



Summer Internship Project 2020

“K-12 Schools Footwear- Sales Strategy (Schools and Channel)”



Submitted by:

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Batch: MBA-FT (2019-2021)

Submitted To:

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PROJECT DETAIL

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ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Sports 365 has been a great learning opportunity for me. I am having a wonderful experience with the company and team involved. Even during the pandemic, this opportunity gave me a hands-on experience on working in the sales and marketing domain.

I would like to thank, Mr. Chaitanya Marasani, Senior Manager at Sports 365 for constantly guiding me and assisting me throughout my project.

Also, I would like to thank Prof. Mayank Bhatia, for providing me the right knowledge whenever required.

Lastly, I would like to thank Institute of Management, Nirma University for providing opportunity for great leaning and making me corporate ready.

Executive summery

This is a report on marketing and sales practices involved in K-12 school Footwear and school accessories by sports 365. With the help of first-hand experience in sales and marketing with the company, I was able to find out about the best practices in sports and fitness industry and how there is still a scope of improvement in the working of the organization. The report also includes a study on the competitive environment in the industry and the technologies that have been adopted as well as technologies being developed that can be implemented in the near future for a high-performance sales and marketing network. The report also tells the user about the number of vendors contacted in different geographical areas and the conversion rate when cold calling the prospective buyers of a good/service. The report also highlights the major areas of improvement that the organization lacks and how can these shortcomings be turned into opportunities for the organization.

The learnings and conclusion part shows the output of the project and the knowledge gained from it. It also shows the insights that we have gained about the sales and marketing process as a whole.

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Part A: Company Profile

Company Name: Sports365

Year of Incorporation: 2012 (8 years old)

About the Company:

Sports365, India's leading sports and fitness business, is the product of the collective collaboration of seasoned sports-passioned marketing specialists, prominent Indian sports stars and experts in the sporting industry.

Sports365's founders come with over 25 years of collective business experience through major companies such as P&G, McKinsey & Co & KPMG, with a deep background in education (NIT's with IIM's). Sports & Fitness icons such as Mahesh Bhupathi, Yuvraj Singh & Lara Dutta support the founding team.

Sports365's journey began in early 2012 when the founding team mapped out the company's first blue prints and the campaign is still on since! Sports365 aims at initiating a sporting revolution in India and becoming the first port of call for individuals and institutions' sport and fitness needs. Sports365 owns and runs numerous online platforms such as Sports365.in, Tennis365.in, Running365.in and several more which are the sports lovers' favorite option in India.

Sports365 also offers one-stop solution to institutions' athletic needs, such as Elite sports teams, clubs & academies, schools & universities, corporates, and many more. Sports equipment, sports product production, creation and delivery, sports facilities, conferences, and consultancy are some of the services provided to organisations.

Sports365 also partners with leading sports & fitness brands inside and outside India to help them harness Indian markets' true potential. Some of Sports365's strategic brand partners include Hero Bikes, Wimbledon, Victor, Mizuno, V22, Lumo and more.

The headquarters of Sports365 are in Bangalore, with branches in Hyderabad, Chennai, Meerut and Jalandhar. The business is powered by a team of over 100 people who have a love for sports & fitness. Sports365 is also funded by influential US-based investment firms such as Powerhouse Ventures and Zolon Ventures.

Sports365 has taken the pole position in India's sports market in a very short time period since its inception. The business won many awards and was named as one of India's Top 50 start-ups.

Owner: Chandra Sekhar Reddy, Mahesh Bhupathi, Vishal Gupta.

Vision: Born out of passion for sports, the company's vision is 'to be the first port of call for sports and fitness related needs' for individuals and institutions.

Investors:

1. **Powerhouse Venture:** Powerhouse Ventures is a leading US-based venture capital company focusing on investing in high-growth markets such as India through emerging sectors such as eCommerce, Clean Tech and Healthcare. Powerhouse Ventures has provided Sports365 with funding, advisory and strategic guidance since its early days.



2. **Zolon Ventures:** Zolon Ventures is a leading US-based investment company focusing on investing in high-growth, technology-sector markets like India. Since its early days Zolon Ventures has provided Sports365 with funding, guidance and strategic direction.



Address: B-36, C.M.C. Khata No.128/B-36,(New No. 483 New PID No.082-N.G.E.F Ancillary Industrial Layout Estate, Main Rd, Garudachar Palya, Mahadevapura, Bengaluru, Karnataka 560048.

Markets & business scope: Providing a one stop solution for sports goods for all institutions. Sports365 is an electronic distribution site for merchandise related to sports. India is a rising country where many people aspire to be enthusiastic about sports. Sports365 is not limited to a specific area but has a nationwide reach as an online platform. It sells and delivers goods nationwide. Therefore, we might claim the Sports365 business covers the whole of India.

PRODUCTS & SERVICES: The company's offered products include various sporting equipment on their platform required by every major sport. Besides this, they also plan to launch two new products, named GOL and SCOULA. GOL is just like jockey, their sporty brand of apparel. The platform also has unique domains such as Running365, Tennis365, and so on to give the users a much more customized experience.

