

Digitals solutions

bring strategy to life

Nokia Siemens Networks completed its first-ever strategy round in early 2007. The company used the services of WSOYpro and AAC Global to effectively deploy its strategy.

Nokia's Networks business group and Siemens's COM division announced their forthcoming merger in June 2006. The merger was of unprecedented magnitude in the Finnish business environment. A 50-50 joint venture of Nokia and Siemens, Nokia Siemens Networks has some 55,000 employees in over 200 countries. The company's pro forma net sales would have amounted to approximately EUR 17 billion in 2006.

Nokia Siemens Networks provides communication networks and equipment and software. The company has five business units. The largest business unit is Radio Access, which employs some 5,000 R&D, product management and customer service professionals.

"Radio Access is responsible for the radio access technologies used in telecommunication networks. Since ours is a global product unit, our strategy is integrally linked to the overall corporate strategy," says **Juha Lappalainen**, the director responsible for the business unit's strategy process.

Strategy must be linked to annual planning

Officially Nokia Siemens Networks started its operations on April 1, 2007, but strategy planning naturally began the previous autumn.

"Rather than try and merge the existing strategy processes of two companies, we settled on the one that was more functional. Since our accounting, monitoring and planning procedures are closely related to the Nokia way, it was logical to have our strategy process follow the same model," Lappalainen explains.

"Our strategy process is based on the bottom-up approach. The work begins around November or December, at which time we start considering which topics will be most interesting in the next few years. Next, we hold a more extensive kick-off meeting and start honing the various elements of the strategy in smaller teams. By March/April we have a compiled strategy that is synchronized with our business strategies and figures. It sets forth the objectives we wish to achieve within the next four years."

"We'll remain open towards new digital solutions, since strategy deployment must be developed continuously. If we repeat what we did last year, people will think "Was this all there is?" Lappalainen says.





“The networks industry has undergone strong consolidation during the past two years. We’re now in more or less the same category with two other key players.”

– Juha Lappalainen
Nokia Siemens Network

Lappalainen explains that Nokia Siemens Networks observes a six-month budget cycle: objectives are set in the spring, and plans for the new budget start in the fall.

“The strategy we define in the spring must be immediately linked to the planning in the second half of the year. Otherwise people forget about implementing the strategy and all the work spent on its planning goes to waste.

Management presence important

According to Lappalainen, it is crucial that the results of the strategy work are communicated to the personnel in as understandable a manner as possible.

“A strategy cannot be implemented unless the audience to which it is communicated buys into it. Unless we package strategy in an easily understandable form, the hours spent on the time-consuming bottom-up planning will be wasted.

“In Radio Access, road shows involving the business unit’s management visiting our largest offices have shown to be the best method of communication. Our employees find it important that the head of a given business area comes and talks to them in person. Road show meetings also include Q&A sessions. Employee participation is often lively.

At Radio Access, strategy deployment meetings are scheduled for a period of 10–11 days in May/June. In 2007, the unit held a total of 12 meetings worldwide, with each management representative hosting two or three meetings. The meetings were aimed at the entire personnel of the unit.

You always need to offer something new

The management of Radio Access utilized the services of WSOYpro and AAC Global to deploy its strategy.

“The road show presentation was made in the traditional format – PowerPoint. However, when we went through strategy deployment methods with representatives of WSOYpro and AAC’s Nokia team, we realized that a simple PPT presentation would probably not be enough to ensure our message would get across. Together we created a digital video presentation and other content to support the road show and help the audience understand our message,” Juha Lappalainen recounts.

“The presentation provides a concise overview of our current situation, our challenges and what we need to do. The material we created together is also very motivating – we describe the new opportunities open for us and how we can overcome our challenges if we just take a bold step forward.

The material used in the meetings was later distributed to all of the participants. Radio Access, WSOYpro and AAC Global also created an e-learning solution which allows employees to access the presentation material even at a later date. Lappalainen explains that the e-learning project resulted from an idea to

create a new media that would reduce the workload of the person explaining the strategy. WSOYpro and AAC Global also supported the implementation of the strategy by organizing training based on simulations on four different continents.

“We want to come up with ideas of how we can further improve communication in the 2008 strategy round. If you wish to maintain interest in the strategy, you always need to come up with something new.”

Competencies and tools for change management

Drafting a successful strategy is one of the key tasks of corporate management. However, they must also ensure that the strategy is translated into practical measures and further into results.

Since the aim of strategy deployment is to motivate employees throughout the organization and ensure their commitment to the new direction, supervisors must have change management skills. The training methods applied by WSOYpro and AAC Global ensure that each supervisor achieves sufficient competencies in this respect. The organization can also utilize the know-how thus acquired in future changes.

WSOYpro and AAC Global also support strategy implementation and management with concrete instructions and tools designed to make messages more concise, initiate discussion or secure employee commitment and motivation. Supervisors have access to tools such as printed guides or versatile digital learning solutions.

During the deployment stage, all members of the organization must be made to understand their role in strategy deployment. Digital material assists the supervisors as they go through the new strategy and helps them approach complicated issues through discussion.

Change management during an integration process or in an international business environment faces the additional challenges of linguistic, terminological and cultural differences. Thanks to their team of cross-cultural training, language training, translation and localization professionals WSOYpro and AAC Global are able to ensure the success of change management and uniformity of communications also in multicultural and multilingual environments.

AAC Global and WSOYpro have come together to provide a new brand of competence and communication solutions. We combine different forms of training and communication with multilingual and multicultural expertise to best support our customers’ needs and success in a global business environment. Tel. +358 9 4766 7800, www.aacglobal.com, www.wsoypro.fi