



What can a world leader in French lingerie teach you about the future of work?

The digital transformation of Chantelle

Welcome to the era of:

Game Changers



Groupe Chantelle CTO: A Game Changer Focused on Collaboration, Breaking Down Silos

In the latter half of the 2010s, Groupe Chantelle's top priorities have been to expand the reach of its brands and break down internal communication silos.

"That's where my job is focused," CTO Andre Wei said. "We're growing as a company, doing more internationally, adding more stores, and building up our brands. That's why people need to talk to each other. We still have silos in the company, and we're working very hard to break those down."

Groupe Chantelle is a global lingerie powerhouse. It designs and manufactures its own lingerie, corsetry, swimwear, and tights, and sells them under eight different brand names, including Chantelle, Passionata, and Darjeeling. It generates \$500 million in annual sales and operates 16 subsidiaries, seven e-commerce sites, 10 manufacturing establishments, and 240 directly-owned shops. It also sells products in 10,000 other retail outlets throughout the world.



"A collaboration tool like Fuze will help us deal break down silos and share information better."

As the company expanded, it launched a series of initiatives to transform its business practices and its delivery of IT resources. Several projects focused directly on communication and information sharing. Others pushed what Wei called a traditionally focused enterprise to embrace the cloud. "I convinced management that collaboration is not going to make sense unless you implement it for the whole group and bring everybody together," Wei said.

A New Communications Toolset

Groupe Chantelle's first communication-focused move took place before Wei joined the firm in August 2017. The "My Groupe Chantelle" project addressed the challenges the company had faced with email usage, file sharing, and calendars. The company was looking to replace its old communications toolset—Lotus Notes, an internet portal, an older generation of Microsoft Office, a Windows file server for sharing files—with new tools that did a better job promoting collaboration across the organization.

The company rolled out a new Universe brand collaborative platform that integrated with Google's Suite tools, bringing together email, document editing and sharing, and shared calendars. This enabled employees to create and develop interactive communities and collaboration spaces without involving IT, improving productivity across the board.

One of Wei's first moves when he joined the company was to build on the collaboration platform. He did this by adding Fuze to the mix. His plans call for Groupe Chantelle to deploy Fuze's cloud-based telephony capabilities to its Cachan, France, headquarters in 2018 and gradually expand the footprint to serve the whole global staff of 2,500 by the end of 2020. When this is complete, it will be the first time that the stores have a direct connection to HQ.



Moving from B2B to B2C

Leveraging new technologies has been a priority as the company changes its business model, from selling exclusively on a B2B basis to incorporate more B2C elements.

“The whole goal is to create a new way of omnichannel selling,” Wei said. “We’re putting more of an emphasis on retail sales, both in stores and online, and we needed to adapt the organization to a new way of doing business. We’ve added new technology in the stores and creating new websites for all of our brands. It’s all about digitization, making things more efficient for the company, and providing a better user experience.”

Groupe Chantelle is also launching an initiative to reposition itself as a younger, fresher brand. Integral to the effort is a mix of IoT, big data, and other modern technologies.

“We’re refreshing the whole image of the company with new logos, new features, and a whole new omnichannel experience,” he said. “It’s a revolution for us. To do it right, we’ve had to change the way we look the cloud and other technologies, helping us connect with the use cases we have in terms of business.”

The company is adding RFID tags in new store prototypes to track the availability of merchandise, improving supply chain functions. It is adding devices in dressing rooms that will enable shoppers to pay for goods as they try them on, improving the overall customer experience. And it’s amping up its uses of BI and CRM technologies, gathering data about shopping patterns and targeting new waves of discounts and promotions to drive more sales traffic.

“It’s all about digitization, making things more efficient for the company, and providing a better user experience.”



Giving the Workforce More of a Say

Wei said one of the company's principal goals is to change the organization approach to give business users more say in how they develop processes, what kinds of tools they want to use and how they choose to use them.

"Changing from a top-down approach to embrace real collaboration with the business is a top priority. We still have a gap. But showing our value with the projects will be critical for us to reach that target."



"It's something that the employees need to be a part of—for them to know our roadmap and understand the capabilities we are offering, so they can imagine things their own way."



NAME:
Andre Wei

COMPANY:
Group Chantelle

TITLE:
CTO

INDUSTRY:
Lingerie designer and fashion house

PREVIOUS GIGS:
IT manager at Givaudan, a manufacturer of flavors, fragrances, and active cosmetic ingredients; IT manager at global consultancy Bain & Company

EMPLOYEE COUNT:
6,200

HOW HE CHANGED THE GAME:
Promoted a new business strategy based on collaboration, empowering the workforce to take a more active role in the way they deploy and use IT

Visionary leaders are changing the game for the modern workforce.

Welcome to the era of:

Game Changers