Range: The Organization sells a wide range of athletic gear. It has an array of products ranging from low cost (for regular use) and high cost professional products too. Therefore, they sell a wide variety of products that is around more than 8000 tennis, badminton, squash, table-tennis, cricket, football, basketball, hockey, volleyball, swimming, yoga and fitness equipment products.

Positioning: Sports and fitness specialist

Distribution Structure: Sports365 being an online sports equipment platform has no retail stores. Customers place an online order and deliver the products at their doorsteps. They deliver throughout India.

Brands Owned: Sports365 is an online retail platform for selling good but they also have their own brands. They own two brands i.e. GOL and SCOULA which are still in infancy stage.

Pricing: Medium range. The price of the products is approximately same as that of their competitors.

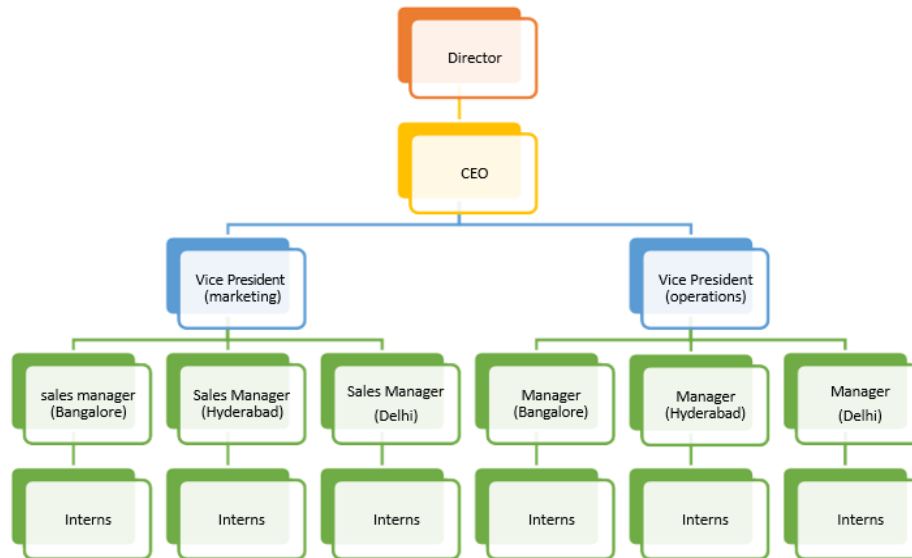
Segmentation: Sports365 caters to the section of the society which is inclined towards sports.

Company's Competitors: Decathlon, Nivia, Jockey, Columbia, HRX, Prolin & Kappa are some of its competitors.

Financial Performance: The start-up kicked off its operations in 2012 after the founders raised a capital of around Rs. 1 crore with the help from few family members and friends. The company initially focused on capital efficiency while choosing to make a small compromise on the growth size of its business. In the very first year of its operation, the company was able to generate Rs. 4.6 crore in revenue. In 2014 – 2015, Sports365 managed to grow its revenue to Rs. 14.5 crore.

The company witnessed two investment cycles; the first took place in 2014 for \$ 200,000 from Powerhouse Ventures, while the second took place in 2015, when Powerhouse Ventures and Zolon Ventures invested \$ 1 million.

Organization Structure:



There are several distribution executives on the ground who are responsible for delivering on schedule. are also educated on how to communicate with the consumers when distributing the items.

Organization Top Management:



About the Industry:

Indian sports and fitness goods market

About:

The Indian market for sports and fitness products in 2017 reached 3,314 million US dollars. According to forecasts, by 2023, the market value will reach 5,565 million US dollars with a compound annual rate of 9.0% in 2018-2023.

Sport is considered an important part of a person's overall growth. As a result, numerous schools, colleges, and other government agencies in India encourage students to choose physical education and other classes. Furthermore, a growing understanding of personal health among the Indian population has led them to attend health clubs and gyms or to actively participate in various sports. In addition to this, they also participate in non-traditional gym classes like Zumba, kickboxing, and aerobics. The growing interest in this type of activity has intensified the expansion of gyms in the region, which, in turn, accelerated the growth of the market.

India represents a large customer base for sporting goods. India's population in 2019 was approximately 1.3 billion people, equivalent to approximately 18% of the total world population. Furthermore, a significant proportion of its current population is represented by the younger generation (the 15-29 age group represents more than a quarter of the total population of India), which is the target consumer base for goods for sports and fitness.

Breakup by Product Type:

The Indian sports and fitness goods industry was categorized into balls, adventure sports, fitness products, and golf products based on product category. Among these, balls represent the largest product segment.

Breakup by Fitness Goods:

The market has also been bifurcated on the basis of fitness goods into cardiovascular and strength training goods.

Breakup by Cardiovascular Equipment:

On the basis of cardiovascular equipment, the market has been categorized into treadmill, stationary bike, rowing machine and elliptical.

