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Proposal for Improving Information Systems at Maldiva Ltd.

1. Introduction

Maldiva Ltd. is a rapidly growing consumer electronics retailer that operates 30 physical stores alongside a successful e-commerce platform. Although the company has experienced significant growth in sales over the past year, its existing information systems have not developed at the same pace. As the business expands, several weaknesses within its current systems have become increasingly apparent, resulting in operational inefficiencies, poor customer experiences, and slower decision-making. If these issues are not addressed, they could restrict future growth and reduce the organisation's competitive advantage within the retail sector.

One of the company's most significant challenges is its reliance on a manual inventory management system. Stock levels are updated manually, creating discrepancies between physical stores and online sales platforms. Consequently, customers are sometimes able to purchase products online that are no longer available in stock. This results in cancelled orders, delayed refunds, and customer dissatisfaction. Furthermore, store managers experience difficulties monitoring inventory levels effectively, leading to situations where some products are overstocked while others are unavailable. Such inefficiencies increase operational costs and reduce profitability (Laudon and Laudon, 2022).

Further concern is the company's customer relationship management (CRM) process. Customer information is stored across several disconnected systems, preventing employees from accessing complete customer profiles. Without a centralised customer database, the marketing department cannot create personalised promotional campaigns, while customer service representatives struggle to resolve complaints efficiently due to missing purchase histories. According to Kotler and Keller (2016), effective CRM systems enable organisations to understand customer behaviour, improve customer retention, and build long-term relationships. Maldiva Ltd.'s current approach limits these opportunities.

The organisation also experiences difficulties in managerial decision-making because sales reports are produced manually using spreadsheets. Preparing reports is time-consuming and increases the likelihood of human error. As a result, senior managers often rely on outdated information when forecasting demand, monitoring sales performance and making strategic decisions. In today's competitive retail environment, organisations require access to accurate, real-time information to respond quickly to changes in customer demand and market conditions (Stair and Reynolds, 2020).

Another critical issue relates to data protection and cybersecurity. The company's current systems lack adequate access controls and security measures necessary to comply fully with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). Weak security controls increase the risk of unauthorised access to customer information and expose the organisation to potential legal penalties and reputational damage (European Union, 2016).

Finally, departments such as sales, finance and inventory operate separate software systems that do not communicate effectively. Employees are therefore required to transfer information manually between departments, increasing workload and creating opportunities for data entry errors. These disconnected systems reduce organisational efficiency and prevent employees from collaborating effectively.

This proposal recommends implementing an integrated Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system supported by Customer Relationship Management (CRM) software and Business Intelligence (BI) tools. The proposed solution aims to improve operational efficiency, enhance customer satisfaction, strengthen data security, and provide the organisation with reliable information to support strategic decision-making.

2. Evaluation of Existing Systems

The current information systems used by Maldiva Ltd. no longer meet the operational requirements of a modern retail organisation. As the company has expanded, the limitations of its existing systems have become increasingly significant, affecting productivity, customer service, and business performance.

The manual inventory management system represents one of the company's greatest operational weaknesses. Inventory updates depend heavily on employee input rather than automated processes, making stock records inaccurate and inconsistent. Because inventory levels are not updated in real time, products may appear available online despite being sold in physical stores. This creates customer frustration, increases refund requests, and damages the company's reputation. In addition, inaccurate stock information prevents managers from making informed purchasing decisions, leading to unnecessary storage costs from excess inventory or lost sales resulting from stock shortages.

The company's customer relationship management processes are similarly inefficient. Customer information is fragmented across different databases, making it difficult to develop a complete understanding of customer behaviour. Marketing teams therefore rely on generic promotional campaigns rather than personalised offers based on purchasing history. Likewise, customer service employees cannot immediately access relevant purchase information when resolving complaints, increasing response times, and reducing customer satisfaction. Modern CRM systems are designed to improve customer engagement by integrating customer data into a single platform, something that Maldiva Ltd. currently lacks (Kotler and Keller, 2016).

