



Research Paper

Birth of a new theory from the Labyrinth of Pandemic

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31st December 2019 clock is ticking another 5 mins to 12. ADG is waiting for the final numbers with bated breath, determining the topline and bottom line. He reached out to mobile and called the GM finance for the report. The voice from the other side informed report has just been generated from SAP; final checking is going on, prima facie it looks good; however, within an hour, the final numbers will get published.

'Crossing the Chasm,' the famous book mentioning 'Inflection Point' crisscrossing the mind whether 30M\$ USD can be reached, whether positive PBT will be achieved in double figures?

He remembered the clarion call he had given at the beginning of the year, "Profitable Growth" will it get realized? The sound of crackers started to transmit through the walls; TV started blazing with the cheers of the happy new year, Welcoming 2020; nothing seemed to be getting into Ear waiting for the impatient phone call. 12:30 am, the much-awaited call came announcing a 30M\$ number with PBT of + 10%. Suddenly ADG could feel the joy in the air, and he also joined the party to cheer 2020.

With the business growing double with profitability, planned 2020 immaculately. SME(Star Medical Equipment)had decided to participate in the most extensive exhibition of Medical Imaging Products conducted by the Radiological and Imaging Association (RIA). Took the most oversized stall to create a positive reinforcement among the team & customers.

2020 started on a positive note first two months clocked 40% growth over the last year, i.e., 2019.

March was looking good with healthy order intake with news of COVID 19 tickling in. The first two weeks recorded 1.2M\$ billing, and Strategy and Planning team was preparing for another 2.5M\$ billings as the last week of the quarter usually records heavy billing. However, on 24th March, the Govt declared the lockdown with the news of infection spreading 21 days.

The mood of the entire country turned sad news of death coming mainly from Italy filled the air; fear psychosis gripped the human mind. The business was a far cry, and everyone seemed to be engulfed with a fear of doomsday approaching. However, hardly any options for the Medical Imaging business are left being an actual B2B business where customer interaction is imperative. It is a business where the relationship with customers plays a critical role. Therefore, there was an acute need to find ways and means to keep customers engaged.

At the same time, it became essential to keep the entire workforce comprising sales, application, and customer support team motivated and engaged.

Entire management, including HQ, was a confused and anxious call from team members that needed to be addressed. Hence, ADG first took the initiative to address the team members and was confident that no drastic measures like attrition would happen and division would soon take appropriate steps to ensure customer and management interaction. Conveyed the message through the online meeting to the entire team. This meeting envisioned conducting online continuous medical education meetings with doctors and christening it as ECME. Immediately shared the idea with Global Incharge. He was thrilled with the idea but was apprehensive about the execution part. ADG asked for some time and decided to discuss with the management team of SME to identify the key members to take this idea forward. He also invited the marketing team to join the discussion. Convened the online meeting and intense brainstorming took place from all over the country, the idea of ECME was shared everyone responded in positive however differences cropped up in regards to choosing the platform, after lengthy deliberations 6-member task force team constituted with the Product Manager, Marketing Manager and representatives from sales and application team were selected keeping in mind their penchant for conducting educational programs with Key opinion leaders (KOL). They have been asked to report with the details of the KOL(Key Opinion Leader) list, their remuneration, and the online platform to be used; they had ruled out internal platform usage as it can only cater to 50 participants.

The task force team at the end of 2nd day presented the detailed plan with the name of KOLs; it should be worthy of mentioning that within a space of 48 hours, they had done a splendid job of connecting with KOLs

from all the corners of the country and got their consent. It has been decided in the presence of ADG and Global Incharge that SME will also shell out token remuneration as recognition of their effort. The platform decided JUUM and branding of the ECME proposed by Global.

Incharge is ONE, the abbreviated form of online education.

The first ECME was proposed on 15th April; however, on 7th April marketing team reported the software solution division rejected the approval of JUUM as some data irregularities said.

Catch 22 situations prevailed with the invitation sent to almost 500 doctors. KOL had already decided his topic and time slot, and the marketing lead informed new platform approval would take another 15 days.

ADG's plates were full. He had to take a call where all the sides to be maintained no negative message should reach the market; employees need to be kept upbeat, HQ was eagerly waiting for the first ECME; hence the right message to be conveyed to them. Sea of a dilemma with lurking fear of pandemic causing colossal damage to the business looming large with an additional fear of failure of the first initiative.