Breakup by End-Use:

Based on the end-use, the report has segmented the market into health clubs and gyms; home consumers; hotels and corporate offices; hospitals, medical centers and public institutions.

Regional Insights:

On a geographical front, the market has been segmented into North India, West and Central India, South India and East India

Economic policies by Indian govt. for sports:

The Sports Authority of India, set up under the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports and the sport-specific national sports federation oversee this program.

Key features of the program are:

- A pan-India program to provide 1,000 young athletes with an annual scholarship of \$ 7,350 (Rs 500,000) for eight years
- Fund 20 universities across the country to promote excellence in sport while pursuing their education level
- Provide college and university students with maximum access to organized sports.
- National boost to physical activity to measure and support activities related to physical activity for 200 million school-age children
- Establishment and use of open gyms in public parks
- Use technologies such as mobile applications to promote sport and reach young people in rural or disadvantaged areas of the country; and,
- A national talent search portal established for talent identification and management under the Indian Sports Authority.

Growth Story of the company

Sports365 was founded by two IIM Lucknow graduates, Chandra Sekhar Reddy and Aashutosh Chaudhari at the age of 31 and 32 years respectively in May 2012. With the help of their 8 years of corporate experience in the industry and the idea of satisfying the fitness and sports related needs of the individual as well as various institutions they incorporated the organization.

With the support of seed financing from their friends and colleagues, the founders raised initial capital of Rs 1 Crore. Once the initial money was collected, their next aim was to create a better and more effective team for their activities and also to set up the technologies and facilities necessary. In the first year of the business idea was to be more effective as well as the efficient as far as the usage of capital is concern.

When this aim was reached, they turned their attention on bringing companies on board with them, but the problem before them was that, back in 2013, their company was more focused on the market model of brick and mortar that was not appealing to other companies. To address this challenge, Sports365 has changed its emphasis and is attempting to target more and more organization for the area's bulk business-like colleges, corporate and sports clubs. After which having big and more labels on board was easier for them.

In the year 2015 they were able to get more than 35,000 products from more than 150 sports brands. Not only that they also started to sell through various e commerce website like Flipkart and Amazon. Of course, they were also selling these products on their online portal i.e www.sports365.com.

In its offline space, it offers solutions around sports goods, merchandise, clothing and infrastructure for companies, schools, sports clubs and training academies. The startup had 250 institutional clients that include premier schools, sports academies, ISL and I-League professional sports teams and multinational companies: Google, Facebook, Amazon, NTT, Accenture, Wells Fargo, among others in 2015.

Meanwhile, they raised Rs 7 million in new money from US-based IT companies. In the years ahead, they were able to build a strong leadership team for the company.

Which includes:

- Aashutosh: Post Graduate in Management from IIM Lucknow, Engineering degree from Nirma Institute. Aashu leads the Marketing and Analytics functions.
- Vinay: MBA from XLRI, Jamshedpur. Vinay leads the institutional sales vertical of business and has lead sales at hospitality and sports/fitness brands in India. Plays Volley ball and swims.
- Dheeraj: MBA from ISB, Hyderabad, Engineering degree from RV college Bangalore. Dheeraj leads the effort on Product management, Usability and business development.

Dheeraj lead product management and marketing functions at Thoughtworks Inc. Plays Basketball and Badminton.

- Moy: Engineering graduate from PESIT with rich Operations experience. He leads fulfillment and logistics functions. He has represented his school team at national tennis tournaments and an avid football player.

Analysis of Growth pattern and Value system:

In my opinion of the company it started with very little seed capital and at the beginning the initial objective was very clear: to use the available capital in the most effective and efficient way and at the same time they were very clear about the company's long-term goals, that is, conquering the sports market in India. Today, the culture of the organization of the company is based on the core team leading the specific department.

Value system: Sports365 works through 3 different portals such as tennis365, Running365 and Badminton365. The organization has links with the best brands in these sports, so the end customer only has top quality products.

The just-in-time approach to the sport365 company's business is that they don't rely heavily on stockpiling, but that they approach suppliers directly every time they receive an order from a customer.

Achievements: Founded in the year 2012 Sports365 has been able to manage a setup as an emerging startup in the industry. These are the following few achievement of the of organization.

- In the year 2015 is was able to raise funding of Rs 7 crore from US based IT company.
- Till now it has been successfully able to tie up with more than 300 institution like schools etc. in Bangalore and Hyderabad.
- The brands nowadays is also supported by big sports icons like Mahesh Bhupathi, Yuvraj Singh and Deepika Pallikal.

