



El Bebe Productions

shapecast
Case Study

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Company background

El Bebe Productions are a UK-based multi-national digital media business who provide children's animations and content distributed via YouTube, Netflix and Sky. They have quickly grown to be the seventh largest YouTube channel globally, offering content in over 200 countries and have amassed over 20 billion views and 20 million subscribers across all of their channels. Their top video has over 20 billion views and is an official Guinness Record for most views for an educational video (2016, 2017 & 2018)

The challenge

Despite their rapid growth since their inception in 2011, El Bebe Productions have a small, focussed design and production team with many potentially high-growth routes to new markets.

While growth has been historically aggressive, any growth has been organic in nature. As the complexity of the organisation has increased significantly, the number of potential routes to market have also grown. To cope with this, a highly structured execution plan linked to the right outcomes was needed. However, the team we're not experienced at bringing together a range of disparate and global activities in to a highly focussed delivery plan. This meant the risk of focusing on the wrong activities could significantly reduce the potential for continued high growth.

What we did

Initially, Shapecast worked with the leadership team to focus and get clarity on the objectives, outcomes and key performance indicators that were critical to the business that would drive the right outcomes. Whilst these were understood at the high level, they had not previously been articulated in detail and agreed with the leadership team

We then worked with El Bebe to understand all of their delivery activities across the business and linked those delivery activities to their strategic objectives using our detailed methodology. This measured the benefits and outcomes of each project and linked these through to the measures that were driving most benefit.

Following this, we were able to challenge the leadership team on how the work they were planning was really aligned to the outcomes they were expecting.

We then identified gaps in activity and developed a new execution plan which was more aligned to the outcomes they were looking for. As a result, some activities were de-prioritised, and others were initiated. These included a change in direction to focus on significant localisation of new global content, which was a lower priority activity at first, but when analysed was critical to achieving the successful outcomes for 2017 and 2018. We then developed the localisation plans in to much more detailed activities and assigned these activities to key members of the team to ensure accountability was tracked and recorded from the top of the organisation through to delivery.

We also then assessed and developed a risk, issues and decisions framework with clear accountability and ownership across the leadership team.

Finally, this information was linked and loaded in to our cloud based strategy execution platform where the El Bebe team were able to track, manage and monitor the progress of the execution. We then trained the El Bebe team on the use of the platform to ensure they are fully self-managing.

The outcome

As a result of the detailed execution planning El Bebe have focussed on new projects that will become hugely important over the coming years.

Some of the activity previously planned has now been de-prioritised or even removed while other work like landing their content across be regions has been initiated that was previously not planned to start until much later in the organisational growth time line.

As a result, the leadership team have clarity about what is really important and can track the delivery of the work across the whole organisation against clear objectives that are really important to them and will drive the business forward.

The impact of this revised approach was a significant reduction in portfolio spend in 2017 due to the removal of ineffective or unaligned programmes whilst prioritising and refocusing on the core strategic objectives, which have driven successful outcomes and subsequent revenue growth. These portfolio savings in 2017 were approximately £200,000 with the successful project outcomes and realised opportunities supporting an increase in revenues by £1.2m

Furthermore, El Bebe will continue to monitor the progress of their objectives online regularly and have a clear focus on delivery and how it will affect their 2018 objectives.

Quote from Derek Holder, El Bebe CEO

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After some early engagement with Will and his team at Shapecast, it quickly became apparent that not all of our delivery activities were aligned to our company vision and strategic objectives. Shapecast's detailed methodology and structured interview process challenged our thought process and uncovered gaps in our portfolio of programmes and projects which would have resulted in wasted time and cost as well unrealised opportunities.

Working backwards from where we want to be as a business at the end 2018, Shapecast helped us redefine our strategic objectives against the company vision and in turn realigned our programmes and projects to these objectives, the results of which have given our leadership team full confidence that executing our realigned portfolio will provide us with the outcomes we need in order to continue the incredible growth we have seen over recent years.

Not only did Shapecast help reorganise our portfolio but they provided their unique execution tool, Strategy Execution, to make sure all of the redefined objectives were executed efficiently, in the correct order, by the right people and at the right time. As a leadership team we have complete visibility over our portfolio and execution activity and can see where and why projects are stalling or tracking behind their timelines and also what course of action we need to take to get things back on track.

It's not only our leadership team that have clarity, our project team now have a clearer understanding of their responsibilities and accountabilities as well as an appreciation of the company vision and the part they are playing to support it.

The impact of this combined service and product-led engagement by Shapecast has been significant. We now have a fully aligned and joined up activity plan, the outcomes of which will enable us to take full advantage of the global opportunities that will present themselves over the next 12 months leading to a conservative budgeted revenue increase of around 15% on 2017 results.”