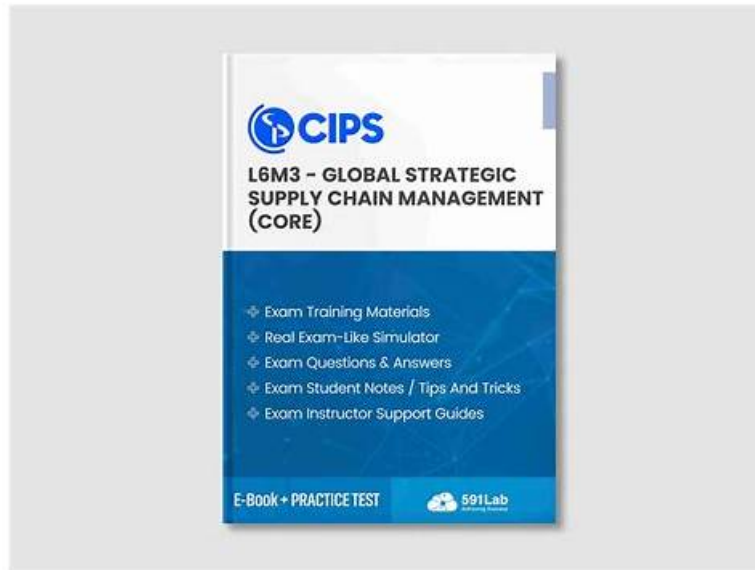


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CIPS Global Strategic Supply Chain Management Sample Questions (Q24-Q29):

NEW QUESTION # 24

XYZ is a paper company. Michael is the manager and is analysing their distribution system. Describe what is meant by a distribution system and discuss FOUR different distribution channel options XYZ could use.

Answer:

Explanation:

See the Explanation for complete answer.

Explanation:

A distribution system refers to the network of processes, intermediaries, and channels through which goods and services move from the manufacturer to the end customer.

It encompasses all the physical, informational, and financial flows involved in delivering the right product, to the right place, at the right time, in the right quantity, and at the right cost.

For a paper company such as XYZ, the distribution system plays a critical role in ensuring that paper products

- which can include office supplies, packaging materials, or commercial print paper - reach customers efficiently and economically.

The structure of the distribution system directly influences cost efficiency, customer service levels, market reach, and competitiveness.

1. Meaning of a Distribution System

A distribution system includes several key elements:

* **Physical Distribution:** The movement of products through warehouses, transportation, and delivery networks.

* **Distribution Channels:** The routes or intermediaries (such as wholesalers, retailers, or agents) through which products pass from producer to customer.

* **Information Flow:** The sharing of demand, inventory, and order data across the supply chain.

* **Financial Flow:** The exchange of payments, credits, and terms between channel members.

In modern supply chains, distribution systems are not just logistical mechanisms - they are strategic enablers of market access, customer satisfaction, and competitive advantage.

2. Importance of an Effective Distribution System

For XYZ Ltd, an efficient distribution system:

* Ensures timely delivery to customers such as offices, retailers, and commercial printers.

* Reduces logistics costs through optimal network design.

* Supports market expansion into new regions.

* Enhances customer satisfaction by providing reliable service and consistent availability.

* Facilitates inventory management and demand forecasting.

Given increasing competition and customer expectations for quick delivery, XYZ must choose the most appropriate distribution channel structure for its market segments and product types.

3. Four Different Distribution Channel Options

(i) Direct Distribution (Manufacturer # Customer)

In this channel, XYZ sells directly to end customers without intermediaries.

This approach is typically used for large, high-volume or strategic customers such as corporate accounts, universities, or government offices.

Advantages:

* Greater control over pricing, service, and customer relationships.

* Higher profit margins (no intermediaries).

* Direct feedback from customers for demand forecasting and quality improvement.

Disadvantages:

* High investment in logistics, storage, and sales infrastructure.

* Limited geographical coverage compared to using intermediaries.

* Requires strong IT and delivery systems for order management.

Example:

XYZ delivers large quantities of copier paper directly to corporate clients using its own distribution fleet or contracted logistics provider.

