

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of the skills project detailed in this paper is to improve the cross-border e-commerce order fulfilment process for the digital brands of XYZ by implementing a direct-to-consumer model from Sri Lanka to Australia.

In the fast-paced world of e-commerce, speed and cost cannot be mutually exclusive. Therefore, the need arose for XYZ digital brands to improve its current order fulfilment process to address the problems of high lead time for stock to move from the factory to the warehouse, slow last mile delivery from warehouse to consumer, and high end-to-end cost of fulfilment. A dedicated team was formed as part of a XYZ groupwide initiative to analyse the existing process to identify waste, to define the problem statements, and to conceptualise a solution to address the problems. Having identified the solution as a direct-to-consumer fulfilment model from Sri Lanka to Australia, the team set-up the required infrastructure to implement and sustainably commercialise the model.

The project consisted of six components; a current situation analysis, development of a middleware service, set-up of infrastructure for the direct-to-consumer model from Sri Lanka, compliance to international trade regulations, stakeholder engagement, and process testing. The implementation was carried out using various management techniques such as process flow charts, cause-and-effect analysis and diagrams, the five-why technique, Pareto analysis, meeting management, negotiations, PDCA cycle, simulations and Gantt charts.

The project was implemented and sustainably commercialised in Sri Lanka in the year 2018, meeting and sometimes exceeding the anticipated outputs, outcomes, and benefits from the direct-to-consumer model. The author played the role of the project manager, process owner, and project champion and developed several technical, interpersonal, and conceptual skills during the duration of the project.

In successfully commercialising the skills project, XYZ digital brands were able to reduce the lead time for stock availability, increase the speed of last mile delivery to Australia, and reduced the end-to-end cost of fulfilling consumer orders to Australia. The outcome of implementing this project is that XYZ now has the ability to offer the direct-to-consumer model to any digital brand that wishes to use the service, and in extension reap the benefits associated with the model.