Developing Bosch Industrial Blowers and Devising Strategy for Re-Launch to Gain Competitive Edge in the Indian Market

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Abstract:
Manufacturers are facing tough times these days. Besides the perpetual challenges of rapidly changing customer needs and preferences, markets becoming more competitive with increasing number of players and product offerings, the global downturn, rising inflation and input costs, decreasing disposable incomes and tight money liquidity position across the world, are posing further challenges to the manufacturing sector. Manufacturers are being forced to produce the products that meet customer requirements and expectations at prices lowest ever. In recent decades, the search for significant cost-saving effects that characterise major process innovations, have driven the manufacturers towards simplification and localisation of the products, with an aim to absorb the shock of the squeezing margins. It was due to this critical ‘need’ that re-launch of Bosch Blower GBL800E was taken as ‘strategic requirement’ for 2013 by Bosch Power Tool Division.

Kano modeling and SWOT analysis revealed the improvements required in the existing product, in order to gain the competitive edge in the target South Asian power tool market. The changes were incorporated through value analysis and engineering and DFMA. Subsequently time-and-motion studies and partial automation of blower assembly line, Process and Product FMEA and prototype development were conducted as per ‘Bosch Production Systems (BPS)’ norms, to bring out a new version, improved in terms of aesthetics, functionality, productivity and performance, besides reduction in input and process costs by rationalisation of vendors through Kraljic approach.

Validation studies and field testing proved that the production cost was reduced by more than 18% and productivity was increased by around 50%, facilitating 12% reduction in MRP, thereby enabling price-positioning of the product to target 20% market share in 2013. Further action in terms of launch of two new models, one with lower motor rating and air volume but at around 15% lower MRP and another ‘cordless version’ at a little premium on existing product GBL800E, have been taken as projects for 2013-14.