Reporting processes also require significant improvement. The organisation continues to depend on spreadsheets for sales reporting and performance analysis. While spreadsheets remain useful for basic calculations, they are unsuitable for managing large volumes of business data because they require manual updates and are vulnerable to human error (O'Brien and Marakas, 2011). Consequently, management lacks access to accurate real-time information required for effective forecasting and strategic planning.

Overall, the company's existing information systems are fragmented, labour-intensive and unable to support future business growth. A more integrated and automated approach is therefore essential to improve operational efficiency and maintain competitiveness within the retail industry.

3. Recommended Solution

To address the operational challenges faced by Maldiva Ltd., it is recommended that the company implements an integrated **Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP)** system supported by a **Customer Relationship Management (CRM)** system and **Business Intelligence (BI)** tools. Rather than operating several disconnected applications, an integrated information system enables all departments to access and share data through a single centralised database. This approach improves communication, increases efficiency, and provides management with accurate information for decision-making. Modern cloud-based ERP solutions such as Microsoft Dynamics 365, SAP Business One and Oracle NetSuite are designed specifically to support growing organisations by integrating business processes across multiple departments (Laudon and Laudon, 2022).

The ERP system should become the core information system for Maldiva Ltd. ERP software integrates key business functions including inventory management, sales, purchasing, finance, warehouse operations and reporting into one unified platform. By replacing separate systems with a single database, information entered by one department is immediately available to all authorised users. This eliminates duplicate data entry, reduces administrative work and improves data accuracy (Monk and Wagner, 2013).

One of the most important benefits of an ERP system is real-time inventory management. Every product sold through a physical store or the company's e-commerce platform would automatically update stock levels across the organisation. This would significantly reduce stock discrepancies, ensuring that customers only purchase products that are actually available. Automated inventory monitoring would also allow managers to establish minimum stock thresholds so that purchase orders are generated automatically when inventory reaches predefined levels. Such automation improves stock availability while reducing the costs associated with overstocking and excess storage.

In addition to inventory management, Maldiva Ltd. should implement a modern Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system that integrates directly with the

ERP platform. A CRM system stores all customer information within a single database, allowing employees to access complete customer profiles, purchase histories, and communication records. This integrated approach enables customer service representatives to resolve enquiries more efficiently because relevant information is immediately available. It also allows marketing teams to develop personalised promotional campaigns based on customers' purchasing behaviour and preferences. According to Kotler and Keller (2016), organisations that effectively use CRM systems are better positioned to improve customer satisfaction, increase customer loyalty, and encourage repeat purchases. For Maldiva Ltd., improved customer relationship management would strengthen customer retention and support long-term business growth.

The proposed solution should also include Business Intelligence (BI) software to improve managerial decision-making. Currently, the organisation relies on manually prepared spreadsheets, which are time-consuming and susceptible to human error. BI tools such as Microsoft Power BI or Tableau automatically collect and analyse data from the ERP system, presenting information through interactive dashboards and visual reports. Managers would therefore have access to real-time information relating to sales performance, customer demand, product profitability, and inventory turnover. This enables senior management to identify market trends more quickly, improve forecasting accuracy, and make evidence-based strategic decisions. Stair and Reynolds (2020) argue that organisations using real-time business analytics are better able to respond to changing business conditions and maintain competitive advantage.

Another important recommendation is that Maldiva Ltd. adopts a cloud-based deployment model rather than installing software on its own servers. Cloud computing offers greater flexibility, lower infrastructure costs, and improved scalability compared with traditional on-premises systems. As the company continues expanding, additional stores, users, and business functions can be incorporated without significant investment in new hardware. Cloud service providers also perform regular software updates, system maintenance, and security improvements, reducing the workload of internal IT staff. Furthermore, cloud systems support remote access, enabling managers to

monitor business performance securely from different locations. Laudon and Laudon (2022) suggest that cloud computing has become an essential component of modern digital business because of its flexibility and cost-effectiveness.

