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Business Writing

Final Paper

Most people today know of Verizon, but they were once part of a much larger telecommunications company, and have gone through many changes to become the overwhelmingly familiar brand they are today. Verizon began in 1983, although it was then known by the name Bell Atlantic. It was split off of AT&T Corp in 1982, as the result of an antitrust lawsuit by the United States government, to prevent a telecommunications monopoly. In these early days, the company known as Bell Atlantic covered a section of the northeastern US, stretching from PA to VA. In 2000, they purchased GTE and started the Verizon Wireless carrier. It was at this time that they also rebranded Bell Atlantic to Verizon, and marketed Verizon Wireless as their offshoot that would provide next-gen and wireless services. Since then, they have grown to become the largest wireless network provider in the US, as of Q4 2020.

Verizon established the Verizon Foundation, through which they direct their philanthropic energies toward education, domestic violence prevention, and energy management. They've helped provide equipment to schools in underprivileged areas, and held competitions to encourage ideas for uses for mobile applications. Through their company HopeLine, the Verizon Foundation donates mobile phones to victims of domestic violence, as even a wireless phone without service can still call 911 in an emergency. They also provide those same people grants to start or maintain a business, to support themselves and leave an abusive situation. As far as our environment is concerned, Verizon is aware of the impact they have, and in 2013 announced planned investments in solar panels and natural gas cells for their energy production

facilities. These facility updates would make them the leading solar power producer among communication companies. Verizon Wireless also deploys what they call COWs (Cell On Wheels) as well as other vehicles, to support network traffic for high volume events, or natural disasters where rescue teams need access to a reliable wireless resource.

There are areas in which they could use their standing as a market leader to make a further impact, such as improving their packaging to reduce waste, or ensure recyclable materials are the majority of what is used. This could potentially help them reduce the cost of producing units, as they would be able to spend less on materials, or recover cost from recycling packaging. The ability to repair devices has also gained support as a way to prevent waste, as recently as 2020 the Right to Repair Act was on the ballots in 20 states. If Verizon is able to get in front of this change, they stand to benefit from increased customer satisfaction, and could get more revenue from offering repairs and customization in their stores.

I should mention that I worked at Verizon Wireless, both in their Hanover, MD call center, and their retail sector in MA, for 8 years during the early 2000s, and my perspective on them as a company is certainly influenced by those experiences. If I were to offer any advice, it would center around how their workforce is viewed internally. Verizon Landline employees have the benefit of a union to protect their interests, but Verizon Wireless employees are without that protection. Employee burnout is a major concern, especially in the call centers, where new hire classes of 30 or more people are held on a monthly basis. The training is a paid experience, lasts 3 months and teaches new employees a wide variety of skills, but due to the nature of the job, there is a lot of employee churn within the first year. As the landline technology becomes less prominent and the wireless portion of the company advances in leaps and bounds, they will need to reinvest in their workforce to maintain the skill bank they have built up. I would also encourage them to consider updating some of their marketing to focus more on a life/tech

balance. One way to do this, would be to make sure they have some devices in their line of equipment that are focused on basic and simple functions. Many people are considering how much they use telecommunication devices, and how it affects their mental health, so having options for that part of the population could help them capture that market's attention. As such a large company, I think they provide great solutions, but can sometimes lose sight of how our relationship with their products has evolved. It is in these areas that I think they have opportunities for improvement.

Works Cited

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