Géant wins big with *HappyMe*, Levtech's Loyalty365 Microsoft Dynamics Solution, enhancing customer acquisition, engagement and retention.

"HappyMe has disrupted the retail customer's convenience & loyalty perceptions".

- **Sajid Azmi, Group Head - IT & eCommerce (Géant, Géant Online)**

Truly making the customer the center of their universe, HappyMe, the FIRST digital loyalty solution for retail in the region, builds on Géant's core growth principles: customer focus and innovation. The solution has helped the retail leader adopt an insight–driven approach to serving and rewarding its customers.

Loyalty Programs have long been the staple for Customer Retention. However, as our physical and digital personas collide and boundaries collapse, it has become necessary to invest in technology solutions that can address the needs of this *"phygital"* world, enabled by automation and data-driven intelligence. Engagement that leverages the power of data is now the key to customer acquisition and retention.

With 35 million sales transactions in a year, Géant is amongst the leading Hypermarket brands in the Middle East and Africa. However, while business was booming, their next strategic step to standout in the ever-evolving retail industry meant a revisiting of their core principle – customer focus.

Organization Profile: Fu-com joined hands with Groupe Casino - one of the world´s largest French hypermarket chains, to bring the "Géant hypermarket" to Middle East for the first time. The first store in UAE was opened in 2005 in Dubai. Today, Géant has 21 stores with 800 employees and serves around 6 million customers annually.

Business Challenge: Géant needed greater customer engagement to yield insights that could help them serve the personalized needs of their customers, reward them meaningfully and ramp-up the overall shopping experience for them.

Solution: Géant's vision led to the inception of the 'Happy Me' App, incorporating an all-in-one virtual shopping assistant. To work in conjunction with the mobile app, Géant got Levtech's robust CRM application in the back-end, to store all customer information including transactions, points earned, vouchers etc., analyse data and provide reports, profile customers, send personalised offers, and do much more.

Industry: Retail

Country or Region: UAE

www.Géant -uae.com

"Our business has always been hinged on a strong customer focus. For us, the customer always comes first. And all our strategic discussions for the future also came back to the customer, placing him or her at the centre of any growth that we envisioned. So knowing our customers better became the core of our natural evolution to drive our next phase of growth"

Sajid Azmi, Group Head - IT & eCommerce (Géant, Géant Online)

The Need

Know your customer - Serve your customer - Thank your customer

As part of their customer focus, Géant had been toying with the idea of a loyalty program for a while. The aim was to reward and thank its existing customers and additionally engage new ones. However, they did not want to launch a program *that did not speak individually to each one of their customers.*

Alongside this vision for loyalty was the management team's curiosity to get answers to critical questions which they felt could guide their future strategy for growth - like the impact of non-availability of products, or service levels, or brand preferences, on customer behaviour. While Géant had been collecting and analysing basic data for a while, they knew they now needed a more drilled down and digitized approach to collecting data such as gender, demographics, shopping preferences and spending behaviour to truly *know* their customers.

The company's strategic management team spent several months brainstorming propositions that would help them truly understand their customers - what they want, when they need, and how they need it. Understanding the customer journey included capturing data across the complete purchase lifecycle, starting from decision making to the actual purchase, payment, after sales service and survey feedback, warranties, call centre interaction, social media dialogue and several other physical and digital touch points.

"We have nearly 11000+ transactions in Ibn Battuta alone in a day. If I can't keep my existing customers happy, what is the point of thinking about the rest of the market? So first we need to keep and retain our market-share by engaging our customers and serving them better. This was our objective"

Sajid Azmi, Group Head - IT & eCommerce (Géant, Géant Online)

The Objective

Innovatively engage your customer

The objective was an attractive, simple, unique, and most importantly, useful, loyalty program that could deliver data-driven insights pertaining to customer behavior, which could then be leveraged to build a stronger connect between the brand and its users.

While customer engagement was a natural requirement born of Géant's core focus on the customer needs, innovation was another objective, being a hallmark of progressive growth within Géant. Their philosophy for innovation was hinged on mobility, primarily to remain ahead of the market and engage effectively with a rapidly digitizing customer base.

Other than the value they hoped to feed back to the customers and the internal strategy teams through the solution, Géant was also clear on its cost objectives. A low cost of maintenance and a manageable total cost of ownership based on an operating expenditure model was also important.