(ii) Indirect Distribution via Wholesalers or Distributors (Manufacturer # Wholesaler # Retailer # Customer) This is a traditional channel where intermediaries such as wholesalers or paper distributors purchase in bulk from XYZ and sell to smaller retailers or end users.

Advantages:

* Reduced distribution and storage burden on XYZ.

* Access to broader markets through the wholesaler's established network.

* Better service to smaller, geographically dispersed customers.

Disadvantages:

* Reduced control over customer service and pricing.

* Lower margins due to intermediary mark-ups.

* Risk of brand dilution if wholesalers handle competing brands.

Example:

XYZ supplies packaging paper to national wholesalers who then distribute to local print shops and stationery retailers.

(iii) Retail or E-Commerce Channel (Manufacturer # Retailer # Customer / Manufacturer # Online Customer) With growing digitalisation, XYZ could distribute directly to consumers and businesses through online platforms or physical retail partnerships.

Advantages:

* Expands customer base through online reach.

* Supports smaller, frequent orders (B2C or small B2B customers).

* Provides real-time sales and demand data.

Disadvantages:

- * Requires investment in e-commerce infrastructure and last-mile delivery.
- * Higher logistical complexity due to smaller order sizes.
- * Competitive pricing pressures online.

Example:

XYZ sells office and craft paper through its own website and third-party platforms like Amazon or office supply retailers.

(iv) Third-Party Logistics (3PL) Distribution (Manufacturer # 3PL # Customer) In this model, XYZ outsources its warehousing, transportation, and order fulfillment functions to a Third- Party Logistics (3PL) provider.

Advantages:

- * Reduces capital investment in logistics facilities.
- * Provides flexibility and scalability as sales volumes change.
- * Leverages professional logistics expertise and technology.

Disadvantages:

- * Less direct control over customer experience.
- * Potential dependency on the 3PL provider's reliability.
- * Possible information-sharing and confidentiality concerns.

Example:

XYZ contracts a 3PL to manage national distribution, including storage, packaging, and delivery to retailers and online customers.

4. Strategic Evaluation of the Options

For XYZ Ltd, the optimal distribution system may involve a hybrid model that combines several channels:

- * Direct distribution for large institutional clients (e.g., schools, corporations).
- * Wholesaler networks for smaller business and retail customers.
- * E-commerce channels for individual consumers.
- * 3PL partnerships to manage logistics and nationwide coverage.

This approach provides both efficiency and flexibility, ensuring that XYZ can serve multiple customer segments effectively while maintaining cost control and service quality.

5. Strategic Considerations When Choosing a Channel

When deciding which distribution channels to use, XYZ should consider:

- * Customer requirements: Order size, delivery time, and service expectations.
- * Cost and margin structure: Balancing logistics cost with profitability.
- * Market coverage: Geographic reach and accessibility.
- * Product characteristics: Fragility, weight, or storage requirements.
- * Technology and visibility: Integration of IT systems across the supply chain.
- * Sustainability and ESG objectives: Carbon footprint and environmental impact of each channel.

6. Summary

In summary, a distribution system is the framework through which XYZ moves its paper products from production to the end customer, encompassing both logistics and sales channels.

XYZ can choose among multiple distribution channel options- including direct sales, wholesalers, retail/e-commerce, and third-party logistics- or adopt a hybrid approach to meet diverse market needs.

The optimal system will depend on customer expectations, cost efficiency, and strategic goals, ensuring that XYZ's distribution network supports its overall competitiveness, service excellence, and long-term growth.

NEW QUESTION # 25

Describe 3 ways in which a market can change.

Answer:

Explanation:

See the Explanation for complete answer.

Explanation:

Markets are dynamic and continuously influenced by economic, technological, social, and political factors.

For an organisation operating in a global context, understanding how markets evolve is essential to maintaining competitiveness and strategic alignment.

There are several ways in which a market can change, but three key forms of change are technological change, consumer behaviour change, and competitive or structural change.

1. Technological Change

Technological advancements are one of the most significant drivers of market change. New technologies can alter the way products are designed, produced, distributed, and consumed.

For example, automation, artificial intelligence (AI), and digital platforms have transformed manufacturing and logistics processes, enabling faster delivery and improved efficiency.

