

Innovation campaigns in large sales organizations

Volkswagen mobilizes its sales employees for tackling new challenges

The Volkswagen sales department had to contribute cost savings and revenue increases for a large-scale transformation program. An innovation campaign was implemented within only a few weeks which resulted in very high employee mobilization and excellent contributions towards Volkswagens transformation program.



Company
Volkswagen AG

Industry
Automotive

Headquarters
Wolfsburg, Germany

Budget
€197 bn (\$256.1 bn) in 2013

Introduction

Volkswagen is the largest car manufacturer in the world and its core brand Volkswagen Cars is the benchmark in the automotive industry. To maintain its competitiveness Volkswagen Cars launched a three-year €5bn transformation program whose goal is to improve performance both on the cost side as well as the revenue side.

Issue & Challenge

Every department is required to contribute a certain amount to the program. While some departments are likely to contribute more on the cost side others, like the sales department are more likely to contribute on the revenue side of the program.

The sales department of Volkswagen Cars consists of 3,500 employees who manage the global dealer network as well as all after-sales operations. The board members were contemplating ways how to mobilize these sales employees for the transformation program and the changes it might bring.

Solution

Volkswagen decided to run a 5-week innovation campaign with all of its employees and to enable every single employee to contribute his or her ideas

towards the program. Within four weeks the complete campaign was prepared by a team consisting of Volkswagen and CrowdWorx employees. The campaign preparations involved

- **Briefing:** Defining the goals of the challenge and based on these goals the briefing for the employees which would include submission criteria and the timeline of the challenge.
- **Rewards:** The campaign would feature CrowdWorx unique Pairwise Voting technology for finding the best ideas and a jury which would review the top-voted ideas. Those ideas approved by the jury would then qualify for large rewards for the ideas' authors.
- **Internal Marketing:** A few weeks before the launch of the campaign the Sales & Marketing board member personally announced the campaign to all sales employees. On the day of the campaigns launch, employee interest had already reach high-levels due to the smart internal marketing which CrowdWorx implemented during the campaigns preparation phase.

The campaign lasted 4 weeks and was divided into three phases:

- **Ideation & discussion:** Within a 2-week period employees could submit ideas as well as discuss the ideas of other participants. This proved very valuable as it helped improve initial ideas as well as form a first consensus on what potential ideas could have.
- **Pairwise Voting:** This unique technology allowed to scan a very large number of ideas without missing hidden gold-nuggets. CrowdWorx voting technology was able to clearly separate best ideas from the rest of ideas (see fig. 1).
- **Jury:** The top-voted ideas where reviewed by a jury to make sure they would be feasible candidates from implementation.



Figure 1: Voting score in % (y-axis) for each idea (idea IDs on x-axis). The chart shows how CrowdWorx' voting technology is able to scan a large amount of ideas and to deliver a clear separation of top ideas vs. the rest of ideas. Source: CrowdWorx.

After the voting and jury results were in, the campaign could announce the winning participants which would receive the campaign rewards. During subsequent weeks and months the campaign team would inform participants about the progress on the winning ideas.

Impact

The campaign generated very large interest among employees and **more than 500 specific ideas** qualified for the voting phase. The employees as well as management felt a surge of energy going through the organization and employees were ready to tackle the challenges which the transformation program held for them.

The **top 40 ideas immediately went on to implementation** which kept the momentum from the challenge and mobilized employees even more. From the employee perspective, the campaign was proof that “the voice of the employee” can be heard even in the highest parts of the Volkswagen hierarchy and that **every employee could make a difference**.

From the top management’s perspective the campaign was an extraordinary success. After the sales department other departments already requested similar campaigns to be run by CrowdWorx with their employees.

About CrowdWorx

CrowdWorx® is headquartered in Berlin, Germany, and part of the Analyx Group, founded in 2007. CrowdWorx is the leading Innovation platform for small, medium, and global enterprises. We serve clients in Europe and North America with the full range of tools and services for Idea Management, Open Innovation and Innovation Consulting. CrowdWorx’ proprietary technology provides unique advantages for innovation programs, which generate measurable results and long-term impact.

Berlin, Germany

Rotherstr. 16
10245 Berlin
Germany
Tel: +49-30-22412-176
Fax: +49-30-41721-281

Poznań, Poland

ul. Św. Marcin 24
61-805 Poznań
Poland
Tel: +48-61-88577-00
Fax: +48-61-88577-15

www.crowdworx.com