**Mission Statement**

To help consumers and organizations secure and manage their information-driven world. Their software and services protect more risks at more points, more completely and efficiently, enabling confidence wherever information is used or stowed.

**Introduction**

Symantec was founded in March 1982 by Gary Hendrix who at the time was an expert in artificial intelligence and language processing. Symantec, in September 1984, merged with a company called C&E Software which was founded by Gordon Eubanks and Denis Coleman. This new company stayed with the name Symantec. After the merge, Hendrix became vice president and Eubanks became president/CEO. The corporate headquarters was located in Cupertino, California. In 1987, Symantec acquired three companies: Breakthrough Software of Novato, California, Living Videotext of Mountain View, California, and Think Technologies of Bedford, Massachusetts. Once acquired, the companies became Symantec product groups and stayed in their original locations.

After an Acquisition, Eubanks sent an executive staff member to the new product group to facilitate the transition and assess the performance of its managers. Eubanks chose to replace some top managers but kept the development technical support and marketing infrastructure. He planned to continue to make acquisitions, so Rod Turner, executive vice president, worked to identify acquisition prospects.

**Summary**

Symantec was organized into product groups and centralized functions. There were five product groups. The five product groups are database management, utilities, project management, outlining and presentation, and language products. These product groups each controlled its own product development, marketing, quality assurance, support and management. Most other functions (finance, human resources and sales) were handled by centralized departments at corporate headquarters. Some functions were centralized but not at headquarters, for example, purchasing and manufacturing were in Santa Clara, California and training was in Novato, California.

Within Symantec, due to its structure, information flowed across all of its boundaries. For example, on any given day, the following information flows might occur: Rod Turner, EVP and formerly director of international sales, would speak with Dana Siebert, current director of international sales, about establishing Symantec partners and distribution strategies abroad. Siebert would speak with certain Symantec partners, exclusive distributors, or subsidiaries about customizing marketing strategy to their particular market. The international partners would share ideas about marketing strategies. Because the international sales were growing, Siebert would speak with people in finance and personnel about hiring additional employees. This is just one example of how information might flow within Symantec.

In addition to these information exchanges, there were scheduled meetings and regularly issued internal publications and reports. Each department and product group held
staff meetings. Top executives met weekly; managers at Cupertino met quarterly. Sales managers and customer service representatives attended weekly training sessions to learn about products, upgrades and new features of a certain product. Customer service representatives attended meetings held by product marketing managers to learn about pricing and selling policies. The human resources department met twice a week to tell new employees about Symantec’s benefits and policies. In addition to all of these meetings, Symantec printed a quarterly newsletter, INSITE, which included general company information and was distributed throughout the company. Information was also shared through internal newsletters.

Despite all these communication channels, many employees expressed frustration that some information was not shared and certain groups (especially product groups) did not communicate with each other. Turner thought that this was because the product groups were geographically dispersed. The product groups (formerly self-contained, entrepreneurial companies) were not used to sharing information or being accountable to a parent organization. Eubanks on the other hand speculated that the groups didn’t communicate because each believed it knew the best way to do something and did not need to solicit information from others.

**Situation**

The main problem facing Symantec is the lack of IT planning which is leading to inadequate information flow within the company. As said by Eubanks, “When you are a company of 30 people, you shout over the side of the cubicle. But as you grow, you need proper communication flow or else you cripple the company. A methodology for getting information to flow among different departments was never set up at Symantec.” The rapid growth at Symantec has led them to have an inadequate IT system for the growing company. This is causing internal and external information flow problems.

**Porter’s five forces**

**Threat of New Entrants:** High

With Symantec being a software/technology company who provides application and systems software, the threat of new entrants would be high. The rate that Symantec tries to acquire competitors shows that this field is littered with many competitors.

**Threat of Substitutes:** High

There are many different types of software out there. Most products that Symantec offers will have substitutes for them provided by other companies. This will cause for a high threat of substitutes.

**Supplier Power:** Low

Symantec doesn’t require raw materials due to it being a software company. This means that there is a lack of suppliers meaning that supplier power is low.
**Buyer Power:** Low

Symantec has to price its software at a price deemed by the market due to there being so many competitors. The buyers don’t have much power. They don’t have much room to negotiate. Symantec doesn’t want to lose customers so they will have to price at the market price in order to compete.

**Degree of Rivalry:** High/Growing

Many companies are offering the same type of products that Symantec offers and many companies are starting to do this. This causes the degree of rivalry to be high and continuously growing.

**Stakeholders**

**Stakeholder 1:** Customers

Symantec Customers consist of its distributors, retailers and end-users. The Symantec sales force sold products to distributors, who then sold them to retailers, who then sold them to end-users.

**Stakeholder 2:** Symantec Employees

The employees would consist of Product group managers, marketing managers, sales representatives, sales managers, customer service representatives and top executives.

**Stakeholder 3:** President/CEO Gordon Eubanks

**Stakeholder 4:** Symantec Stockholders/shareholders

These are the people who have invested in the company. These people have the right to receive a return on their investment.

