recommended that decentralizing the work assignment and team structure would still get LB team to success in Canada.