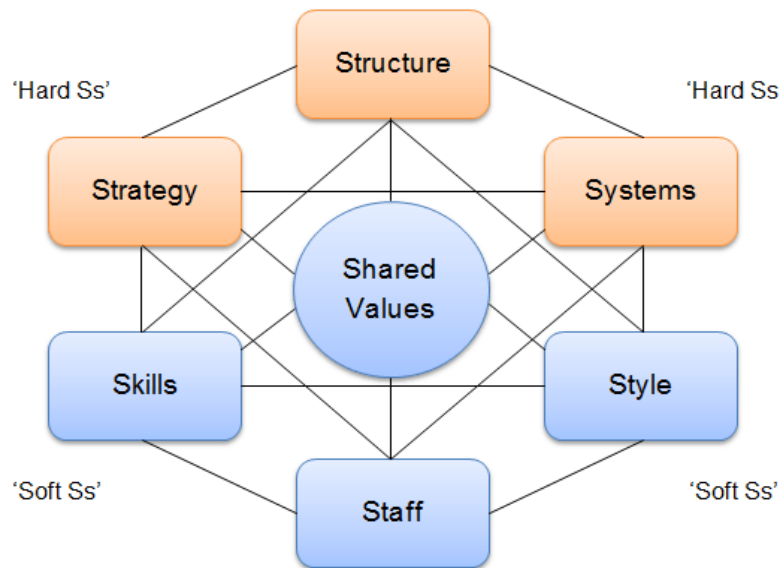
Comparison with similar players in the industry: E-retailers sports equipment industry in India is very large and yet to be properly penetrated not like the particular E-commerce industry which has been able to reach till tier 4 & tier 5 cities as well as the rural market in Indian economy.

Sports365 faces competition with some of the other start-ups like khelmart.com, Sporting8.com etc. These websites are those in which sports equipment of almost all the types are available not like the other players in the market www.onlicecricgear.com etc. where equipment of one particular sports are only available.

Note: Big ecommerce company like Flipkart, amazon, shop clues, and some other giants are not included because these also deals with other category of goods also they are unlike sports365 which are focused on one type.

- More brand on boards: As compare to the other companies in the market sports 365 has tie with the greatest number of brands than any other company.
- Wider product offering: Sports365 has also more wide range of product to be offer to the customers as well as the schools and other institution with which it has tie ups for example: Sports365 also offers technological equipment that are needed for the practice sessions. Such equipment are not available on the websites of its competitors.
- Institutional customer base: One thing which is very unique with sports365 is that it not only depends on individual customers for its revenue but also institution like schools and sports clubs also contribute in its revenue.

Company's Strategic Framework:



The main intention to start this venture was to serve the under-served and highly unsaturated sports and fitness industry market. Creator Aashutosh Chaudhari wanted to take advantage of his love for sports to become an entrepreneur, so he considered sports & fitness to be the perfect part. Until today, the company focuses on the idea of filling the gap in industry by serving the needs of individuals and institutions related to sports and fitness. And their plan and ambitions to support this sector are also clear. The strategy is to take the majority market share in this space.

Understanding Mckinsey 7s model, to know 7s of sports365 are align with strategy and goals. Soft Ss includes Skills, Staff, Style and Hard Ss include Strategy, Structure and systems. 7th S is shared value.

Shared Values:

Values to meet the Rs.1000 Crore sales goal in the years to come. The organization constantly refers to individuals and institutions as "First port of call for sports and fitness related needs." Any person affiliated with the company believes and works accordingly in the above-mentioned argument. The values of sharing to make work easier. Employees, staff, supervisors and interns respect collaboration and have faith in each other. Those values are always shared and cultivated as new employees or interns join the company.

Strategy:

The strategy to build **hybrid business model**. To be called as an e-commerce and institutional engagement model category specialist. They connect to communities and aggregate user base at different academics, colleges / schools, corporate, fitness center etc. At the grass root stage, the association strives tirelessly to communicate with sports and fitness lovers and fosters the spirit through positive on-site engagement.

Their 2nd most important strategy is to build and keep the **Team's DNA**. For this organization, the competitive advantage is its team that includes highly qualified people, players and athletes. Whenever team works with clients, there is a demonstrated love for sports.

Structure:

The organization has a well-structured hierarchy, starting from the employees at the lower level to the Executive. Also, the information process is well established and the workers follow the instructions honestly. Management has been given some degree of autonomy in decision-making but is supposed to report any developments to their immediate superior. This procedure guarantees the maintenance of a safe system of contact and activities.

Systems:

Company firmly believes in supporting and satisfying customers. They have formal systems which require brands and good quality products or sports equipment. They have proper distribution systems in place to deliver on time to their products. Group maintains new market growth and Merger & Acquisitions programs.

Skills:

All the members and employees or interns are athletes along with top management skills. Company claims that a good sportsman is always inspired to work with sales and revenue. Sportsmanship demonstrates success. But, in fact the organization recruits' people who are fantastic at certain games. Fitness freak and badminton player is co-founder. COO is an IIM-L alum who has served we top corporations including P&G, McKinsey. He is player in tennis. All other managers and colleagues are either star cricket players or volley ball players or swimmers etc. These common skills help keep the team motivated and allow the success to be celebrated together.

Style:

The leadership style that is adopted by enterprise Increases motivation by feedback, games and raises among interns and team players. Employees are permitted to take decisions and take part in decision making processes. In company, the working environment is always motivating and on high. Working hours are flexible. Business has a cooperative form of management and a belief in sport as tradition.