Thus, Géant identified a five-fold objective to its loyalty initiative:

1. High Customer engagement to yield Customer insights (behaviour, profiling)

2. Innovative Solution (Mobility, app-based, rule-based CRM loyalty engine)
3. Simple and easy to use
4. Relevant to customers
5. Low Total Cost of Ownership & Maintenance

"Software is very addictive. You can want to keep on making it more perfect. But it is important to be timely in your approach, which is why we had set clear deadlines for the critical path and identified the priority of what we wanted first, even in terms of data."

Sajid Azmi, Group Head - IT & eCommerce (Géant, Géant Online)

Defining the Scope

With a clear vision of their objectives, Géant delineated their scope:

1. **An app-based engagement program**

   Being focussed on an innovative solution, Géant wanted to leverage the significantly high level of digital penetration in the UAE market (UAE has the highest smartphone penetration in the world at 78%). Géant decided to go card-less with a mobile-app based customer engagement program. This became the first app-based loyalty program by a large retailer to go to market, and helped differentiate Géant from its counterparts offering traditional, card-based loyalty programs.

   To work in conjunction with the mobile app, Géant needed a robust CRM application in the back-end, that could store all customer information including transactions, points earned, vouchers etc., analyse data and provide reports, profile customers, send personalised offers, and do much more.

2. **Defined features:** An all-in-one virtual shopping assistant, family group based loyalty, shopping list, to name a few

3. **Defined metrics:** Parameters and priority for the data to be collected and analysed (demographic, geographic, psychographic, behavioural)

4. **Defined Deadlines:** Set the critical path of solution delivery

"So, the decision for Microsoft was already taken. But even within this space, we didn't want a plug and play solution. So now the question was choosing the right system integrator that could understand our specific unique needs and grow with us and be flexible to work with us on bettering the end solution to suit our requirements. And the team from Levtech exhibited those qualities – that understanding and that flexibility. Plus they were very helpful and proactive in their approach to the solution".

Sajid Azmi, Group Head - IT & eCommerce (Géant, Géant Online)

The Selection Process: Why Levtech

With parameters and scope defined, Géant went through an exhaustive screening process for the selection of the solution provider for their Loyalty initiative, meeting nearly 11 providers before zooming in on Levtech. Pitted against some of the best names in the ERP and CRM solutions business, Levtech won due to a strong consultative approach, an informed team, a robust solution offering and a flexible 'can-do' approach, backed by strong retail domain knowledge. They bought into what we were trying to achieve while too many other providers did not understand what we wanted and were trying to adapt us to their solution.

Key strengths included:

1. Despite having Oracle and Gold PoS as back-end systems in the current landscape, Géant chose to go ahead with Microsoft Dynamics CRM because they were looking for a simple, yet powerful solution. Géant had already identified Microsoft as their choice of platform as the whole MS Ecosystem was easy to use and operate and exist in as the internal teams had high familiarity with Microsoft. Levtech's expertise and strength in Microsoft Dynamics solutions portfolio and their experience within the retail industry made their case much stronger versus other IT brands
2. Géant wanted a low-maintenance solution that was simple and easy to use. Levtech's solution presented a favourable Total Cost of Ownership for Géant , a critical aspect when rolling out massive, high-investment IT projects
3. Géant did not want an off-the-rack, readymade solution that would then be customized to their needs. They wanted to create a solution that could be tailored and provided advantages of the latest technology, based on their unique needs. Levtech's ability to adapt to this requirement of the client further strengthened their case
4. To top it all, Levtech's detailed understanding of Géant 's needs and requirements and the expertise and flexibility of their team to craft a solution specifically for Géant led to their selection.

Consequently, Géant teamed with Levtech Consulting to implement Microsoft Dynamics CRM for Retail, and Loyalty365 as an add-on solution.

Key Features and Functionalities:

- Access to real-time Loyalty points tally
- Group/Family Accounts for shared accumulation of points
- Digital Shopping Lists that can be shared across groups
- Digital Vouchers & Coupons
- Digital storage of Warranty details on the app
- Latest offers by stores and exclusive offers for HappyMe customers
- Driving directions to store

The Solution

Géant's vision led to the inception of the 'Happy Me' App, incorporating an all-in-one virtual shopping assistant. The specialized app harnessed the power of mobility of Géant's upwardly digital customer base. Happy Me was not aimed at only commercially incentivizing customers but was also a way to make shopping fun, interactive and engaging for them. Customers could have their own personal shopping space, where they could see and avail benefits and offers customized specially for them based on their past purchasing history and buying patterns.

