

Case Study

Transforming employee experiences for Suntory Beverage & Food Asia



? Who is the customer?

Suntory Beverage & Food Asia (SBFA) is a leader in the beverage industry, based in Singapore with 22 factories and more than 7,000 employees across Asia, the Middle East and Sub-Saharan Africa.

As one of the region's foremost soft drink brands, SBFA is always exploring ways to improve and create products that are healthy, natural and valuable, bringing happiness and wellness into customers' lives. But the SBFA team realised they could only do that if their employee experiences matched those of their customers.

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The most important thing for us is employee experience and improving with each collaboration.

Diana Tan
Corporate Communications Manager
Suntory Beverage & Food Asia

! The challenge

SBFA put experiences at the heart of its ongoing digital transformation journey – from user experience to employee experience and finally to customer experience.

That meant looking consistently to iterate and make real changes that would improve day-to-day processes for SBFA staff and customers.

Central to that goal was the idea of simplifying complexity across the team – whether by introducing new functionality or by optimising existing infrastructure.

“We have a really strong working relationship with Telstra Purple based on a deep understanding of our business,” continued Tan. “That’s why it made sense for Telstra Purple to work with us to find the right problems to solve.”

As part of the drive to transform experiences, Telstra Purple and SBFA identified a range of potential areas to contribute to experience improvements.

From [improving communications with customers and partners](#), and [organising internal documentation](#), to assisting employee queries and simplifying vendor onboarding – nothing was off the table.

🔑 Key issues

Following a problem-solving workshop run by Telstra Purple, the SBFA team identified some key challenges that demanded attention.

First and foremost was the issue of vendor onboarding – a regular activity in a large-scale organisation dealing with a plethora of suppliers and vendors.

The legacy process was based on a complicated system requiring a specific naming convention to trigger the onboarding workflow within Microsoft SharePoint. In practice, what that meant was that mistakes or incorrect filing wouldn't trigger the workflow process – which could ultimately result in delays for both SBFA and the vendors themselves.

The workflow itself was also causing problems. Its size and the number of conditions involved meant that the process was running slowly and presented the IT team with challenges to operate and optimise its use.

Secondly, the SBFA team had also identified a challenge with the organisation's intranet functionality, where employees were struggling to find specific documentation among a vast range of policies and self-help content.

Employees unable to find what they were looking for were then asking help from the IT helpdesk teams to find the right documentation – spending their colleagues' time and effort on responding to questions and keeping them away from adding value in their roles.

Those issues were exacerbated because the administrators managing the organisation's intranet had little visibility of how employees were using the intranet itself. That made it difficult to report usage to the management team, let alone giving them insight into use by department, location, or query type when it came to internal documents.



The solution

After hosting a range of discovery workshops, the Telstra Purple team began work to design a series of proofs of concept technology solutions to boost employee experiences.

Basing solutions on the Microsoft Power Platform, Telstra Purple co-created solutions with SBFA to meet experience challenges.

Telstra Purple revamped SBFA's vendor onboarding process by integrating Microsoft Power Apps and Microsoft Power Automate into the existing SharePoint implementation. By creating a simple app to onboard vendors, users can input vendor details seamlessly and the workflow can begin with a click of a button.

Telstra Purple also worked to automate processes to optimise performance and added a reminder feature, greatly reducing the number of lapsed requests.

Secondly, Telstra Purple worked with SBFA to create a chatbot to support the internal helpdesk and reduce the amount of queries that required human help when locating specific documents.

Telstra Purple gathered the most commonly asked helpdesk questions and configured a chatbot using Microsoft Power Virtual Agents to automatically provide the best answers. By embedding the chatbot into SBFA's intranet, employees had a simple way to ask questions if they couldn't find what they were looking for.

Working closely with the intranet administrators, Telstra Purple also built a customised data visualisation dashboard using Microsoft Power BI containing metrics for administrators to understand employees' intranet behaviour. The easy-to-use interface and a wide selection of filters meant the administrators could accurately find the user activity data that they needed.



The result

"When it comes to the onboarding process, we've dramatically increased performance," concluded Tan.

"We've not only been able to improve the experience for users, but we've been able to reduce delays in the workflow and optimise the process. Staff can quickly and easily pick and choose the right option and send in their requests in ways they couldn't before."

The improved efficiency and user experience has seen a dip in the number of user complaints and workflow issues by 50 per cent in SBFA.

"Similarly, the new intranet chatbot has considerably reduced the number of queries requiring IT helpdesk support, so staff can concentrate on more valuable tasks," continued Tan. "The chatbot is answered approximately 100 queries per month in the first three months – a number that's only likely to increase."

Ultimately, the Telstra Purple projects are solving experience pain points through digitisation and automation, reducing duplicating of processes and simplifying complexities. And, for Diana Tan, there's still more improvements to make.

"We hope to build more alongside Telstra Purple. That means giving employees more autonomy, learning about how employees want to work, and then engaging with them to empower them as we continue to digitise our business," she said.



We've developed a relationship with Telstra Purple where we continuously try to find new opportunities to improve. We're candid with each other – we know that when something isn't working we can say so and get a new idea quickly. Ultimately we're both working toward the same goal – better experiences for our staff and our customers based on digital transformation.

Diana Tan
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