

From Business Simulation to Business Success: Personalizing Strategy and Building Strategic Alignment to Accelerate Growth



For one of the largest premium wine and spirits companies in the world, holding their global industry-leading position was critical. In order to do so, they needed to win in the United States market where they were falling behind competition. With this goal in mind, the company transformed their strategy and re-vamped its ways of working to get closer to end consumers and accelerate growth. Essential to making this happen was re-structuring and re-wiring the organization to become flatter and to develop direct lines of communication between the field and headquarters, all with the long term aim of increased growth in the U.S. market.

"This is the first time I have experienced these types of "games / business simulations", so it was a leap of faith for me. However, I was really encouraged with how effective it was in trying to meet our needs of learning, getting people to work together, and having fun. Well done to all of you and thank you for your efforts."

– CEO, Wine & Spirits Company

In order to actually achieve this sustained growth and bring the new strategy to life, however, the organization's U.S. division needed to align the organization to the new ways of working. In addition, they had to push the responsibility and accountability to cross-functional teams for owning the business while promoting the company's values and culture.

Focusing on Pivotal Moments that Matter to Gain Strategic Alignment

To help the company achieve these goals and build strategic alignment amongst leaders, BTS created a digital, scenario-based business simulation that explored the pivotal moments leaders would face when executing the new strategy in the real world. The program experience took place over two days, with the simulation sessions interspersed by strategic discussions, individual feedback and coaching sessions, presentations by internal leaders, and social activities.

The business simulation was designed to personalize and align leaders around the new strategy, help them understand the behavioral shifts needed to execute and lead teams, and create a sense of accountability and ownership. In addition, the experience was planned to promote collaboration, a key component of the new strategy and organizational structure in what had traditionally been very siloed.

Cross-functional teams of six worked through the two business simulation rounds together, addressing five to six challenges per round. In their teams, the leaders practiced collaborating to handle tough situations, something that was missing in their old way of working. Teams were scored based on the metrics of net sales, brand saliency, contribution after advertising and promotion, and employee engagement.

Business simulations used in conference events like this are hosted and deployed through the innovative BTS Pulse technology platform. The program also used the BTS digital journey tool Changr, to engage participants before and during the meeting and to communicate with them post-event. Through Changr, participants received pre-workshop materials – an introduction and agenda, videos, participant bios, and more – that built excitement and engagement for the event. Post-workshop, Changr was used as an impact tool for action planning, follow-up surveys, and tool resource to generate business results

Lasting Impacts

The program was piloted at the U.S. headquarters during a two day session with organization's top 40 leaders. The response to the program was so positive that the CEO requested that the rest of the organization also go through the experience. To accomplish that goal, BTS has since converted the solution into a board "meeting-in-a-box" solution and trained internal champions in the organization to cascade it throughout the organization. The program is now actively being cascaded to the remaining 800 people in the US organization.

About BTS

BTS focuses on the people side of strategy, working with leaders at all levels to help them make better decisions, convert those decisions to actions and deliver results. At our core, we believe people learn best by doing. For 30 years, we've been designing fun, powerful experiences™ that have profound and lasting impact on people and their careers. We inspire new ways of thinking, build critical capabilities and unleash business success. It's strategy made personal.

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