



Providing global business solutions for a truly global company

Consultancy Intec is helping The Gillette Company meet its global objectives through the intelligent use of integrated IT.

The Gillette Company is one of the world's truly global companies. In 1926, 25 years after the company was first established, King C. Gillette wrote of the company's flagship product, the safety razor, "There is no other article for individual use so universally known or widely distributed. In my travels I have found it in the most northern town in Norway and in the heart of the Sahara Desert."

The company comprises many of the world's leading brand names within the personal grooming, portable power and oral care product categories, including Gillette Mach 3, Gillette Venus for Women, Braun electric shavers, Duracell batteries, and Oral-B. Ensuring the consistency of business standards that characterise these brands across the globe is a challenge that The Gillette Company has ably met over the past 100 years.

Like any successful business, large or small, The Gillette Company is very focused on its mission – to achieve or enhance worldwide leadership in its chosen consumer product categories. Making the company's mission a reality necessarily involves the commitment of the entire company – a geographical spread now much further than even the company's founder envisioned.

One geographical region, AMEE, is responsible for all commercial operations to five Asian, Middle Eastern and former Soviet Union 'hubs'. The AMEE CITA (Corporate Information Technology & Applications) Group is responsible for ensuring the timely and consistent delivery of information systems as well as delivering efficient methods of executing business across this culturally diverse region.

The Gillette Company has long been a champion of integrating IT into its operations, streamlining business processes and adapting IT to meet the changing demands of its business. In addressing the needs of the AMEE region, the company recently undertook two core IT projects with the help of IT consultancy Intec. Intec has been involved within The Gillette Company for a number of years, providing a range of solutions including AS400 and supply chain projects.



Global Knowledge Sharing

One particular project required the definition and development of a central Intranet to deliver core information out to the hubs in Turkey, Dubai, India, Russia and South Africa and on to the local market subsidiaries of these hubs. Andy Davenport, Group Applications Manager for AMEE explained the need for the system; "We were keen to use technology to improve visibility of core management information, to ensure that each company had access to the same information, and also to reduce the amount of time taken up by head office answering the same questions for each of the hubs."

The Gillette Company enlisted the help of IT consultancy Intec to make its business vision of an integrated information source a reality. The two companies had been successfully working together on a number of projects over the course of their long business relationship. Intec has over a decade's experience of developing and implementing advanced solutions to major global enterprises, including The Gillette Company.

Intec's skills in integrating enterprise applications from diverse sources and taking applications to the Web enabled the team of consultants to develop the knowledge-sharing platform that the company required. "Our business team identified what we wanted to see on the system, and Intec worked with us to deliver it." Andy Davenport explained. "Initially the project started small, and as people started to get an appreciation of what the system would do, so demand to include other information grew."

The resulting information system delivers the information and knowledge that the hubs need to run their business – replacing the current business process, rather than adding another one. The primary site is hosted as a home page – and from this lead off a number of sub-sites for Finance, Business Management, Trade Marketing and Customer Services.

The Finance site delivers information about the company's latest policies, information or news flashes, market research data and budget information – providing visibility to key data and decisions, and delivering an important manpower saving to the company's head office operation. The Business Management site is used to share market intelligence and advertising copy with markets as well as being able to receive input from the local operations. Trade Marketing supplies Headquarters information and Customers Services contains the customer services policies, key performance indicator statistics as well as forecast information.

Delivering the solution placed demands on Intec's core skills – primarily in integrating existing Lotus Domino databases and templates with the customer requests for visually appealing graphics. As Andy Davenport explained, "The initial database was built over 4 weeks, followed by a period of intense activity as internal customers requested changes, it became an iterative process. Intec impressed us by responding well to the challenges of integrating Java and Lotus together – something they weren't designed for." Since its launch in January 2001 the system has received very positive and encouraging feedback.

Skills, responsiveness and empathy – the key to a healthy relationship

One of the key reasons why The Gillette Company and Intec enjoy such a healthy relationship is down to the shared values of the company. The Gillette Company rightly guards its leadership position and offers high quality products and services to its global customers. Intec also undertakes to offer the right solution to meet a customers needs. In The Gillette Company's case this involves delivering a wide range of skills across a variety of platforms and technologies; Access, Notes, Domino, WebSphere, Java and AS400; with a focus on support and commitment to the customer.

Working with its blue chip clients – like The Gillette Company – Intec is able to broaden and deepen its skills offering. The company has recently achieved 'Certified for e-Business' partnership status from IBM – a benchmark for the provision of high-quality e-business solutions consultancy and development. Clearly, Intec's qualification and status in this key area has come from the lessons the company has learnt delivering real-world solutions.

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