Cybersecurity and regulatory compliance should also form a key element of the recommended solution. The company's current systems do not provide sufficient protection for customer information, creating potential GDPR compliance risks. Modern ERP systems include a range of advanced security features, such as role-based access controls, data encryption, multi-factor authentication, automated backups, and audit trails. These controls ensure that employees only access information necessary for their job responsibilities while maintaining detailed records of all system activity.

Implementing these measures would reduce the risk of unauthorised access, improve customer confidence, and help the organisation meet the legal requirements established under the General Data Protection Regulation (European Union, 2016).

Although implementing an integrated ERP solution requires a significant initial investment, the long-term benefits outweigh the costs. Automation reduces manual administrative work, improves operational efficiency, and minimises costly errors caused by duplicate data entry. Improved inventory management lowers storage costs and reduces lost sales resulting from inaccurate stock records. Better customer relationship management increases customer satisfaction and encourages repeat business, while real-time reporting supports more effective strategic planning. These improvements contribute directly to increased productivity and long-term profitability.

The proposed integrated information system also provides excellent scalability for future business growth. As Maldiva Ltd. opens additional stores or expands into new markets, the system can easily accommodate increased transaction volumes and additional users without requiring major changes to the existing infrastructure. This flexibility ensures that the technology continues to support the organisation's strategic objectives as the business develops.

Overall, implementing an integrated cloud-based ERP system supported by CRM and Business Intelligence technologies represents the most appropriate solution for Maldiva Ltd. The proposed system addresses the organisation's current operational weaknesses

by improving inventory control, enhancing customer relationship management, strengthening cybersecurity, supporting GDPR compliance and providing managers with accurate real-time information. As a result, the company will be better positioned to improve operational performance, increase customer satisfaction, and achieve sustainable long-term growth in an increasingly competitive retail market.

4. Implementation Plan

The successful implementation of an integrated Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system requires careful planning, effective project management, and strong support from senior leadership. Introducing a new information system affects almost every area of the organisation, meaning that a structured implementation process is essential to minimise disruption and maximise the benefits of the investment. A phased approach is recommended for Maldiva Ltd. because it allows the organisation to identify and resolve issues before the system is fully deployed across all stores and departments.

The first stage of the implementation process should involve conducting a detailed requirements analysis. This includes consulting key stakeholders from departments such as sales, inventory, finance, marketing, and customer service to identify their operational needs and expectations. Gathering these requirements will ensure that the selected ERP system supports existing business processes while also providing opportunities for process improvement. During this stage, the organisation should evaluate potential ERP vendors based on factors such as functionality, cost, scalability, technical support, ease of integration and compliance with data protection regulations (Monk and Wagner, 2013). Selecting a solution that aligns with both current operations and future growth plans is essential for long-term success.

Following system selection, the next stage involves system configuration and data migration. Existing customer records, supplier information, product catalogues, inventory data, and financial records must be transferred from the current systems into the new ERP platform. Before migration takes place, the data should be reviewed and cleansed to remove duplicate, incomplete, or inaccurate records. High-quality data is

essential because poor data quality can reduce system performance and affect the accuracy of business reports. Testing should be carried out throughout the migration process to ensure that information has been transferred correctly and that the system functions as expected.

The ERP system must then be integrated with the organisation's existing infrastructure, including the e-commerce platform, payment systems, barcode scanners, and accounting software. Effective integration ensures that information flows automatically between departments without the need for manual data entry. For example, when a customer purchases a product online, the inventory levels should update immediately, while sales and financial records should also be adjusted automatically. This level of integration improves efficiency, reduces human error, and provides employees with access to accurate real-time information (Laudon and Laudon, 2022).