Impact:

- * Creates opportunities for innovation and differentiation.
- * Can render existing products, processes, or business models obsolete.
- * Increases pressure on organisations to invest in R&D and digital transformation.

Example:

The rise of e-commerce and digital marketing changed how consumer goods companies reach customers, forcing traditional retailers to adapt or lose market share.

2. Changes in Consumer Preferences and Behaviour

Markets evolve as consumers' values, lifestyles, and expectations change. Globalisation, demographics, cultural shifts, and social media influence purchasing behaviour and brand loyalty.

Impact:

- * Organisations must adapt products and services to meet new preferences, such as sustainability, ethical sourcing, or health-conscious options.
- * Greater demand for customisation, convenience, and transparency requires agile and responsive supply chains.
- * Failure to adapt can result in loss of relevance and declining sales.

Example:

In the food and beverage industry, the growing consumer preference for organic, plant-based, and ethically produced goods has transformed the product portfolios of major multinational companies.

3. Competitive and Structural Market Change

Competitive dynamics within an industry can change rapidly due to mergers and acquisitions, new entrants, globalisation, or changes in industry regulation. Such structural changes alter the balance of power and profitability across the market.

Impact:

- * New entrants with innovative models (e.g., digital start-ups) can disrupt traditional players.
- * Consolidation through mergers may increase competition or create monopolistic pressures.
- * Shifts in regulatory frameworks (e.g., trade barriers, sustainability laws) may redefine market access and operational strategies.

Example:

The entry of low-cost producers in emerging economies has transformed global manufacturing and procurement strategies, forcing established firms to focus on innovation, differentiation, or nearshoring.

Summary

In summary, markets can change through technological evolution, shifts in consumer preferences, and structural or competitive transformations.

These changes can create both opportunities and threats. Strategic supply chain managers must continuously monitor external environments, anticipate trends, and adapt strategies proactively to ensure resilience and long-term competitiveness.

Effective market analysis and flexibility are essential to maintaining alignment between corporate objectives and the changing market landscape.

NEW QUESTION # 26

XYZ Ltd is a large car manufacturing company run by Bob. Bob is considering introducing a Network Sourcing approach to supply chain management. Evaluate this approach.

Answer:

Explanation:

See the Explanation for complete answer.

Explanation:

Network Sourcing is a strategic supply chain management approach in which an organisation develops and manages a coordinated network of interconnected suppliers rather than relying on a single, linear supply chain or a small group of isolated suppliers.

For a large car manufacturer such as XYZ Ltd, network sourcing focuses on building a flexible, collaborative, and resilient network of suppliers that can collectively deliver components, technologies, and services efficiently while supporting innovation, risk mitigation, and global competitiveness.

This approach recognises that modern supply chains operate as interdependent ecosystems rather than simple buyer-supplier relationships.

1. Meaning and Characteristics of Network Sourcing

Network sourcing involves managing supply relationships at multiple tiers to create a dynamic, responsive, and transparent supply network.

Key characteristics include:

- * Multiple interconnected suppliers providing inputs across tiers (raw materials, components, sub-assemblies, logistics, and technology).
- * Collaboration and information sharing across the entire supply network.

- * Flexibility and adaptability in responding to disruptions or demand fluctuations.
- * Strategic integration of suppliers based on capabilities rather than geography or cost alone.
- * Use of digital technologies (e.g., ERP, blockchain, IoT) to enable visibility and coordination.

For a complex product like a car - which can have over 30,000 components - network sourcing allows better coordination between Tier 1, Tier 2, and Tier 3 suppliers, ensuring quality, innovation, and supply continuity.

2. Advantages of a Network Sourcing Approach

(i) Enhanced Flexibility and Responsiveness

Network sourcing provides the ability to switch between suppliers or regions more easily in response to demand changes, capacity constraints, or geopolitical risks.

For example, if one component supplier in Asia faces disruption, production can shift to another supplier within the network in Europe or the UK.

(ii) Increased Supply Chain Resilience

A multi-tier network structure reduces dependency on single suppliers or regions. This supports continuity of supply in the face of natural disasters, pandemics, or trade restrictions - a critical factor for the automotive industry.