Staff:

Staff work upon customer satisfaction and helping company to achieve its goals. Company provides better promotions and career opportunities for their staff. They are given financial rewards as and when they achieve or convert best customers/institution for company.

As of now, 7 factors are aligned properly.

Now, company want to start the new products segment with project names school365. This project will work on same model as sports 365, but products will change. The end user might change. Company already have huge data for schools and institution where they provide sports equipment. Now company want to provide uniform, water-bottle, lunchboxes, bags along with sports equipment. For this project strategy, System, shared value, structure, style will remain same but staff, skills required will change. So now company is working on these parameters trying to connect different vendors and dealers who can provide these materials.

Porter's 5 Forces Model:

- **Bargaining power of buyers:** Customers tend to have a very low switching cost. The availability of information about products and the prices have made the customers very selective in case of online purchase. The increased number of options has increased the bargaining power of the customers. They can easily compare the price on different website.
- **Bargaining power of suppliers:** Company have a low switching cost; this in turn reduces the bargaining power of the suppliers. They generally have multiple suppliers just to reduce their reliability on a single supplier.
- **Competitive Rivalry:** Major competitor in the market is decathlon, amazon, flipchart which also deliver products online. Decathlon is the leading market player in the e retail of sports equipment. Amazon and flipkart offers product of other sector also and they have a renowned name in ecommerce industry so they offer high competition.
- **Threat of new entrants:** The barrier to enter in the market is too low. Nowadays everything is going digital and govt. is also supporting ecommerce business. Main problem is to develop a strong supply chain and to maintain effective logistics.
- **Threat of substitute products:** Threat of substitute product is low in sports industry. As sports enthusiast are loyal to one brand's product. They have developed the confidence and trust over that product. Quality is very important in sports goods as it resist injuries.

Potential Problems:

There are various problems that might occur in the near future due to various internal and external environmental factors. Below are a few problems along with the suggested solutions.

1. The company looks to establish a logistics service. We know a logistics service is highly labor-intensive. It will be important to ensure that the safety protocols are enforced following the COVID-19 pandemic that struck the country. The company can resolve this through the automation of different logistic levels. This can include the last mile delivery of drones as well as no touch delivery and encouraging online payments rather than cash.
2. As the organization begins to grow, new employees will be required to accommodate for the various verticals of the expanding sector. Ensuring that the right talent is recruited for such an occasion will be crucial. The solution is to outsource this task to a highly efficient recruiting agency rather than setting up a new recruiting team which could be capital- intensive and time-consuming.
3. The challenge from major e-commerce players like Amazon and Flipkart will continue to increase as they expand and more customers will move from retail shopping to online shopping. But this is also an opportunity to increase their own market share by increasing operating efficiencies and maintaining a foothold in the market of an exclusive provider of sports equipment. This distinction would help expand the company.
4. There has been a consistent problem in the customer conversion domain. The company works on contract basis with several schools in the southern part of the nation and also with the brands. For example, the firm is an official partner of Nike shoes and it is also responsible for providing Nike shoes to all the schools with which it has partnered. But the biggest competitor here is, the parents of the student who are the real target market, they know the business is really concerned with Nike sneakers because it is the one that is responsible for delivering them to the students. Whereas the company does have sports uniforms, equipment, and other items for the store. Hence, it's a challenge area where the company wants to convert the already existing as well as potential customers to their total product domain and not just till the specified contract ones.

Part B: Project Work

Title of the project:

Sales Strategy- Schools and Channels.

Nature of the Problem:

Difficulties faced due to COVID-19 by our school segment customers (School supplies vendors)

- Early COVID 19 scare began with premature disruption of operation in the school.
- Nationwide lockdown contributing to full suspension of school activities culminating in the 2019-20 academic year unexpectedly ending, therefore no sale of school uniforms, textbooks, shoes, etc.
- Sale process of pre-academic year absolutely wiped out.
- No clarity regarding the way forward.

Difficulty in Expanding the current business due to the crisis:

- Due to the COVID 19 pandemic, sports equipment sale came to a halt.
- Negligible sale of our leading product i.e. Nike school shoes.
- No new tie ups with schools regarding sports equipment.

Objectives:

- To carry out a comprehensive study and market research, and to find online vendors related to our business.
- Manage the process of pipeline development, deal with potential customers and assist in smooth onboarding.
- Develop a go-to-market strategy for the same category by identifying and recommending spaces of opportunity that the company should follow.
- Up-selling our leading product i.e. Nike school shoes. We are the sole distributors of Nike school shoes throughout India, and it is one of our major objectives to on board more schools to mandate Nike sport shoes.

- To learn about the changing market scenario, how unpredictable can the market scenario be and with the help of changing business methods and global supply chains we can convert these changes into opportunities and use them in our favor.
- To create a one stop, shop for school going children in order to facilitate them in buying their day to day school needs whether it is book/stationery, uniforms, shoes, or anything else.
- Understanding the services/Business plans provided by Schools365.