**Courses of Action/Alternatives**

1. **Do Nothing**

   If we take this course of action, nothing will be done to change the IT system of Symantec, thus keeping everything the same. This will keep all of the information flow the same and Symantec will operate in its normal state but it may prohibit growth in the future.

   a. The customers will still be able to purchase the products produced by Symantec.

   b. The Symantec employees will continue to work under the same system as usual. It has been stated that some of the information was not shared and that certain groups did not communicate with each other. This could cause some employees to become frustrated and they could possibly leave because of it.

   c. President/CEO Eubanks will continue to run the company per usual under the same system. The company will probably still make money but growth could be limited due to the insufficient system that is currently being used.

   d. The shareholders/stockholders wouldn’t be affected too much by this. The only issue would be if the companies growth is affected which could cause some of the shareholders to retract there investments.
2. **Purchase a new Email system or update the current Email system**
   Symantec uses an email system for the majority of its communication, so by updating or purchasing a new email system it could potentially fix some of the issues with the Novell LAN system. Symantec’s email package was intolerant of noise, making it impossible to communicate from places like New York City whose phone lines were noisy. With the purchase of a new Email system, many of these problems could be solved.
   a. The customers could benefit from better customer service. They will continue to be able to purchase the many products that Symantec offers.
   b. The employees would really be the ones affected by this change. They deal with the email on a daily basis. With the current system, the employees get frustrated due to problems with the system at least once a week. With a new system, these problems could be solved and information could possibly flow better within the company. This could make the employees happy which could potentially make employees work together better.
   c. President/CEO Eubanks could be affected because he would be using the email as well. With a new system, he could get information to people quicker and more efficiently. He could possibly manage the employees better. This could make Symantec run smoother and more efficiently. All the product groups could work together better and could communicate more efficiently.
   d. The shareholders/stakeholders could benefit from increased profits if the new system increased productivity and efficiency within the company.

3. **Hire a New MIS director**
   This action was based on finding a way to work with the current MIS system. Eubanks supported this action because he believed that Symantec needed a new MIS director who had better leadership skills and that new leadership in the MIS department could find ways to work with the current MIS system and could solve the company’s communication problems.
   a. The customers won’t be affected too much by this change. Symantec will continue to produce its products and the customers will continue to be able to purchase these products.
   b. The employees could be affected because the MIS department is notified when there are system failures or technological problems. If a new director is able to work with the current system and make it more effective, the employees would be more happy and could possibly become more productive.
   c. President/CEO Eubanks would be affected since he is on-board with hiring a new director. If the new director works out, it would reflect positively on Eubanks. He may be able to communicate more effectively with his employees which could allow the employees to work more efficiently. They would be getting the information that is needed.
   d. The shareholders/stakeholders could potentially benefit from higher profits due to increased productivity if the new director is able to work with the current system.
4. **Update the current Corporate Philosophy/strategy**

Using this action, it entails institutionalizing a unified corporate philosophy that would emphasize communication and establishing a unified policy in which managers will be expected to communicate this new philosophy to all employees. In order for this to work, corporate managers would have to decide on a new communication policy. Once this policy is decided upon, the corporate managers would inform all other managers who would then communicate that to their employees until everyone in the corporation was aware of the new policy. This will allow Symantec to continue using the current MIS system. These policies would meet the requirements for that of a large company, which Symantec is. This action is supported by Vice President Bob Dykes, director of corporate communications Loretta Wagner, director of product marketing for Q&A Kathy Johnson, director of human resources Dave Sornson and order administration manager Fran Steward.

a. The customers could be affected because customer service could be better which would make the customers happy. They will still be able to purchase the products that Symantec produces.

b. The employees could be affected because they will be the most affected by this change. With a new policy, they would possibly be able to communicate more effectively with each other as well as managers. This could cause employees to become more productive which in turn could increase profits for the company.

c. President/CEO Eubanks could be affected because he would play a big part in deciding which policy fits best for Symantec. If the policy works well, it will be reflected positively on him but if it fails, it would be reflected negatively. He would be able to possibly be able to communicate better with manager below him and information could flow more freely and effectively.

d. The shareholders/stakeholders could be affected by higher profits due to better communication and increased productivity.

**Recommendation**

I feel that the best course of action to take would be to update the current corporate philosophy/strategy to allow for better communication. I feel that this is the best course of action because it will be cheaper for the company since they would be using the existing system while updating it to keep up with the current state of the company. This would mean that Symantec doesn’t have to hire anymore employees and they wouldn’t have to purchase a new system to replace what they have. With this strategy, the employees, managers and upper management will be able to communicate more effectively and clearly.

This course will be the most effective because it will allow Symantec to keep up with the current trends in technology and will allow them to save money in the long run. The only thing that would need to be done would be to train the employees on the policy and demonstrate to them how it works and what is needed to be done. This will allow Symantec to be more competitive in the application/software field. Technology is a continuously changing field, and Symantec needs to keep up. Updating the current strategy to allow for better communication is the best way to do that.
Bibliography

“Case 4-2: Symantec” Management of Information Systems, CIS 401 Course pack, Professor Barker
