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Arc'teryx Streamlines Efforts to Do Right for Business and the World

Arc'teryx uses Smartsheet to track progress toward its goals and improve visibility and decision-making across its global offices.

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Jessica Burton, Senior Manager of Marketing Operations, Arc'teryx

Customer:
Arc'teryx

Industry:
Retail

Organization Size:
Large (1,000 - 9,999 employees)

Region:
North America

Website:
arcteryx.com

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Arc'teryx is a global design and manufacturing company based in North Vancouver, Canada, specializing in technical high-performance apparel, outerwear and equipment.

Background

Arc'teryx takes its inspiration from the Coast Range peaks that lie close to its headquarters in North Vancouver, B.C., and from customers who share the company's passion for the outdoors. The technical high-performance apparel, outerwear, and equipment manufacturer's four key values — evolve, commit, live it, and do right — provide a foundation for Arc'teryx to pursue business growth and innovative product design in ways that will do the most good in the world.

"We have what we call the code of the collective, which is a series of behaviors we adhere to, such as encouraging each other, assuming goodwill, and sharing information," says Jessica Burton, senior manager of marketing operations at Arc'teryx. *"There's a long list but it all really factors into what we do. We look at those as filters for making decisions, and Smartsheet helps us share information and provide context so people have the meaning and understanding behind why they're doing something."*

Key Arc'teryx initiatives include providing greater transparency about how products are manufactured, maximizing the performance and durability of products to minimize their impact on the environment, and reducing the time required to bring a product to market.

Solution

With offices around the world, and with a headquarters office that's divided between two buildings on opposite sides of the street, Arc'teryx needs tools that will help employees work better across large and small distances.

Through the Smartsheet platform, Arc'teryx employees streamline information capture and reporting, communicate across teams and offices, share information and improve transparency, use a single source of data to make decisions and take action, and work towards its ambitious goals.

"I'm using Smartsheet as a way to standardize information across projects so that we're providing better reporting up through the ranks," says Tom Giannelli, senior manager, business solutions at Arc'teryx.

Customer:
As Arc'teryx continues to grow, enabling that visibility is increasingly important for achieving its objectives. Teams can coordinate complementary efforts that allow more efficient progress toward overall goals, and can negotiate or collaborate to work out potential conflicts. Smartsheet helps foster efficiency with consistent templates and the ability to communicate in real time.

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One of the strongest points of OKRs is the alignment and the commitment. To have alignment, you have to have visibility. By having everything in one location — not multiple sheets, but one location — it's very easy to align with the other departments on what they're doing, on how you're feeding up into their OKRs, and on what you're doing that contributes to the rest of the organization.

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"More recently, we've been starting to use Smartsheet to track our company goals and objectives. We're using OKRs — objectives and key results — as a new method of goals and objectives. And we're using Smartsheet to actually track all that so that everything aggregates up to one level."

Giving All Teams Visibility into Objectives

Arc'teryx uses Smartsheet to power a new approach to goal-setting, with a companywide program of objectives and key results (OKRs). Leaders frame five-year strategic objectives for the organization; each department then establishes specific objectives that accrue to the larger goals.

Smartsheet makes it easier to view objectives across the teams and identify the dependencies between them. For example, a retail objective of increasing sales in brick-and-mortar stores by enabling endless-aisle capability, or in-store ordering of out-of-stock products for pickup or delivery, requires collaboration with Information Services (IS).

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Making Product Development More Efficient

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In a Nutshell:

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Burton collaborated with the product line operations team lead and key cross-functional stakeholders to create a virtual visual control board within Smartsheet that could be organized to show status at a glance and allow easier viewing of graphical elements. Product line operations staff still hold a weekly meeting with the Smartsheet visual control board, but it can also be accessed and updated anytime for an always-current view of project status and needs.

Sharing information in real time makes it easier for Arc'teryx to coordinate major initiatives across teams located in different cities and even countries. One of the company's major objectives is to significantly shorten the product development process within the next 10 years, which will not only save staff time but reduce the use of materials and energy. It's an ambitious goal that will require collaboration and innovative thinking, made possible by the company's decision to embrace the transparency that Smartsheet provides..

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Making Business Processes Run Better

In addition to its ambitious multi-year initiatives, Arc'teryx is using Smartsheet to simplify and automate a wide range of efforts, from managing event calendars and alerts to coordinating the work of contractors and tracking budgets. Burton says automated alerts help keep people informed, not just of small details but of big events and deadlines that might affect their teams.

"It's a good mental load reliever," Burton says. "I talk a lot about alleviating that mental load that we carry: Automate what we can so we can do the work we need to be doing."

One of Burton's favorite uses of Smartsheet is as a central repository for translation documents, including both final approved content and workflows for video and sales catalog publication. Having a single source of translated copy has significantly improved the integrity of Arc'teryx's translations, Burton says.

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She's also been able to use it to forecast workload needs and provide data-based justification for new hires. By showing the numbers for contractor hours used in one quarter and anticipated need in the next, she can make the case for adding headcount to before teams get overloaded.

Using Efficient Practices to Build a Better World

Efficient use of contractors and timely software upgrades are important, but Arc'teryx has a more pressing goal: Doing all it can to protect the environment. In addition to supporting nonprofits that help conserve wild spaces and connect youth and underserved communities with nature, Arc'teryx invests in business programs and practices that reduce the harms from textile manufacturing and help remediate damage already done.

The company takes part in industry-wide initiatives to reduce chemical runoff from textiles into the water system, and has launched a U.S. program called Rock Solid to keep old products out of landfills by helping customers resell Arc'teryx products they no longer use. Through these initiatives, Smartsheet is helping teams connect the dots across departments and offices, saving time and resources that can be put to higher uses.

"Our values factor into our work and our personal life, the work we do, and also how we work within the community," Burton says. *"And with our vision — we apply design everywhere — we're applying a design mentality and an evolution kind of spirit to everything, in ways that can make the world better. Whether that's designing a product that uses less fabric or designing programs that ensure that our product goes into the circular economy. And Smartsheet really helps us with that."*

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