E-commerce can help by:

- Kick starting the sales process right away
- Kick starting the cash flows
- Turn-over inventory
- Extend support to your customers – Schools, and earn good-will.

Methodology:

- ❖ Secondary data were obtained from the vendor's Google listings from across India who may be future business customers. Besides this, secondary data is also collected from vendor data on other online platforms, such as schoolkart.com and eschoolbuddy.com, as we already know they are interested in the online platform and could be a potential partner for the business. These vendors are mainly from the Tier1 and Tier2 cities.
- ❖ Having made the pipeline of these vendors' database, cold calls are made and vendors are briefly explained the concept of Schools365 and asked if they are interested in online onboarding. The interested vendors are then checked according to the company's policy and requirements and are considered for further consideration if qualified. The vendors who are qualified, their data are recorded in a new sheet and are regarded as clients of second level.
- ❖ After this exercise of database building and first-level calling, customers are approached for second-level conversation where all of the online onboarding details are explained in detail. At this level a single call takes at least 20 minutes, and after the status of that client is noted, and if further negotiation is required, our manager will do so. After the discussion at second level while customers are eligible for electronic onboarding, we are allocated to the customers and they can contact us if they are in question. Most of these are linked concerns regarding distribution, catalog photos, connections or precise locations. As these vendors have no online experience, even many of them have not bought anything online, these doubts are bound to happen.

❖ Vendor onboarding process:



This whole vendor onboarding process is categorized into three phases:

1. Phase I:

- In this phase all the vendors who already have exclusive tie-ups with schools i.e. they are the sole vendors to provide uniforms, shoes, books, etc. to the schools are contacted.
- The phone numbers that are extracted during the data mining phase are called and if they have exclusive tie-ups they are categorized into phase-1 otherwise phase 2. The phase 1 vendors are then enquired about the number of schools, they are currently and exclusively working with and how is the situation of work.
- Then they're told about the vendor policy of the company and how they're going to be boarded online. They are sent a proposal presentation containing all the information regarding the on boarding.

- If these vendors are interested, they are then referred for a second level conference call with the manager. During this call the final commission that the vendor is going to give is negotiated and the deliverables from the side of sports 365 are negotiated.
- For these vendors, separate school pages are developed on the website where their products are listed and students can easily buy them from there.

2. Phase II:

- All the vendors who do not qualify for Phase I/ those vendors who do not have exclusive tie ups with the schools, come under Phase II of the vendor on boarding process.
- These vendors are generally working through physical marketplace model and sell uniforms, books, shoes, etc. through retail stores. Due to not having any Tie-ups with schools these vendors don't have any guaranteed sale and were worst hit during the COVID-19 crisis.
- These vendors are contacted for the marketplace model, just like that of Amazon's where buyers and sellers communicate freely and the vendors who do not have tie-ups with any schools can sell over here.
- These vendors are less profitable as there is no guarantee of sale from their side as they don't have any exclusive deals.
- These vendors do not work in bulk orders or huge quantities which means they already operate on a very low Margin. Deducting Sports 365's commission from that margin will make it very difficult for them to operate.
- The same process is followed to on-board these vendors. First level as well as second level calls are done. They're just put into marketplace model instead of providing them a different page for their schools.

3. Phase III:

- In Phase III, all the vendors regardless of the phases are approached for being an official vendor of Nike's school shoes range. These vendors are approached to be the official distributors of Nike school shoes for a particular school or a particular geographical area as Sports 365 is the official vendor of Nike school shoes across India.
- Vendors whether on boarded or not, whether for phase I or Phase II are given this proposal in order to expand the Nike school shoes supply chain.
- For a particular Geographical Region first preference is given to the school shoes vendors of that region, second preference to the uniform vendors in that region and the last preference is given to the accessory vendors in that region.
- This Phase is called the up-selling phase because in addition to on boarding the vendors we also ask them to be a Nike distributor for that region.

❖ Proposal For the vendors:



COMMERCIAL PROPOSAL

PARTICULARS	S365 - LITE (Online Ordering Only)	S365 - BUSINESS (Online Selling & Order Fulfillment)	S365 - PRO (End to End Online Selling)
Dedicated Page for School Product Listing Customer Support Service Vendor Business Dashboard	Commission : 10% + GST	Commission : 10% + GST	Commission : 10% + GST
Warehousing - Inventory storage & Insurance - Packaging	-NA-	-NA-	4% per stored product value** per month
Shipping to Customers** - Order processing - Packaging Material - Delivery to Customer - Tracking	-NA-	₹ 55 for first 500gm ₹ 20 for every additional 500gm +GST	₹ 55 for first 500gm ₹ 20 for every additional 500gm +GST
Total Charges	10% + GST	10% + Shipping charges* + GST	14% + Shipping charges* + GST
Payment Settlement	Every 15 days	Every 15 days	Every 15 days

Shipping to Customers**: Final cost of shipping will be determined as per weight & delivery location of the consignment

OTHER VALUE-ADDED SERVICES:

- Product cataloging - best in class content & imagery for your product portfolio - ₹ 500 per product
- Marketing & Promotions - ₹ 500 per banner set / ₹ 300 per banner set
- Creative Banner (Communication to Parents/Schools) - ₹ 200 per banner set

For More Details - Email us at partnership@schools365.in

There are three types of proposals for Vendors to come and on board the website:

1. S365- Lite

Under S365 Lite plan 10% commission is charged to the vendors for every sale they do through the company website. They are not provided any warehouse services or shipping services.