To work in conjunction with the mobile app, Géant got Levtech's robust CRM application in the back-end, to store all customer information including transactions, points earned, vouchers etc., analyse data and provide reports, profile customers, send personalised offers, and do much more. For example, a key feature of the solution, 360 profiling, helped Géant gather customer data, across its whopping 184 nationalities customer base! By generating relevant insights from the same, Géant is able to target its customer base better with customized rewards and promotions that can not only trigger higher sales but also help build credibility and trust. The 360 profiling feature analyses data captured across various touch points, including social listening, to map detailed personas of customer behavior. Capturing data around customer buying patterns also helps Géant plan inventory to optimum levels.

"This initiative has been one of the most successful in the company's history, with even the board applauding its success. What we started as an engagement initiative has now become larger than life! Much more than we had imagined. And it has captured everyone in its excitement – existing customers, new customers, staff, partners, vendors/suppliers"

Sajid Azmi, Group Head - IT & eCommerce (Géant, Géant Online)

The Outcome

The impact of the Loyalty 365 & Microsoft Dynamics CRM solution has been far reaching for Géant. From happy customers to motivated employees, from higher sales to higher customer retention, Happy Me has served as a winner all the way. Some highlights include:

1. Only 6 months since roll-out, HappyMe today boasts more than 170,000 subscribers
2. Won the SL Award for best shopping app of the year 2016 (the Technology & Engineering Emmy Award for Outstanding Achievement in Gaming & Applications).
3. Finalist in 'Best Customer Experience Initiative' at World Retail Awards 2017
4. More than 190 different nationalities customers shop with us
5. More than 12 million screen views and 3 million sessions, and rising
6. The app was the No. 1 free-ranking app for the first 3 days in each market, without any promotions, advertising or marketing
7. Customer with HappyMe have 125% higher ATV then non-HappyMe customer
8. The success of the app has led to a multitude of partners seeking out Géant for tie-ups and bundle offers, wanting to be part of Géant's ecosystem
9. Information on frequency, basket size value, customer preferences and shopping habits is helping Géant enhance basket value with customized offers and targeted marketing brochures, additionally reducing their expense of producing & distributing nearly 300000 bulk/generic leaflets every 15 days!
10. Heightened convenience and satisfaction for customers (based on customer feedback/surveys/roundtables)
11. Happy Me even boosted Géant staff morale and generated a high level of excitement and motivation among internal teams
12. The popularity of the app is completely based on word-of-mouth as no above the line advertising spend was done to launch and promote the app/loyalty program

"The way forward would be merging the ecommerce with this as well as data enrichment. A lot can be done with data. Are we there yet? No. But we are well on our way. However we need to be careful, as there can be no end to data collection and mining. But not all data is useful. We need to be clear about what data are we capturing, why are we capturing it, and what we can do with it. Additionally, achieving the perfect balance of personalization without intrusion will remain our constant endeavor"

Sajid Azmi, Group Head - IT & eCommerce (Géant, Géant Online)

The Way Ahead

The Happy Me program has already led to many a happy customer for Géant. With 60% of their customers actively using features like Shopping Lists, the information pipeline being created for Géant is massive. As more and more data is gathered, the next step for Géant would be sifting through this data pool for transformative findings and generating actionable insights from those to truly benefit their growing customer base.

Key plans for the way ahead include:

- Merging the ecommerce with the loyalty program

- Data enrichment by incentivizing customers to voluntarily provide data
- Identify new relevant categories for data capture and further mine existing data for insights
- To become the Groupon of retail, enabling ancillary bundle discounts for customers by building strategic partnerships

About Levtech Consulting

Levtech Consulting is a leading technology consulting firm servicing organizations through delivering best-of-breed business solutions and industry-specific consulting services. Founded in 2009, Levtech operates from offices in U.A.E., Singapore, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, US, Japan and India. Driven by a strong management team with diverse industry experience, the practice consists of some of the finest talent in the areas of Business Consulting and Project Management for Enterprise Applications. With a team size of over 200 consultants, we have helped over 150+ customers transform their business globally.

Solutions provided by Levtech Consulting include Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP), Enterprise Asset Management (EAM), Customer Relationship Management (CRM), Human Resource Management System (HRMS), Business Intelligence (BI) and web/mobile app development.

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