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Montego Video Games: A Study on Ethics

Ethics deals with a person's judgment of what is right and wrong. Speaking of workplace ethics, it is a study of proper business policies and practices regarding several work related issues. Broadly speaking, it is a way in which the company conducts its business with its external and internal stakeholders like customers, employees, investors and creditors. This case deals with Montego Video game's foray into child-education market. It has started selling an education game called Sequence Enhancer. Within this games are hidden games that children can access easily. Some of those hidden games are explicitly violent, some depict crime as a good activity and others show police men robbing people, beating them and other illegal acts. Speaking from an ethical point of view, these hidden games of Sequence Enhancer are definitely not meant for the educational market. It would not be ethically right for Montego video games to market this game as an educational tool because the company must remain honest, trustworthy and credible to its consumers. The fact that Montego is marketing Sequence Enhancer as an educational tool and that it has several hidden games which promote violence, is not correct. It questions the honesty and credibility of the company in achieving what it wants. A parent would buy this game for his child, thinking it to be as an educational tool, but it would turn out later that the game is filled with violence and illegal acts which would not be suitable for children. This would be a breach of trust on the part of Montego video games and it could face some severe backlash from the market. There are ratings given to video games when they are marketed, an educational game like ' Sequence Enhancer' should receive a ' universal

rating’, but due to its violent content, it would receive a ‘ Mature rating’. When any customer would go to buy an educational video game and will come across Sequence Enhancer, he might notice the ‘ mature content’ rating on the game cover. This would create a doubt in the customer’s mind regarding the authenticity and credibility of the game and the game creators. “ The game is for educational purpose and it is for mature audience, how is it possible? Are these people authentic? Is this company honest? Why do companies, in order to increase their sales, take such desperate steps”? Such questions would be asked by people and Montego would have to answer these. This would severely dent the company’s image in the market, and might also affect the sales of its other video games. Apart from this, the company’s might be faced with several oppositions from parent groups and associations for promoting violence and providing misleading information.

Failure to abide by the rules and regulations pertaining to marketing and promoting the products: There are several rules and regulations that companies have to follow for marketing their products, failure to do so might result in litigations from its customers or by the concerned local authorities. Apart from this, Montego video games must introspect and realise why it present in the video games market? Is it for the entertainment and overall development of children? Or was it to only earn profits? The company could sustain in a long run if it adopts the first strategy as children from 14 to 21 years were the biggest users of its video games (around 75% of its total video game sales). It was obvious that the company must be honest to these users, misleading them with an educational tool that has violent content was

ethically wrong. Moreover, it would not result in good sales because people who would buy the video game would not be interested in violent and entertainment based games. It would result in bad publicity and result in poor sales.

Conclusion

Ethical decision making process involves participation of employees and related stake holders. Primary aim of ethical decision making process is to do what is right and establish credibility in front of all the stakeholders, external or internal. It is needed to create trust and respect in the business as well as social circles. Montego team have two options in order to improve sales and gain goodwill from its customers. It can change the ‘ genre’ and ‘ title’ of Sequence Enhancer; it can remove the ‘ education’ tag from the video game and place it under ‘ mature entertainment’. Or, it can remove the hidden games from Sequence enhancer and again promote it as an educational tool. It must engage in a PR campaign that would improve its image and get it back on track.