

## **D. Grant Ruesch**

### **Case Examples: Challenge faced; Actions taken; Results achieved**

As CFO of WNBC-TV, NBC's flagship station faced the challenge of limited resources to fund a desired two-hour hard news program in the Monday-Friday 5:00-7:00pm block. Working with the News Director, we opted to place the majority of our budget on the 6:00pm hour to air a competitive hard news show. We utilized remaining funds to air a new innovative soft news program from 5:00-6:00pm in which we invited entertainment and sport stars who happened to be visiting NYC to be interviewed in our Rockefeller Center studio. The program was called "Live At Five" and it took the market by storm. Innovation is often born of constraint.

As CFO of Sun Microsystem's Services arm, our upgrades business resulted in a huge volume of "good but used" computer gear returning to Sun's repair depots which was torn down and scrapped for pennies on the dollar. We saw an opportunity to create a "Remanufacturing Business" in which we performed a cost effective renewal program on computer equipment which enabled the resale of "like new" desktop computers. This effort resulted in an incremental revenue stream of \$250 million in the first year and, thereafter, generated high margin incremental business in the aftermarket. Sun's previous policy had a huge opportunity cost which was the foregone benefit of aftermarket sales.

As VP&GM of Sun Microsystem's Support Services business, it was evident that we had highly successful but autonomous geographically-based businesses resulting in a grossly overlapping and duplicative cost structure. Recognition of the problem resulted in the unification of the autonomous businesses whereby we instituted global systems implementations and standardized product features and delivery processes. This greatly simplified our business, transformed the cost structure, and lead to a greater level of collaboration and best practices sharing. Global businesses require integration and unification across geographically established markets. Strong egos must work for the greater good of the global business.

As Senior VP of Global Sourcing for Sun Microsystems, it was imperative that we greatly reduce the company's cost structure in the aftermath of the Dot Com bubble burst in 2001. We embarked upon a series of real estate divestitures, Six Sigma projects, outsourcing initiatives and a global location strategy which resulted in a lower and inherently more flexible cost structure. We reduced total company spend by \$1.0 billion in the first year and proved that off shore locations offer lower factor costs without sacrificing quality. Sacred cows were the enemy.

As Senior VP of Partner & Alliance Sales for Sun Microsystems, we needed to rebuild the relationship with our value-added resellers and distribution partners who were feeling disenfranchised due to Sun's shift to direct sales in response to the sales downturn. We asked our partners to participate in the creative development of solutions whereby our partners were brought back into the fold with more robust value added offerings, better tools for supporting customers and monetary incentives to double down on the promotion and selling of Sun's technologies.