Southwest Airlines Competitive Advantage

Abstract

Southwest Airline's business model is comprised of their goal to maintain pristine customer service through their competitive advantages. Their efficient airline operations stem from customer satisfaction, motivated employees, low-cost production, and logistic solutions that maintain success within the airline industry. Southwest will only benefit from the enactment of a new digitized information system, OpsSuite. This information system was founded in 2017 that has made groundbreaking strides in digitizing Southwest. The efforts directly help employees understand and implement the 21st century technology that employs a web-based application to ensure traveler safety. OpsSuite has resulted in Southwest remaining as a top contender within the constantly evolving airline industry.

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The airline industry is built up of many private companies with the same goal, to attract paying customers. This forever expanding industry has been open season for businesses to develop and maintain competitive advantages over the other enterprises. Southwest Airlines have sustained a thriving business for the U.S. Airlines. Southwest has continued to spark competitive advantages from small to large over it's competitors. Low costs and, therefore, low fares are an enormous competitive advantage, when combined with their high-quality and loyal workforce (Blogin, 2011). Incorporating OpsSuite into their business model, Southwest has enhanced their outlook for perfefcted digitation in the 21st century.

Founded on March 15, 1967, Southwest has flourished as a U.S. airline for more than half a century. They have made tremendous strides to provide impeccable service to all Southwest travelers. Their motto, "Low fares. Nothing to hide. That's Transfarency" (Southwest, 2015), has led the success among other airlines. Southwest continues to produce simple to complex ideas that sustain a competitive advantage amidst competition in the aviation community. However, Southwest's most recent and eye opening competitive advantage is OpsSuite. This information system, built by Southwest has increased productivity, communication, and transparency between emplyees and customers. "OpsSuite was built by Southwest and a Texas-based software design and UX firm, Projekt202, which specializes in what they call "complex digital transformations" for their clients" (Ungerleider, 2017). OpsSuite is an application used by Southwest's employees to ensure passengers reach their destinations safely with more efficiency. Enacted in 2017, OpsSuite has been incorporated to digitize not only the airline, but primarily their employees. Education and training for the new 21st-century digital communication is a primary factor in the success of the application. OpsSuite enhances personnel to preform their jobs efficiently, communicate with fluidity, and maintain customer service throughout each interaction. The application is accessable through mobile devices to ensure efficiency and convience. The application allows employees to access information immediately upon request from travelers. "With OpsSuite tools, Southwest's employees monitor gate assignments and use, ensure luggage is loaded onto aircraft, and track a myriad amount of other traveler data" (Ungerleider, 2017). The application is able to connect hubs all over the world in regard to logistical ramifications that may occur due to impending storms.

Southwest has developed a software that enriches their employees thought processes, business processes, operating efficiency, and decision making skills. OpsSuite has helped Southwest have a competitive advantage over airlines that still use old technology because ‘it works for them.’ Change is good and Southwest has seen and taken advantage of it.

OpsSuite has changed the future of Southwest’s tactics. Their reestablishment of a information technology system has paved the path for success among competitors in the aviation community. Prior to OpsSuite, Southwest’s was lightyears behind the rest of the aviation community. Everything from customer service, flight operations, and maintaince documentation was used by a system that was over two decades old. However, in their defense the airline industry is an around the clock venture that makes downtime nearly impossible when there are paying customers awaiting travel services. The incorporation of information technology is a costly toll that could damage reputation and profit margins. However, Southwest made a smart decision when deciding to take the hit on profit margins to upgrade their systems to OpsSuite because of their ability to relax for many years to come. Their airline has merged an information technology and a successful business model into one corporation and has maintained dominance among competitors. As a commercial airline, Southwest has implemented the modern information system, OpsSuite, that has done nothing but help drive the on-demand economy.