S365 Lite just Includes Dedicated page for product Listing, Customer support services and Vendor Dashboard.

2. S365- Business

Under S365 Business, All the features of S365 Lite are provided along with delivery of the product. There are standard charges for delivery i.e. 55 INR for 500 grams and additional 20 INR for every additional 500 grams.

3. S365- Pro

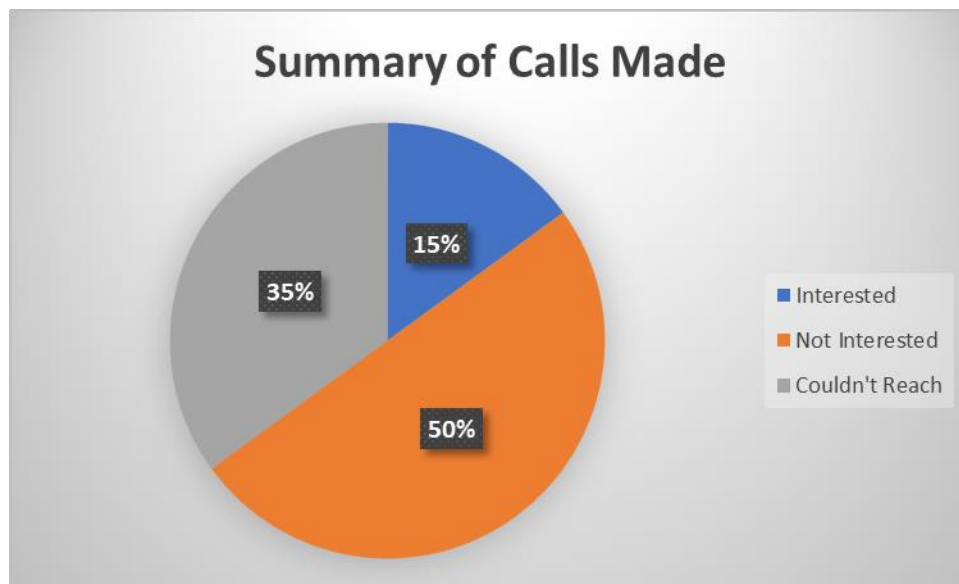
Under S365 Pro, all the services In S365 Lite & S365 Business are provided along with warehousing, inventory insurance and packaging services. These services are charged on the basis of value of the product on a monthly basis. Each unit is charged 4% of its value per month for such services.

❖ Timeline of the work:

- 5th May 2020 – 10th May 2020
Research online directories and create a database of Vendors dealing with school uniforms.
- 10th May 2020 – 25th May 2020
Cold call school uniform vendors to create awareness about the platform and generate leads.
- 26th May 2020 – 31st May 2020
Gather information about platforms that are in direct competition with School's 365 and mining information about the vendors that are already boarded there.
- 1st June 2020 – 6th June 2020
Cold call school shoes and stationary vendors to create awareness about the platform and generate leads.
- 8th June – 30th June 2020
Cold calling vendors from the given list of selected vendors to create awareness about the platform, generate leads, and cross sell shoes by Schools365.

❖ Summary of the Calls made:

- During 2 months of my internship I made around 400 calls and I was able to generate 60Leads out of the calls made.



- Geographical areas covered:
Each candidate during the internship was given several cities in order to mine data about the vendors in that geographical area. Following are the cities I was allocated and I had contacted around 400 vendors during the tenure of my internship from these cities:
 1. Bhopal
 2. Kanpur
 3. Patna
 4. Nashik
 5. Gurugram
 6. Gandhinagar
 7. Hyderabad
 8. Vishakhapatnam
 9. Delhi
 10. South Mumbai

Part C: Learning

Observations/Key Findings and Major Learnings:

Industry Potential:

The comprehensive knowledge about sports 365 made me understand the importance and consumer value of sports and fitness products in India. There was macroscopic knowledge that I figured out when I began working on the project during the orientation phase, and microscopic insights that I got to know after working. In addition to sports and fitness products, I also understood the consumer base and opportunity of the K12 school sector in India and the significance of linking businesses with schools as well as how important it is to understand the seasonal workers in this industry.

Different Perspectives on E-commerce Venture:

As stated in the introduction, the organization's main objective right now is to grow and bring in new vendors online. So, this project gives the first-hand experience of exactly what details are required from a vendor 's perspective if you want to embark online. This offers first-hand insight of what is the protocol for getting vendor online, even from an operational viewpoint. Therefore, I get the overall idea and the minute intricacies of how ecommerce works.

