

A case study of ray
ozzie software
strategist marketing
essay



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Ray Ozzie was the known to play a major role at the lotus notes before he became the Chief Software Architect of the Microsoft team (Microsoft, 2010). In 2005, he aimed to “ webify” Microsoft in order to level up with the wide use of internet and search engines such as Yahoo! and Google. He had to create a management strategy in order to find out the best way to share the information through his colleagues and be able to sum up the ideas on how to maintain the revenues of the company. The case study, “ Ray Ozzie, Software Strategist”, relates with the everyday processes, practices and activities that are involved in creating a strategy.

Why was the Semiahmoo retreat not successful in creating sustained momentum around the issue of Microsoft’s core?

The March retreat of the company’s top 110 or so executives including Bill Gates was not successful because they failed to discuss the key factors about the Microsoft’s core. It is said that the company relied on selling proprietary software straight to users or to the manufacturers of computer for pre-installation on machines. However, the strategy was being challenged by free open-source software like linux and web- based companies whose software was free off the internet and supported by advertising such as Google or Yahoo!. This seemed to leave the company behind the emerging software that offers free access over the internet and is able to use by the customers directly. The company’s processes of reaching the market have had difficulties most especially the shipping of products.

Retreat at Semiahmoo was not able to initiate a clear discussion of the things that Microsoft has to do in order to get back to the emerging

companies in the Information Technology industry today. They have got breakout sessions in order to brainstorm various strategic issues and it was observed that the people within the company relate to Bill. It appeared to be more of a team building for the executives and the group refused to organise the issues covering the strategy or the issue of the Microsoft's core. They argued it was untimely and likely to cause unnecessary apprehension to engage more people as it involves the past strategies. Thus, the momentum from the retreat on Semiahmoo did not have enough space to tackle the said issue.

The importance of focus on the processes and practices with regard to the activities of the company is given much attention rather than the issue of sustaining the strategy for selling products in a unique manner (Christensen, 1997). The practice of strategy involves the important components of how the organisation manages its people and links the outcomes from strategising events, activities, meetings and other. In addition to, the focus of the group went to the attraction of the place, perhaps, and the experience to bond with each other. The strategic challenge that Microsoft was facing was not clearly defined as well. The team relied on the past strategy and thought it was irrelevant to review. The retreat ended without accomplishing what was really tasked to do because the team overlooked the criticisms about the past strategies without realising that it is important to be able to figure out what specific changes to focus on or where exactly they should concentrate.

Why was Ozzie more successful in creating follow-on action after the

Robinswood retreat?

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After the Semiahmoo retreat, the company had a second retreat because the first attempt to create a strategy for the Microsoft's core evaporated. Ozzie took charge of the second retreat and it was successful. Although Ozzie have not tried working intimately with the team, he took his chance on delivering and defining the strategic challenge that the company was facing. The retreat was held as Robinswood house where in it appeared to be substandard unlike the Semiahmoo retreat. Ozzie provided a 51- page memo beforehand that describes his diagnosis of the strategic challenge facing Microsoft. He detailed out the challenges for the company through his friendly mood and did not confront anyone with the past mistakes of the company. He opened up a discussion through an invigorating exercise about the unfavourable things happening in the present technical and organisational strategy of the company (Fried, 2009). Thus, it gave the team a chance to speak up and raise the issues with regard to the mistakes of the company on its operations most especially the issues that they have to solve most especially the fluctuating revenues of Microsoft. The meeting resulted on a more intense discussion with the team about the future strategies that could benefit the organisation. A progress was made although a good deal of controversy was still present.

Furthermore, Ozzie put a highlight on the changing environment and the importance of service to the clients. The communications technologies have drastically developed into a more convenient form. In the modern world, the people pay much attention to the interaction with the company and its products and services and how they are able to use in a simple way. The businesses are directly reaching the customers with lower costs and provide

a great service. Technology companies are now practicing ways to sell the products without the hassle of shipping and most importantly with lower costs such as downloading the application directly from the website supported by advertisements and the like.

As Ozzie have seen, Microsoft is not developing a strategy on how to compete within the industry most especially the strategy of advertising-supported services and software over the internet. The strategy depicts innovation and gives the foundation for the web developers to improve and develop the services to the customers. Microsoft has to embrace this kind of business strategy in order to come up with a more practical way to reach and interact with the market and benefit the company with remarkable revenue.

The company have to reflect on its past mistakes and relate to the present environment to be able to emerge with what is going in the market. The leadership responsibilities, strengths and weaknesses of the company should be discussed in a genial manner so an immediate response from the team could result to a better strategy to solve the challenges. The business might be at risk if the team fails to handle the dilemma accordingly and did not maintain an open communication (Levy, 2008).

Comment on Ozzie's communications strategy with regard to the Internet Services Disruption.

The communication strategy of Ozzie is indeed a good way to reach the executive staff and he explained clearly what his goals are for the company.

According to the memo, he has a lot of positive reasons to innovate more
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with regard to the strategic challenge that the company is facing. He delivered the memo very well such as stating that the leaders understand the efficiency of eradicating the hindrances on developing products. Reorganisation is considered to be an important step for improving the alertness of the company (Ozzie, 2005). He maintained a positive outlook on the past strategy of the company although it prevailed to put the business at risk. He still considered past strategies to start the development of the company on what he aims on his recent strategies. It is a very good way to motivate the organisation to move on to the next stage and be able to encourage them to participate and work accordingly.

His idea of differentiating the strategy from the past developments of the company made it significant to understand the whole point. He immediately perceived the feedbacks of the readers so he addressed, in advanced, the possible doubts of the readers of his memo. Ozzie continues to innovate as he mentioned a continuous change every five years for the company to cope with the changing environment of the market considering that technology is growing rapidly.

His focus on the recent strategic issues gives the memo a clearer objective to increase the motivation for the team to work well on creating new products and continuously creating a solution to the challenges. Ozzie is catered to the transformation of the company into a more user-friendly and interactive to reach the customers, partners and other for bigger opportunities (Ozzie, 2005). Thus, Ozzie's communication strategy promotes a vision and a set of well- defined goals and objective that makes a

dependable leader to integrate the varied activities and ideas of the whole team.

Conclusion

Ray Ozzie worked well on the creation of new strategies for the Microsoft such as going live and being more interactive with its users. Advertising-supported software and other internet-based applications are emerging in the market and are doing well with its revenues. The techniques of internet advertising have drastically affected by the innovations on technology. The use of broadband is considered to be a blanket for the market starting from the purchase of the computer up to the installation of its software and applications. Hence, it calls for an extensive innovation for Microsoft to comprehend with the use of the World Wide Web.