(iii) Access to Innovation and Technology

By maintaining relationships with a diverse network of suppliers, XYZ Ltd can benefit from access to emerging technologies and specialised capabilities (e.g., electric vehicle batteries, AI-driven safety systems).

Collaborative partnerships across the network can accelerate innovation and shorten product development cycles.

(iv) Improved Cost Efficiency and Risk Balancing

Network sourcing allows the company to optimise sourcing across multiple dimensions - cost, quality, lead time, and risk. It supports strategic trade-offs between low-cost regions and local suppliers for agility and sustainability.

(v) Enhanced Visibility and Collaboration

Modern digital tools enable real-time sharing of data on production, inventory, and logistics across the network. This transparency helps anticipate problems, manage performance, and ensure compliance with standards such as quality, ethics, and sustainability.

3. Disadvantages and Challenges of Network Sourcing

(i) Complexity of Management and Coordination

Managing a large and interconnected network is far more complex than managing direct suppliers. It requires advanced systems, skilled personnel, and governance frameworks to monitor multiple tiers effectively.

(ii) Data Integration and Visibility Issues

Achieving full visibility across all suppliers and sub-suppliers can be challenging. Without accurate data sharing, risks such as quality issues or delivery delays can still propagate through the network unnoticed.

(iii) High Implementation Costs

Establishing a network sourcing model requires significant investment in digital systems, training, and supplier capability development. For XYZ Ltd, this could involve upgrading IT infrastructure and integrating supplier portals.

(iv) Risk of Intellectual Property (IP) Exposure

Greater collaboration and information exchange across suppliers increase the risk of sensitive designs or technologies being leaked or misused.

(v) Cultural and Relationship Management Challenges

Suppliers within a global network often operate across different cultures, time zones, and regulatory environments. Building trust and collaboration across such diversity can be demanding.

4. Evaluation of Network Sourcing for XYZ Ltd

For XYZ Ltd, adopting a network sourcing approach could bring substantial strategic and operational benefits, provided it is implemented carefully.

Advantages for XYZ Ltd:

- * Improved resilience against supply chain disruptions (e.g., semiconductor shortages).
- * Faster integration of new technologies for electric and hybrid vehicles.
- * Greater agility to meet varying regional demand in the UK, Europe, and beyond.
- * Stronger collaboration and innovation with strategic suppliers.

However, it also requires:

- * Investment in digital connectivity (e.g., ERP, supply chain visibility platforms).
- * Development of cross-functional skills in supplier relationship management, risk analytics, and strategic sourcing.
- * Clear governance and performance management structures to avoid duplication and inefficiency.

If implemented strategically, network sourcing can transform XYZ Ltd's supply chain from a linear, transactional model into an integrated ecosystem capable of delivering innovation, resilience, and sustainability.

5. Strategic Implications

Introducing network sourcing will influence XYZ Ltd's corporate and supply chain strategy in several ways:

- * Encourages strategic partnerships rather than short-term cost-based supplier relationships.
- * Enhances supply chain transparency to support ESG compliance and ethical sourcing.
- * Requires digital transformation to manage data and collaboration effectively.
- * Aligns sourcing strategy with corporate goals such as sustainability, innovation, and customer responsiveness.

Ultimately, network sourcing becomes a strategic enabler of the company's long-term competitiveness in the global automotive

market.

6. Summary

In summary, network sourcing represents a modern, strategic approach to supply chain management that emphasises collaboration, flexibility, and resilience across interconnected supplier networks.

For XYZ Ltd, it offers the opportunity to enhance innovation, reduce risk, and increase supply chain agility - essential advantages in the fast-evolving automotive industry.

However, successful implementation requires significant investment, coordination, and governance to manage complexity and maintain data integrity.

If managed effectively, network sourcing can transform XYZ Ltd's supply chain into a strategic asset, delivering sustainable value and competitive advantage in global markets.

NEW QUESTION # 27

Discuss THREE challenges facing global supply chain management today.

Answer:

Explanation:

See the Explanation for complete answer.

Explanation:

In an increasingly interconnected and volatile global economy, supply chain management (SCM) has become more complex and risk-prone than ever before.

