



Decathlon USA Beats #1 Competitor in 1 Year

Organization Description

- Decathlon, headquartered in France, is the world's leading sporting goods retailer with over 320 stores in Europe, Africa, Asia, South America and North America. Decathlon made its debut in USA with the purchase of MVP Sports' 20 New England Stores.
- Twelve-person Senior Management Team, 32 next-level Managers/Store Managers.
- Work force of various cultures, nationalities, ages and professional specialties.

Situation

- Integration issues overwhelming the management and workforce during intense retail seasons. Lingering cultural differences causing many problems at other times.
- Conversion of MVP Sports New England, local store mentality to a global, world-class approach was alienating customers and employees. Turnover was steadily increasing and customer loyalty was diminishing.
- French leadership miscalculated the US associate need to be involved, be respected and make situational customer decisions...resulting in a general unwillingness to transform the stores into retail experiences that paralleled the global Decathlon.
- Business, margins, profitability was eroding so quickly that the CEO need to take immediate action to right the ship.

Approach/Process

- Senior Management agreed to participate in an "all-out" effort to turn around the business in time for the critical holiday season. Key Senior Managers agreed to be team members, but not team leaders. Other Senior Managers agreed to help remove barriers and assist in implementing the team's recommendations.
- Five Fast (90 day) Teams were organized and simultaneous kicked-off in a 2 ½ day workshop to address customer, leadership, sales, distribution and operating policy needs/opportunities/issues.
- Each Team presented their mission, objectives, a thirty-day progress report and the opportunities for involvement to Senior Management and then at a company-wide meeting. Associates were encouraged to participate in this cross-functional, cross-cultural effort.
- Implementation teams began aggressive, intense action, transforming some stores over a weekend.

Outcomes

- Successful movement toward Enterprise Goals was measured in terms of specific customer, product, distribution, team and market achievements.
- A somewhat demoralized management group was energized by the business and organizational results achieved in 90 days. They renewed their commitment to make the MVP acquisition work.
- A corporate wide project team called Team USA was created to accelerate the transition from MVP to Decathlon USA. Team USA focused on delivering and implementing key functional projects to provide Decathlon USA with the revenue, profit, and customer support needed to demonstrate the viability of the Decathlon concept in the US market.
- All the efforts worked. The 'Spirit Effort' kept people engaged during difficult times.

Business Results

- Our 'Members Only' night generated revenues of 350% of goal. We are achieving things we never thought we could.
- Sales for the 2001 Christmas Season were level with the 2000 season, which was quite an accomplishment considering adverse weather, 9-11 impact on the Boston area and a weak retail environment.
- For the first time we beat our #1 competitor in year-over-year same store sales comparisons!

Customer Quotes

"Our 'Members Only' night generated revenues of 350% of goal, on a scale of 1 -10, Masters Alliance is a '10' - we are achieving things we never thought we could."

"Sales for the 2001 Christmas Season were level with the 2000 Christmas season, which was quite an accomplishment considering adverse weather, 9-11 impact on the Boston area, and a weak retail environment."

"For the first time, we beat our #1 competitor in year-over-year same-store sales comparisons!"

"We never would have been able to accomplish these results without the projects, methodologies, and coaching of the Masters Alliance. All the things we put together worked."

"The 'Spirit Effort' has kept people engaged during difficult times."

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