



SANTA: THE CONSUMMATE ENTREPRENEUR

Most people think Santa Claus only works one night a year. Nothing could be further from the truth. Sure, product distribution takes place on one magical night, but Santa's operation runs year round and is one of the largest manufacturing and distribution operations in the world.

You've probably never considered the fact that Santa is the CEO of a large organization that not only distributes a vast assortment of products throughout the world, but does so in a single night with just a sleigh and eight tiny reindeer. Sam Walton would have killed to have Santa's logistics manual.

Do I believe in Santa? You bet your red longjohns I do. I especially believe in Santa's entrepreneurial spirit. Just consider all he does from an entrepreneurial point of view and I think you will start to believe, too.

Santa Is His Own Company Spokesperson

Santa is a brilliant marketer and knows that his image is the best marketing tool he has. No other face is as recognizable and no other entrepreneur has inspired so many songs. You'll never hear "An Ode To Jack Welch" on the radio ten times a day.

Santa's Customers Love Him

Just say his name around a group of kids and watch their little faces light up like Rudolph's nose. You will never see Bill Gates get that kind of reaction. Heck, he can't even make his own kids smile.

Santa Sets The Bar For All Entrepreneurs

When you list the traits of the perfect entrepreneur, Santa gets the highest marks. He has passion for his work. He loves his customers and will go to great lengths to make sure they are happy. He has the ability to spot consumer trends and bring products to market quickly. He can lead a large organization with a wink of his eye. He inspires those around him. He is tireless. He is dedicated. He is loyal. He is persistent. And above all, he is jolly. Name another jolly entrepreneur (other than Dave Thomas of Wendy's fame). I bet you can't.

Santa Is A Great Leader

Can you imagine trying to manage a few hundred giddy elves who are shut in year round and spend their off hours drinking spiked hot chocolate and doing who knows what with fairy dust? It would be enough to drive even the best of entrepreneurs to hide out at the North Pole. Somehow Santa manages the task without pulling his whiskers out. I expect he has a management system that promotes from within. The hard working elves get into management. The slackers are stuck cleaning up after the reindeer.

Santa Perfected "Just In Time" Manufacturing

Santa heads up one of the largest, most diverse manufacturing operations in the world. His product lines range from rag dolls to toy trains to rocking horses to baseball gloves for the little kids, to iPods and cellphones and diamond rings for us big kids. Santa's factory runs year round, twenty four hours a day, seven days a week and never, ever suffers from cost overrun or production shut downs. Santa perfected the "just in time" method of production that is used by many of the world's largest manufacturers today.

Santa Pioneered Global Product Distribution

Santa is the king of single channel distribution. How else could he deliver millions of presents to good little girls and boys all around the world on a single night? Santa's distribution process is a closely-guarded secret (elves and reindeer are required to sign iron-clad nondisclosure agreements), but I expect it involves a highly detailed logistics plan and the best CRM software on the planet. You never hear about Santa calling up a kid and telling them a present is backordered until July.

Santa's Delivery & Tracking Systems Are Second To None

If you think FedEx is number one at tracking packages think again. Santa's track record is spotless. He has never, ever missed a single delivery or left a box sitting on the porch in the rain. Every package is delivered in perfect shape, right under the tree.

Santa Wrote The Book On Customer Satisfaction

Santa proudly boasts a 100% perfect customer satisfaction rating. You never hear about class action lawsuits and Better Business Bureau complaints against St. Nick. Santa makes sure that his customers are happy and if they aren't, he'll come back next year to make things right. If JD Power could find him, I'm sure they would give Santa their Christmas Customer Satisfaction Award.

Santa Claus Is Watching You

Not everyone believes that Santa is the perfect entrepreneur. There are those kids who complain that Santa never brings what they ask for, but we grown ups know that Santa brings the gift that is deserved, not necessarily the gift that is asked for.

Here's a little Christmas tip from your Uncle Tim, boys and girls, ladies and gents: If you get a lump of coal in your stocking this year it's because you were bad and that's what you deserved.

It was not because Santa dropped the ball.

Merry Christmas everybody!