Employee training is another critical factor in the success of the implementation. Even the most advanced information system will fail to deliver its intended benefits if employees do not understand how to use it effectively. Comprehensive training programs should therefore be delivered before the system goes live. These programs should include practical workshops, online learning resources, user manuals, and ongoing technical support. Training should also be tailored to different job roles, ensuring that employees understand the specific functions relevant to their responsibilities. Managers should receive additional instruction on using reporting and Business Intelligence (BI) tools to support strategic decision-making. Providing continuous support after implementation will help employees adapt to the new system and reduce resistance to change.

Before introducing the ERP system across all 30 stores, Maldiva Ltd. should conduct a pilot implementation in one or two selected locations. A pilot program enables the organisation to evaluate system performance in a controlled environment while identifying technical issues or process improvements before company-wide deployment. Feedback from employees involved in the pilot should be collected and used to refine the system configuration and training materials. Once the pilot has been successfully

completed, the ERP system can be rolled out gradually across the remaining stores and departments, reducing operational risks and ensuring a smoother transition.

Although the proposed implementation offers significant long-term benefits, several challenges may arise. Employees may resist adopting new technologies because they are comfortable with existing working practices or fear that automation will increase workloads or reduce job security. Effective communication from senior management is therefore essential to explain the reasons for the change and the benefits it will bring to both the organisation and its employees. Regular updates, staff involvement in the implementation process, and ongoing support can help reduce resistance and encourage user acceptance.

Another challenge is the initial financial investment required for purchasing software licenses, system configuration, staff training, and data migration. While these costs may be considerable, they should be viewed as a long-term investment rather than a short term expense. Improved efficiency reduced operational errors, lower inventory costs, and enhanced customer satisfaction are expected to generate significant financial returns over time.

Following full implementation, Maldiva Ltd. should continuously monitor the performance of the new information system using Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). Measures such as inventory accuracy, order fulfilment times, customer satisfaction scores, sales growth, reporting speed, and employee productivity should be reviewed regularly. Monitoring these indicators will allow management to evaluate whether the new system is delivering the expected benefits and identify areas where further improvements can be made. Continuous evaluation and system updates will ensure that the ERP solution continues to support the organisation's strategic objectives as the business expands.

5. Conclusion

Maldiva Ltd. has experienced significant business growth in recent years; however, its existing information systems have not evolved to support this expansion. The company's reliance on manual inventory management, disconnected customer databases, spreadsheet-based reporting and isolated departmental systems has created operational inefficiencies that negatively affect customer satisfaction, employee productivity and overall business performance. In addition, weaknesses in data security and GDPR compliance expose the organisation to legal, financial, and reputational risks.

This proposal has recommended the implementation of an integrated cloud-based Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system supported by Customer Relationship Management (CRM) software and Business Intelligence (BI) tools. Together, these technologies would provide a centralised platform that connects key business functions, including sales, inventory management, finance, marketing, and customer service. By replacing fragmented systems with a single integrated solution, Maldiva Ltd. would improve data accuracy, automate routine processes, and enable real-time information sharing across departments.

The proposed system would deliver several strategic benefits. Automated inventory management would reduce stock discrepancies and improve order fulfilment, resulting in higher levels of customer satisfaction. An integrated CRM system would allow the organisation to build stronger relationships with customers by providing personalised marketing campaigns and faster customer support. Furthermore, Business Intelligence tools would provide management with accurate, real-time reports that support informed decision-making and more effective forecasting.

Successful implementation will depend on careful planning, effective change management, and comprehensive employee training. A phased implementation approach, supported by pilot testing and continuous performance monitoring, will reduce operational risks and improve user acceptance. Although implementing a new ERP system requires substantial investment, the long-term benefits—including

improved operational efficiency, stronger regulatory compliance, reduced costs and increased customer loyalty—are expected to outweigh the initial expenditure.

In conclusion, investing in an integrated information system will provide Maldiva Ltd. with a modern technological foundation capable of supporting future growth. By improving efficiency, strengthening data management and enabling evidence-based decision-making, the proposed solution will enhance the company's competitiveness and position it for sustainable long-term success within the consumer electronics retail industry.

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