Finally, on the 10th, ADG called for an urgent meeting with the head of the B2B marketing and software solution division and asked them to explore all the options as doodle meets, M-soft Ateem, and EWebzx, and Going To Wewinar. Again, the same point came to the fore five days is too short a time. ADG asked them to find a solution and start a discussion with the vendors stating that there was no other option. Suppose required ADG had decided to pay his own money to keep the first program going. On the 12th, the marketing head gave the good news that Going To Wewinar has agreed to lend their demo platform with a capacity of 200 participants with the condition that we have signed with them for the rest of the year after the due approval process. ADG in no time approved this idea as an exception and given his go-ahead, finally, on 15th April the first program took place after the program started the mobiles of sales, application and CS team started ringing with the complaints from doctors that they were not able to join the program as capacity has reached the 200 level. Immediately marketing team requested the Going To Wewinar team to increase the power the obliged by increasing it by 100 total of 300; however, that was not enough. The entire team apologized to the doctors who failed to join with an assurance to repeat the same program shortly.

Therefore, the decision was taken after the program to expedite the approval process and enhance capacity to 2000 participants, which was earlier decided to 1000.

The very clamor of doctors to join the ECME forced me to ponder ADG to think about the probable reasons.

1. The thirst for knowledge or wiliness to learn.
2. As patient loads are missing hence want to utilize time to know something new, i.e., quality utilization of time.

The third factor circulated the invitation to 500 doctors through email and SME ultrasound. What's app group how it has reached to triple the number of doctors. He figured out the invitation had been recirculated to various What's app groups even through Facebook and other social media. **(Suddenly, it came to his mind the term METASTATIC MARKETING CAN BE COINED, OR NEW THEORY CAN BE BUILD AROUND IT amalgamating marketing, technology, and biological phenomena. Circulation, recirculation, and replicating messages through social media or different social media can give rise to a new Marketing Paradigm of the connected World).**

A Series of ECME programs started, and looking into the overwhelming response and phase-by-phase lockdown extension, the frequency of the ECME under the brand name of ONE had been increased. Further doctors started demanding sequential online classes for a single anomaly; therefore, fetal cardiac, fetal CNS (Central Nervous System) anomaly series developed with the competent KOLs.

SME during the course also identified to strengthen their presence in musculoskeletal ultrasound imaging by roping in leading KOLs from that area. This strategy worked very well in two counts 1) It helped to build up a prospect base around this area., 2) Kols also got interested in SME technology and showed their interest to buy the same.

During this endeavor, building up an advocacy platform became essential as competitors had also embarked on conducting ECMEs keeping their doctor's organization in the forefront. Therefore, we utilized our long-standing relationship with FGI and started back-to-back programs.

HQ planned to launch two premium ultrasound machines within 15 days during this time. As an on-ground launch will not be possible, SME decided to launch online.

The entire marketing taskforce team went into a huddle and came out with an idea of Launching the Models in a virtual 3D booth under the 'JOY OF MOTHERHOOD' for OB/GY centric model and 'EXPECTED THE UNEXPECTED' for radiology centric model. Incidentally, conducted both the launch under the grab of spreading the education through national and international KOLs with the help of HQ.

The terminology of the OB/GY program is done with a thought to change the paradigm of pregnant women. They are not patients; they are on the verge of welcoming a new life, and life is a synonym of celebration. The other terminology of the radiology segment symbolizes the new diagnostic features powered by AI.

However, something was missing during these programs as ultrasound is all about live imaging, unlike X-Ray, CT (Computerized Tomography), MRI (Magnetic Resonance Imaging). Hence after brainstorming, I connected with MBRIA (Maha State Branch RIA) to plan the nationwide online educational program through live demonstration.

ADG and the marketing team got in touch with the president of MBRIA. They convinced and negotiated 15 exclusive SME programs with a live demonstration of their premium machine installed at Medical College of Nalpur. It generated a lot of enthusiasm among the doctors' community. It gave the idea to BCG (Biggest Corporation of Gaurpur) to conduct the online evaluation of models quoted in their tender.

That's another event SME had successfully conducted during this lockdown.

During this endeavor, SME had realized it was also essential to conduct dedicated training programs for employees. Hence HQ has been roped in along with the SME team to conduct training for sales, application, and CS teams as reskilled employees always stay ahead, and this was the best opportunity to 'Sharpen the Saw .' A training calendar was published, keeping their training needs and soft skill training imparted, which kept them engaged and motivated. Gave a total of 35 activities were to the team.

The entire team was involved with the task force team in conducting the 50 CMEs and the task force team. Extended online working hours have been welcomed and accepted by the group as it ensured 'FIFTH DISCIPLINE' and helped ward off the feeling of uncertainty and fear.

From July, with phase-by-phase unlocking and opening up the market, ADG was concerned about how the post lockdown will affect the business. To his surprise, the company picked up drastically and resulted at par numbers of 2019 in the 2nd half of the year. Testimonial evidence of a 250 basis point increase in market share during this challenging time raised the market's eyebrows and HQ management, as SME achieved profitable growth during this uncertain time.