Global supply chains span multiple countries, time zones, and regulatory environments, making them highly susceptible to economic shocks, geopolitical tensions, environmental disruptions, and technological changes.

Today's supply chain leaders must manage not only cost and efficiency but also resilience, sustainability, and agility.

Three of the most pressing challenges currently facing global supply chains are:

- * Supply chain disruption and geopolitical instability,
- * Sustainability and ethical compliance, and
- * Digital transformation and data management.

1. Challenge One: Supply Chain Disruption and Geopolitical Instability

Description:

Global supply chains operate across multiple countries, each with unique risks such as political instability, trade restrictions, or transport bottlenecks.

Recent years have seen an increase in disruptions - from pandemics (COVID-19) and wars (e.g., Russia- Ukraine conflict) to natural disasters and shipping crises - exposing the fragility of global logistics networks.

Key Causes of Disruption:

- * Geopolitical conflicts: Trade sanctions, tariffs, and embargoes affect material flows.
- * Pandemics and global crises: Cause border closures, labour shortages, and port congestion.
- * Transport disruptions: Events like the Suez Canal blockage (2021) halted \$9 billion in trade per day.
- * Supply shortages: Scarcity of critical materials (e.g., semiconductors, energy, raw inputs).

Impact on Global Supply Chains:

- * Extended lead times and stockouts.
- * Increased logistics costs due to route diversions and fuel price volatility.
- * Reduced customer service levels and brand reliability.
- * Shift toward nearshoring and regionalisation to reduce dependency on distant suppliers.

Strategic Response:

Supply chain managers must focus on resilience and risk mitigation, including:

- * Diversifying suppliers across regions.
- * Building strategic inventory buffers for critical inputs.
- * Using supply chain mapping to identify vulnerabilities.
- * Establishing contingency and scenario planning frameworks.

Example:

Following semiconductor shortages, major car manufacturers like Toyota and Ford began developing multiple sourcing strategies and investing in local production capacity.

2. Challenge Two: Sustainability and Ethical Compliance

Description:

Sustainability has become a strategic and regulatory imperative in global supply chain management.

Consumers, investors, and governments are increasingly demanding transparency, ethical sourcing, and carbon reduction from organisations.

Managing sustainability across a complex global supply chain - involving multiple tiers of suppliers - is a significant challenge.

Key Issues:

- * Environmental sustainability: Pressure to reduce carbon emissions, waste, and resource consumption.
- * Ethical sourcing: Ensuring fair labour practices, human rights protection, and supplier compliance.
- * Regulatory requirements: Adhering to ESG reporting, modern slavery laws, and environmental regulations (e.g., EU Green Deal, UK Modern Slavery Act).

Impact on Global Supply Chains:

- * Rising compliance and auditing costs.
- * Increased scrutiny from consumers and NGOs.
- * Difficulty ensuring visibility and traceability beyond Tier 1 suppliers.
- * Potential reputational damage from unethical supplier behaviour.

Strategic Response:

Supply chain managers must embed sustainability into core strategy through:

- * Supplier codes of conduct and regular audits.
- * Sustainable procurement policies (e.g., prioritising eco-certified materials).
- * Lifecycle thinking - adopting circular economy practices such as reuse, recycling, and remanufacturing.
- * Technology adoption for traceability - such as blockchain for product provenance and carbon tracking.

Example:

Companies like Unilever and Patagonia have made sustainability a competitive advantage by enforcing ethical sourcing and publishing transparent supplier sustainability reports.

3. Challenge Three: Digital Transformation and Data Management

Description:

Digitalisation has revolutionised supply chain management - enabling real-time visibility, predictive analytics, and automation. However, many organisations struggle to integrate digital technologies effectively, manage large volumes of data, and bridge skill gaps in digital literacy.

Key Digital Challenges:

- * System integration: Difficulty linking ERP, logistics, and supplier systems across global networks.
- * Data accuracy and visibility: Inconsistent or incomplete data across supply chain tiers.
- * Cybersecurity risks: Increased vulnerability to data breaches and cyberattacks.
- * Technology investment: High cost of implementing AI, IoT, blockchain, and robotics technologies.
- * Change management: Resistance among employees and partners to adopt new systems.