Gap Analysis:

This ecommerce platform and talking to vendors for boarding them online has given me a lot of insight into the gap that is present in our service and what they expect. Which helped us analyze the platform from a dual perspective i.e. from the point of view of the vendors and the organization.

Geographic Understanding:

Talking to vendors across the country gives the macro idea of vendors' behavior from different geographic locations from different states. For eg, the answer and tone of vendors from one region to the other would be different. This helps you to think proactively about your sales pitch or the choice of words in one geographic location VS the other. Furthermore, this analysis may well be used in the future if the organization plans to expand in more categories or in more. In the North East vendors, for example, were happier when they were provided with technology i.e. online platform. We also learned the differential pricing according to geography. For example, there are many competitors in metro cities such as Bangalore, Delhi, Mumbai etc. and thus naturally profit per piece will be less compared to the place where competition is not much.

Command over Verbal formal Communication:

Calling vendors daily and describing the service to them on a regular basis helped me brush up my convincing & listening skills and helped me develop strong trust. In addition, our trainer provides daily training to be on a conference call with various vendors and how to address specific questions that the vendor poses and trust even though you don't know the answer. In addition, our mentor also helps us to practice the calls with different vendor when we're talking and he's listening and then our mentor gives input on what else we might have said on different issues.

Factors Affecting Sales:

Various factors affect the sales of the products e.g., website, clarity in the brochure, communication channels, the content of the messages sent, and also the online buying journey of the products. The text messages, emails, etc. sent should be eye-catching, crisp and must explain the products and its benefits in detail so that the customer is attracted to it.

Influence of Social Media:

In today's era, everyone is very active on social media site and hence that platform must be utilized to the best for online marketing of the products through posting images, videos, etc. the video messages are the most engaging and can have an impact on the viewers as well hence the company must post videos regularly to attract customers

Critical Issues/ Problem Areas:

Problems that require Solution:

- Sales Loss: The school division accounts for more than 60 percent of sales in the summer season. Because of these scenarios all of this revenue can be lost or transferred to the competitor.
- Cashflow Crunch: No sales plus prior credit accumulation has culminated in a temporary closing of cash flows.
- Inventory Build-up: Inventory of raw materials and finished goods piled up in the warehouse.
- Sales Cycle uncertainty: Owing to social distancing, counter selling market is now negative and we don't know when to raise the door.

- Vendors are still not aware of the e-commerce platforms specifically catering to school needs.
- There's a lot of mental barriers set by vendors in terms of e-commerce
- Uniform vendors feel parents buy uniforms with future perspective in mind and hence online platform won't be suitable for this, as it won't help parents to decide the size.
- Many Vendors felt that the commission rates are higher than their profit margins

Solution to these problems:

E-Commerce is the only possible channel of sales as:

- Counter Sales/Tuck Shops/Retail Shops violate lockdown & social distancing norms
- Schools unwilling to initiate any in-premise activity
- Parents/Students unwilling to gather at counters

Conclusion:

Major Challenges and steps taken to overcome:

- Collecting vendor data and finding out whether or not they have partnered up with schools. Since most vendors on google don't mention from which school they have associated with, we need to find out this data from Google's comment section, which was a very tedious job.
- Some of the vendors have different landlines or mobile Contacts for shops and as there was a lockdown, we couldn't reach them by the same number available on google, so we need to find out the alternative number from the website like justdial or Indiamart, which also doesn't guarantee that we'll get the alternative number.
- Many vendors have insignificant knowledge of the online platform and how it works, and thus it was of utmost importance to explain them and ensure that there is no miscommunication from our side.
- Some vendors don't trust technology much and hence convincing them about the future scenario seem very difficult.
- Some of the potential vendors were in the hotspot areas right now, so they weren't interested in talking or being told to call after lockdown. These vendors will be contacted after the situation when COVID appears to improve.
- Some shops are partnership based and you have to convince both of them for a single shop contract for online onboarding.
- We as interns were not allowed to tell commercials and some other details and hence when vendors asked about it, we had to say that our manager will talk to you later which did not seem inappropriate to some vendors.
- Some vendors had tie-ups with many schools, so if they want to go online, they have to communicate it to schools about it, which is very difficult when schools are closed due to lockdown. For this the discussion was conducted with the category manager that if we can deal directly with schools so that the vendor has no need to worry about this issue.
- The data of vendors which we collected from other online websites was raw and was scattered, for example many categories have same vendor and vice versa, arranging that

data took a lot of time. After arranging that data, the problem of multiple calls to the same vendor was solved.

- Additionally, the vendors who currently work with other e-commerce platforms need more value as they switch from one platform to another, and many are reluctant to do so. Some other advantages and additional negotiations are to be made for this vendor segment. There were additional services that Sports 365 provided to these vendors which solve this problem and provided additional value to the vendors.
- Proper market research to create a feasible plan for vendors across India, as the profit margin for vendors differs from place to place.
- Running campaigns to increase awareness so that vendors get to know about Schools365
- Targeting vendors catering to private schools would've fetched good results, as their profit margins are higher.

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