V-Mart Retail: Scripting #NewCodeofWork with PeopleStrong Alt

Customer

V-Mart is a complete family fashion store that provides its customers true value for their money. Maintaining high standards in quality and design, V-Mart offers fashion garments at down-to-earth prices. Over a period, it has emerged as the destination of choice for bargain hunters and the fashionable alike.

V-Mart operates primarily in Tier II & Tier III cities with the chain of “Value Retail” departmental stores. Through its main motto of “Price Less Fashion,” V Mart believes in providing the latest trends to the upwardly mobile Indians at the best possible price. Today, they have a total of 172 stores across 145 cities in 14 states and union territories, with a total retail area of 1238832 sq. ft in prime states/cities such as Bihar, Chandigarh, Gujarat, Haryana, Jammu and Kashmir, Madhya Pradesh, New Delhi, Punjab, Rajasthan, Uttarakhand and Uttar Pradesh.

The Long List of Challenges- Before 2018

When you have over 8000 employees, ensuring seamless experience, while managing connect and collaboration is a challenge. On top of it, when these 8000+ employees are spread over 172 locations that too in Tier 2 and Tier 3 cities of India complexity increase manifold. V-mart, before 2018 was facing these complexities.

- Last Mile Communication- Because of a vastly dispersed workforce, the programs and policies implemented at the organizational level seldom trickled down to the last man standing. This resulted in High Attrition and Low Engagement levels.

- Consistent Employee Experience- Ensuring every Single Employee irrespective of their Physical Location get the same experience was a huge task to accomplish.
Employees had to depend on HR for even the most basic of queries, be it knowing their leave balance or the status of their attendance. This became a challenge especially when modes of reaching the HR were disconnected (email based).

Since there was no direct channel to reach the retail store employees, there was a lot of dependency on the store managers in terms of engaging the employees and ensuring implementation of HR policies/practices.

The HR function couldn’t operate effectively as a lot of time was spent in managing mundane processes.

The data and information flow were not interconnected.

In this scenario, while managing employee experience and keeping them engaged became an issue, there was a financial impact too. Manual process of collating disconnected time and time-off data resulted in a payroll cycle of over 12 days. i.e. employees getting paid for half a month, irrespective of them being at work – big impact on company’s bottom line.

Journey towards the #NewCodeofWork

The work of future would no longer be limited by geographies, hierarchies and work timings. The #NewCodeofWork hence calls all organisations to focus on systems which can bring together transparency collaboration and sense.

V Mart started this journey in early 2018 and partnered with PeopleStrong. A steering committee comprising of the CEO and CHRO and few other team members came together to drive this change. The following three outcomes were established for this digital transformation project:

1. The new system should be user friendly and simple to understand.
2. The experience should be single, irrespective of the manager, location or grade band.
3. The financial losses caused by disconnected systems should be eliminated.

Speaking on the occasion, Lalit Agarwal, Managing Director, V Mart said, “As we go full throttle on our scale up plans across India, we needed an HR Technology that could not only deliver exceptional employee experience to our vastly distributed workforce but also bring predictability to our decision making through single view of Data. We found all of it in PeopleStrong Alt.”
Once the steering committee was setup and project guidelines were defined following steps were followed:

1. **Process evaluation and redesign**

   V-mart realized that there were a lot of policies that had become outdated and no longer served any purpose. Such policies were dropped, and new processes got put in place.

   The new intent was to create centralized, standardized policies which were relevant with the new way of working. This meant a mindset change not just for the employees and store managers but also for the HR teams.

2. **Designing the tech framework**

   During this phase, the three objectives were kept at the centre and the digital framework of VMart was designed around it. Since it was a big mindset change, the scope of technology was phased out so that maximum outcome could be leveraged around the three key objectives.

3. **Setting up and going live**

   As soon as the design was ready, setting up the system was the next step. Thanks to the exhaustive effort put in the design phase, it was relatively easier to complete this phase with exceptional speed.

4. **Adoption and change management**

   Any system is only as effective as it gets adopted. This aspect has been the key focus area since the very beginning. During the change management process, the project team made sure of being in touch with the users directly to get any feedback. The result was that the product enjoyed MAU (monthly average users).

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   \text{98%}
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   **#NewCodeofWork and the early Impact in Numbers**

   While it’s still early days, V-Mart’s journey towards the #NewCodeofWork has shown exciting results across the **three key objectives** that were set in the beginning:

   - All employees across locations, stores and grade have access to a **Single, Unified V-Mart experience** instead of relying on emails for information transfer and communication. This makes access to information an easy process, along with an **Exceptional User Experience** with simple navigation.

   - Access to any employee of V-Mart, irrespective of location is now easy. Anyone in the company, from the CEO to the HR team can reach out to an employee in any location without having to depend on store managers. The effectiveness and reach of **communication** have improved as high as **50%**.

   - Financial losses have reduced **significantly** as the process now runs on a single unified system. There is no more wastage of time and resources while trying to solve problems on outdated systems.

   All three objectives set out in the beginning of the initiative were hence achieved.
#NewCodeofWork - Making collaboration work

V-Mart adopted Alt Messenger which is a secure instant messenger for enterprises. The aim was to connect the entire organization through technology that is effective and easy to use.

The unique feature of the messenger made a perfect fit for V-Mart.

- There was No Signup required. Since the system operates on employee data, all employees instant access to the system. In retail organizations, frontline workforce is seldom given access to official email ids. With Alt messenger this was removed and today every single employee is easily accessible.

- Strong internet connectivity remains a challenge in tier II and tier III cities. A lot of workforce is based in smaller cities. With this initiative, today the CEO, CHRO and the corporate teams can ensure that their messages reach to every single employee of V-Mart and on the other side, every single employee can reach out to the right people in case of any grievance. Collaboration has become possible with every information being available to everyone in the company. This has also helped create a sense of belonging with the grand vision of the retail chain and increase engagement as a result.

PeopleStrong is helping many such companies become future ready and create beautiful and engaging experiences for their employees. Refer to our #NewCodeofWork for more details.

PEOPLESTRONG ALT

PeopleStrong Alt Worklife is trusted by 200+ leading organizations to manage and simplify worklife of over 600,000 employees, across India. On its journey to write the #NewCodeofWork, PeopleStrong delivers its technology and services in one offering, using its on-demand technology product PeopleStrong Alt. Designed to be accessible on Cloud and Mobile, Alt Worklife Software Suite continues to add many industry firsts with application of Machine Learning in Recruitment Technology, NLP & AI enabled chatbot ‘Jinie’ for employee experience and launching India’s first HR App Store Alt One for HR Teams. PeopleStrong is the first company in the space to be successfully assessed on SSAE18!