Impact on Global Supply Chains:

- * Lack of real-time visibility hinders agility and decision-making.
- * Inefficient coordination across international partners.
- * Risk of operational downtime or reputational loss due to data breaches.
- * Delays in achieving digital maturity compared to competitors.

Strategic Response:

To manage digital challenges, supply chain leaders should:

- * Develop a digital transformation roadmap aligned with business strategy.
- * Invest in integrated systems such as ERP and cloud-based analytics platforms.
- * Use AI and predictive analytics for demand forecasting and risk management.
- * Strengthen cybersecurity policies and data governance frameworks.
- * Upskill employees in digital competencies.

Example:

Amazon and Maersk have leveraged big data, IoT, and AI to improve visibility, automate logistics, and optimise delivery routes globally - reducing costs while enhancing responsiveness.

4. Summary of Challenges

Challenge

Key Risks

Strategic Response

Disruption & Geopolitical Instability

Supply interruptions, cost volatility, delays

Diversify suppliers, regionalise operations, risk management

Sustainability & Ethics

Compliance failures, reputational damage

Audits, supplier codes of conduct, circular economy, traceability

Digital Transformation & Data Management

Integration issues, cybersecurity threats, data inaccuracy

ERP systems, AI, data governance, workforce training

5. Strategic Implications

These three challenges are interconnected.

For example, digital transformation supports sustainability by enabling traceability, while resilience to geopolitical disruption requires both technological visibility and ethical supplier networks.

A successful global supply chain manager must therefore:

- * Build resilient, transparent, and technology-enabled networks,
- * Balance efficiency with agility, and
- * Integrate sustainability into strategic and operational decision-making.

6. Summary

In summary, global supply chains today face increasing complexity due to disruption, sustainability pressures, and digital transformation demands.

To remain competitive, organisations must shift from traditional cost-focused models to strategic, data-driven, and ethically responsible supply chain practices.

By diversifying supplier bases, embedding sustainability, and leveraging digital innovation, global supply chain managers can create resilient, adaptable, and future-ready supply chains capable of withstanding today's volatile and uncertain global environment.

NEW QUESTION # 28

XYZ Ltd is a large hotel chain with 32 hotels located around the United Kingdom. It has traditionally allowed different hotel managers to run their own procurement and supply chain operations. The new CEO is considering adopting a Shared Services model. Describe what is meant by this and 3 models of Shared Services that could be adopted. Evaluate which strategy would be best for the CEO to implement.

Answer:

Explanation:

See the Explanation for complete answer.

Explanation:

A Shared Services Model refers to the centralisation and consolidation of common business functions— such as procurement, finance, HR, or IT - into a single, specialised service unit that serves multiple divisions or business locations within an organisation. Instead of each hotel operating independently, shared services allow XYZ Ltd to standardise processes, reduce duplication, improve efficiency, and leverage economies of scale across all 32 hotels.

This approach transforms procurement and supply chain operations from fragmented, location-based management to a strategically coordinated and value-driven function that supports the entire organisation.

1. Meaning of a Shared Services Model

In a shared services environment:

- * Core operational functions are delivered from a central unit ("shared service centre") that provides services to multiple business units.
- * The focus is on process efficiency, cost savings, standardisation, and service quality.
- * It operates with a customer-service mindset, where internal stakeholders (e.g., hotel managers) are treated as clients.

For XYZ Ltd, this could mean establishing a central procurement and supply chain management function that handles supplier sourcing, contract management, and logistics for all hotels across the UK.

2. Three Models of Shared Services

There are several ways a shared services approach can be structured. The three most relevant models for XYZ Ltd are:

(i) Centralised Shared Services Model

Description:

All procurement and supply chain activities are managed from a single central location, such as a head office or shared service centre. Decision-making authority and operational control are consolidated.

Advantages:

- * Economies of scale through consolidated purchasing.
- * Standardised processes and policies across all hotels.
- * Strong governance and strategic alignment with corporate objectives.
- * Greater negotiation leverage with suppliers due to volume consolidation.

Disadvantages:

- * Reduced flexibility and responsiveness at local (hotel) level.
- * Risk of slower decision-making due to central approvals.
- * Potential disconnection from local supplier relationships and needs.

