



## **Summer Internship Report**



**Submitted by:**

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**Section: A**

**Batch: MBA-FT (2020-2022)**

Institute of Management, Nirma University

*Date of Submission: 12<sup>th</sup> July, 2021*

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<b>Purpose of Report</b>	Submitted as partial fulfilment of the requirement of the MBA Course (2020-2022)

## **ACKNOWLEDGMENT**

Sports365 has been a great learning opportunity for me. I had 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, Mrs. Upasana Bhat, Senior Manager at Sports365 for constantly guiding me and assisting me throughout my project. Also, I would like to thank Prof. Punit Saurabh, for providing me the right knowledge whenever required. Lastly, I would like to thank Institute of Management, Nirma University for providing opportunity for great learning and making me corporate ready.

## **Executive Summary**

This is a report on marketing and sales practices involved in infrastructure services and uniform offering by Sports365. 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 covered while 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 1*  
*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.

**Key People of the company:** Chandra Sekhar Reddy(Founder), Mahesh Bhupathi(Director), Bhavya Jain(President), Yuvraj Singh(Brand Ambassador).

**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.



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**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. It also provides sports infrastructure solutions and also provides one stop uniform solutions to prospective agencies. 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 SCOUA. 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. They also provide sports infrastructure solutions to prospective real estate companies. And are also involved in providing uniform solutions to schools, colleges, hospitals, security agencies etc.

**Positioning:** Sports and fitness enthusiasts.

**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 SCOUA 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.

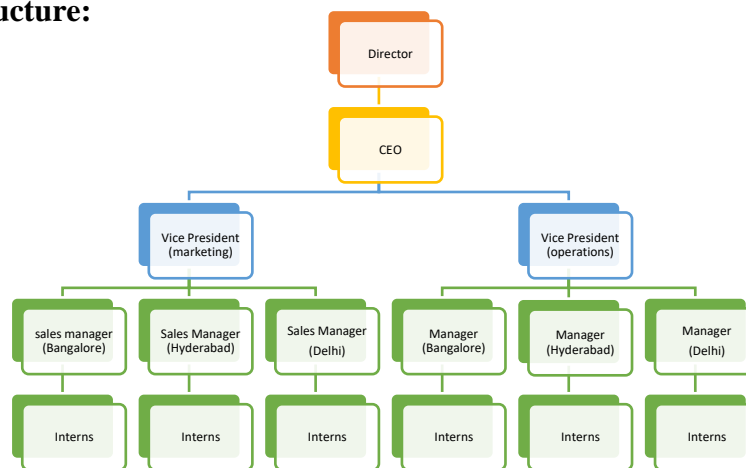
**Company's Competitors:** Decathlon, Nivia, Jockey, Columbia, HRX, Proline & Kappa are some of its competitors.



**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 of 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.

### Organisation Top Management:





## *Part 2*

### *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 over see 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.

*Part 3*  
*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](http://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 achievements of the organization.

- In the year 2015 it 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 are also supported by big sports icons like Mahesh Bhupathi, Yuvraj Singh and Deepika Pallikal, Lara Dutta.

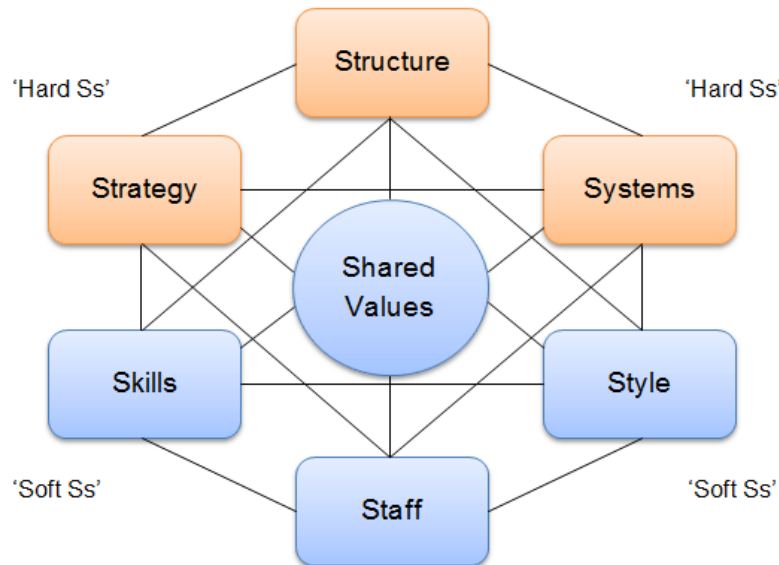
**Comparison with similar players in the industry:** E-Retailer's sports equipment industry in India is very large and yet to be properly penetrated not like the particular E-commerce industry which has been able to reach till tier 4 & tier 5 cities as well as the rural market in Indian economy.

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](http://www.onlicecricgear.com) etc. where equipment of one particular sport is only available.

Note: Big e-commerce companies like Flipkart, amazon, shopclues, and some other giants are not included because these also deal in other category of goods also they are unlike sports365 which are focused on catering to a particular need of the people.

- More brand on boards: As compared to the other companies in the market, Sports365 has tied-up 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 is 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, and other business development activities which also contribute in its revenue.

*Part 4*  
*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. Mr. 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. 7<sup>th</sup> 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 2<sup>nd</sup> 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 has 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.

