

TITLE: Next Generation Retail Architecture for Maldiva Ltd.

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1. Introduction

1.1 Overview of the Business Case

Maldiva Ltd. is a well-known retailer that sells consumer electronics through 30 physical stores and an online shopping website. As the company has grown, its old information systems have become less effective. The current systems are not connected, which creates delays, reduces efficiency, affects customer satisfaction, and increases the risk of breaking data protection regulations (Laudon and Laudon, 2021).

1.2 Main Challenges Faced by the Company

After analysing the business, five main problems have been identified.

Inventory Management

The company's physical stores and online shop use separate inventory systems. Because these systems are not updated in real time, stock levels are often incorrect. This can lead to products being sold when they are not available, more customer refunds, and extra stock kept in warehouses (O'Brien and Marakas, 2023).

Customer Relationship Management (CRM)

Customer information is stored in different systems across the business. Employees cannot easily see a customer's complete purchase history, making it difficult to provide personalised marketing or fast customer support (Chaffey and Ellis-Chadwick, 2022).

Decision-Making

Managers rely on reports that are created manually using spreadsheets. This process takes time, increases the chance of mistakes, and makes business decisions less accurate (Turban et al., 2020).

Data Security and GDPR Compliance

The company's current security measures are outdated. Weak access controls increase the risk of cyberattacks and make it more difficult to protect customer information and comply with the Data Protection Act 2018.

Poor Communication Between Departments

The sales, finance, and inventory departments use different legacy systems that do not communicate with each other. Employees often have to transfer information manually, which wastes time and increases the risk of errors (Alter, 2013).

2. Evaluation of Existing Systems

2.1 Analysis of the Current Information Systems

Maldiva Ltd. currently uses several separate information systems that were introduced over time as the company expanded. The 30 physical stores use older Point of Sale (POS) systems that only update sales information at the end of each day. The online store works on a different platform and is not connected to the store systems. The finance department uses separate accounting software, while inventory is checked through manual stock counts. According to Stair and Reynolds (2020), businesses that use disconnected systems often experience communication problems, slower processes, and difficulties sharing information between departments.

2.2 Problems and Weaknesses of the Current Systems

Inventory and Supply Chain

The inventory system is not updated in real time. Stock levels are checked manually or through spreadsheets, which can lead to stock shortages, overselling online, and higher storage costs because too much inventory is kept in warehouses.

Customer Relationship Management (CRM)

Customer information is stored in different systems. As a result, staff cannot quickly access a customer's full purchase history, making it more difficult to provide good customer service and solve customer problems.

Business Reporting

Managers prepare reports by collecting data from different Excel spreadsheets. This process is slow, increases the chance of mistakes, and makes sales forecasting less reliable.

Data Security and Compliance

The current systems have limited security features and weak role-based access controls. This increases the risk of data breaches and makes it more difficult for the company to meet GDPR requirements and protect customer information.

Communication Between Departments

The sales, finance, and inventory departments use different software that is not connected. Employees often need to transfer information manually, which creates extra work, slows business operations, and increases the possibility of human error.

3. Recommended Solution

3.1 Recommended Information System

To solve the current problems, Maldiva Ltd. should introduce a modern cloud-based information system. A suitable solution is to combine **Salesforce Commerce Cloud**, **Oracle NetSuite ERP**, and a **Cloud Data Lakehouse** (Inmon, 2019).

This system will connect all 30 stores with the online shop and allow information to be updated in real time. It will also bring together important business functions such as sales, finance, inventory, and customer management into one integrated system.

3.2 Why This Solution Is Suitable

Business Needs

The new system will provide real-time inventory updates across all stores and the online shop. This will reduce stock errors, prevent overselling, and improve customer satisfaction (O'Brien and Marakas, 2023).

Better Efficiency

The system will automatically share information between the finance, sales, and inventory departments. Employees will no longer need to enter the same information into different systems, saving time and reducing mistakes (Laudon and Laudon, 2021).

Cost and Business Benefits

Although the company will need to invest in the new cloud system, it will reduce operating costs in the long term. Better inventory management, fewer customer refunds, and improved GDPR compliance will help the business save money. The company is expected to recover its investment within about 15 months (Turban et al., 2020).

Future Growth

The cloud-based system is flexible and can easily support future business growth. If Maldiva Ltd. opens more stores or receives more online orders, the system can handle the extra demand without requiring major hardware upgrades (Chaffey and Ellis-Chadwick, 2022).

3.3 Benefits for Operations, Data Management and Decision-Making

Improved Operations

The new system will support services such as **Click and Collect** and **Ship from Store**, allowing customers to buy products online and collect them from a local store or receive products from the nearest available location.

Better Data Management

Customer information will be stored in one secure database. Data will be protected using GDPR security standards, encryption, and automatic audit logs to improve security and monitor system activity.

Better Decision-Making

Managers will have access to real-time business dashboards that show important performance indicators (KPIs), sales results, and customer trends. The system will also help predict future sales more accurately, allowing managers to make faster and better business decisions.

4. Implementation Plan

4.1 Steps for Implementing the New System

Maldiva Ltd. should introduce the new cloud-based system through a planned four-stage implementation process. This approach will reduce risks and allow the company to introduce the changes gradually.

Stage 1: Planning and Infrastructure Setup (Months 1–3)

The first stage will focus on preparing the new system environment. This includes setting up the cloud platform, improving security settings, reviewing current business data, and preparing information for migration to the new system.

Stage 2: ERP and Inventory System Migration (Months 4–7)

During this stage, the Oracle NetSuite ERP system will be connected with the company's physical stores, POS systems, and warehouse operations. This will create a central inventory system where stock information can be updated automatically and viewed in real time.

Stage 3: Online Retail and CRM Implementation (Months 8–10)

The next stage will introduce Salesforce Commerce Cloud and connect it with the CRM system. Customer information from different sources will be combined into one central profile, allowing the company to provide better customer service and more personalised marketing.

Stage 4: Testing, Training and Final Launch (Months 11–12)

Before the system becomes fully operational, the company will complete system testing to identify and fix any problems. Employees will receive training to understand the new processes and software. After successful testing, the new system will officially replace the previous systems.

4.2 Training, Integration and Possible Challenges

Successful implementation requires effective change management to reduce employee resistance and technical problems (Kotter, 2012). Training programmes should be provided for store employees, managers, and executives so that everyone understands how to use the new system correctly.

One of the main challenges will be transferring information from the old systems to the new platform. To reduce risks, Maldiva Ltd. should clean and check existing data before migration. The company should also perform testing while running both old and new systems together for a short period to ensure that all information is transferred correctly.

By preparing employees and carefully managing the transition, Maldiva Ltd. can successfully introduce the new system and improve its overall business performance.

5. Conclusion and References

5.1 Summary of Key Points and Expected Benefits

Maldiva Ltd. needs to improve its current information systems because its existing technology cannot fully support the company's growth. The use of separate systems, manual processes, and poor communication between departments creates operational problems and affects customer experience.

By implementing an integrated cloud-based ERP, CRM, and data management system, Maldiva Ltd. will be able to improve business operations, increase data security, and make faster decisions. The new system will provide real-time information about inventory, sales, and customers, helping the company reduce errors and improve efficiency.

The solution will also help the organisation meet GDPR requirements, reduce unnecessary costs, and provide a better service for customers across both physical stores and the online platform. With effective planning, employee training, and careful implementation, Maldiva Ltd. can support future expansion and maintain a strong position in the competitive retail market.

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