Example:

XYZ's central procurement team manages all contracts for food, cleaning supplies, maintenance, and IT services for every hotel.

(ii) Centre of Excellence (CoE) or Hybrid Model

Description:

A hybrid model combines centralised control with local flexibility.

Core strategic functions (such as supplier selection, contract negotiation, and category management) are centralised, while local hotel managers retain control over operational decisions (e.g., ordering and replenishment).

Advantages:

- * Balances efficiency with flexibility.
- * Local hotels benefit from strategic supplier arrangements but retain some autonomy.
- * Facilitates knowledge sharing and continuous improvement.
- * Encourages collaboration between central and local teams.

Disadvantages:

- * More complex governance structure.
- * Requires strong coordination and communication between central and local units.

Example:

The central team negotiates national contracts with key suppliers (e.g., food distributors, linen suppliers), while local hotels place orders within those contracts based on demand.

(iii) Outsourced Shared Services Model

Description:

Procurement and supply chain management functions are outsourced to an external service provider or specialist procurement organisation.

The external partner manages sourcing, contracting, and logistics on behalf of XYZ Ltd.

Advantages:

- * Access to specialist expertise, technology, and global supplier networks.
- * Reduced internal administrative burden.
- * Can lead to significant cost savings and process improvement.

Disadvantages:

- * Loss of control over internal processes and supplier relationships.
- * Risk of misalignment with company culture or service standards.
- * Dependency on third-party performance and contractual terms.

Example:

XYZ outsources procurement of non-core categories (e.g., office supplies, cleaning chemicals) to a procurement service company while retaining internal control of key strategic sourcing.

3. Evaluation of the Models

Model

Advantages

Disadvantages

Suitability for XYZ Ltd

Centralised

Strong cost savings, standardisation, and control

May reduce local responsiveness

Suitable for standard, high-volume items (e.g., toiletries, linens)

Hybrid (CoE)

Combines strategic alignment with local flexibility

Requires robust coordination

Best overall fit for mixed hotel operations

Outsourced

Access to expertise and scalability

Loss of control, dependence on third party

Suitable for non-core categories only

4. Recommended Strategy for XYZ Ltd

The Hybrid (Centre of Excellence) model would be the most suitable strategy for XYZ Ltd.

Justification:

- * It provides centralised control over key strategic procurement activities (e.g., supplier contracts, tendering, sustainability standards), ensuring consistency and cost savings.
- * At the same time, it allows local hotel managers to retain autonomy over day-to-day ordering, ensuring flexibility and responsiveness to customer needs.
- * It supports collaboration and knowledge sharing, enabling best practices to be transferred across locations.
- * The hybrid model aligns with the service-oriented nature of the hospitality industry, where local customer requirements and regional supplier availability can vary significantly.

Implementation Considerations:

- * Establish a central Shared Services Centre for procurement, supply chain analytics, and supplier management.
- * Introduce a standardised e-procurement system accessible to all hotel locations.
- * Define clear governance policies for which decisions are made centrally vs locally.
- * Develop KPIs (cost savings, service quality, supplier performance) to measure success.
- * Provide training for local managers to use shared systems effectively.

5. Strategic Benefits of Adopting a Shared Services Model

- * Cost Efficiency: Consolidation of purchases increases buying power and reduces duplication.

- * Process Standardisation: Consistent procurement practices improve compliance and control.
- * Data Visibility: Centralised data enables better analytics and supplier performance tracking.
- * Strategic Focus: Local managers can focus on customer service rather than administrative procurement.
- * Scalability: The model supports future growth, acquisitions, or expansion into new markets.

6. Summary

In summary, a Shared Services Model centralises common business functions to drive efficiency, consistency, and cost savings across multiple business units.

For XYZ Ltd, the most effective approach would be the Hybrid (Centre of Excellence) model, as it balances central strategic control with local operational flexibility - essential in the hotel industry.

By implementing this model, the CEO can achieve greater cost efficiency, standardisation, supplier leverage, and data transparency, while maintaining the agility needed to meet customer expectations across all 32 hotels.

NEW QUESTION # 29

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