*Part 5*  
*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 offer 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.

*Part 6*  
*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. Due to covid the cash flow has been limited, restricting the prospective clients for making purchases or starting new projects unless extremely necessary. It is causing trouble to the business. Also, in many cases the people were infected and the office is non functional or working with minimum staff.

*Part B: Project Work*

**Title of the project: Marketing & Sales Strategy**

**Nature of the Problem:**

**Difficulties faced due to COVID-19 by our Customers from Real Estate Development industry:**

- Early COVID 19 scares began with premature disruption construction work.
- Nationwide lockdown contributing to suspension of construction activities, laborer's migrating to their villages.
- Gyms and other facilities have still not been operational from the past one year and are not likely to be fully functional anytime soon.
- 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 prospective related to our business.
- Manage the process of pipeline development, deal with potential clients 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 infrastructure development and uniform services to potential clients.
- 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 real estate developers for the sporting equipment needs and taking care of their infrastructure requirements.
- Understanding the services/Business plans provided by Sports365.

**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.
- Listing the offerings of the company on the portals of websites like Indiamart shall help the brand reach target audience easily.

**Methodology:**

- Secondary data were obtained from the Google listings from across India who may be future business customers. Besides this, secondary data is also collected from data on other online platforms, such as 99acres.com and magicbricks.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 database, cold calls are made and vendors are briefly explained the concept of Sports365 and asked if they are interested in partnering with the company for their sports equipment or uniform needs. The interested clients then connected with the sales department who make note of the client details and understand their needs to cater them better.
- After this exercise of database building and first-level calling, clients 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. As these clients have no online experience for availing such services, these doubts are bound to happen.

**Summary of the Calls made:**

During 2 months of my internship, I made around 120 calls in all to real estate developers and hospitals to enquire for their requirements of our services.

Each candidate during the internship was given several states in order to mine data about the potential clients in that geographical area. Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat and Rajasthan were the states that I was allocated and I had contacted around 120 potential clients during the tenure of my internship from these cities:

1. Indore
2. Ujjain

3. Bhopal
4. Gwalior
5. Ahmedabad
6. Surat
7. Gandhinagar
8. Vadodara
9. Jaipur
10. Udaipur
11. Jodhpur
12. Ajmer

### *Part C: Learning*

#### **Observations/Key Findings and Major Learnings**

**Industry Potential:** The comprehensive knowledge about Sports365 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 problems of infrastructure sector in India and the significance of linking businesses with schools and real estate companies as well as how important it is to understand the seasonal workers in this industry.

I realized the ever growing need to be fit in today's time where a major part of the population is working from home and is glued to the screen for a major part of the day causing more health problems than ever.

**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 a 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 clients' behavior from different geographic locations from different states. For e.g., the answer and tone of client 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 clients, 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 clients daily and briefing our service to them on a regular basis helped me brush up my convincing & listening skills and helped me develop strong trust. In addition, I also got trained to be on a conference call with various clients and how to address specific questions that the client poses even though you don't know the answer. In addition, our mentor also helped us to practice the calls with different clients 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 onboarding journey of the client. 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:**

- Cash flow: A business such as that of real estate requires a huge amount of capital. Due to the pandemic, there has been a huge loss to the sector which has resulted in resultingly low cash flow, which in turn resulted in low turnover of potential clients.
- 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
- Clients are still not aware of the e-commerce platforms specifically catering to uniform needs.
- There's a lot of mental barriers set by vendors in terms of virtual onboarding.
- Indian clientele buys clothes of a larger size keeping in mind future changes; hence they are skeptical if an online vendor would satisfy their needs.
- Many clients felt that the rates are higher than local vendors and the product delivery would be longer than expected. Also due to lockdown and Covid19 they refrained from physical visits to measure the fittings.

#### **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.
- Gyms and other fitness centers are closed from more than a year now and people are now focusing on maintaining their fitness from home.
- Clients refusing to get physical measurements for their requirements due to Covid19.



## **Conclusion:**

### **Major Challenges and steps taken to overcome:**

- Collecting client data and finding out whether or not they have a requirement of any of the Sports365 offerings. Since most clients on google don't mention the number of their acquisition/purchases department, it was a tedious task to get through the primary call to the target person.
- Some of the clients had 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 clients had insignificant knowledge of the brand and had trust issues, and thus it was of utmost importance to explain them and ensure that there is no miscommunication from our side.
- Some clients 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 the second wave of COVID appears to improve.
- Some hospitals and security agencies had already partnered with other brands and hence it was a task in itself to make them trust us and partner with us.
- We as interns were not allowed to tell commercials and some other details and hence when potential clients asked about it, we had to say that our manager will talk to you later which did not seem inappropriate to some vendors.
- Some potential clients felt needed our services and enquired about our rates but they were not looking forward to deal immediately.
- The data of clients which we collected from other online websites was raw and was scattered, for example many categories have same client 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 potential clients who currently worked with other companies need more value as they switch from one company to another, and many are reluctant to do so. Some other advantages and additional negotiations are to be made for this client segment. There were additional services that Sports365 provided to these clients which solve this problem and provided additional value to the potential clients.
- Proper market research to create a feasible plan for potential clients across India, as the profit margin for vendors differs from place to place.
- Running campaigns to increase awareness so that our potential clients get to know about Sports365.

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