

JohnsonDiversey

JohnsonDiversey (www.johnsondiversey.com) is an international company of cleaning products. Its parent company is S C Johnson whose headquarters are in the USA. Originally a British company JohnsonDiversey was sold to an American conglomerate in 1985 who in turn sold it to Unilever in 1996 before it was acquired by S C Johnson in 2001.

The company have a sales force in excess of 300 calling on all sorts of private and public organisations. The sales organisation use 'FrontDesk', a sales reporting tool developed internally using software based on Lotus notes. The aim is to hold full details on all customers at the head office. Specially filtered information is held by individual salespeople on laptops and up-dated by them on a daily basis. The system is intended to allow the company to more accurately tailor its products and services to the needs of the customer. The system is also used to monitor and measure sales force efficiency. FrontDesk has been designed to work with SAP which is used to optimise the company's financial performance and the two systems interface three times a day to provide as near as possible real time measurement of sales and customer activities.

The success of FrontDesk relies on the salesperson updating customer information in full every day but less than 30 per cent of the sales force actually does so. This is despite full training and one-to-one training sessions with every member of the sales team. Changes have been made to work patterns and activities to ensure time and resources are available. Although some downsizing of the sales force has resulted in recent redundancies, changes were made to the pay structure with field salespeople receiving pay increases on the understanding that FrontDesk was rolled out and utilised. To date, no improvement in the usage of FrontDesk has materialised.

Questions

- 1 Why do you think there has been reluctance to use the FrontDesk system?
- 2 What else can the company/management do to increase usage of the system?
- 3 IT failures in Western Europe have been estimated at \$40 billion (Dalcher and Genus, 2003). What proposals would you make to assess the financial worth of the system?