Auditing Results After the Launch

In general business terms, an audit is an evaluation or examination of a process, project, or system to determine how well all the internal elements performed together against the original plan. A post-launch audit examines the performance of every business function that committed to support the launch. The diagrams that follow are examples used in the book. It's recommended that your team establish similar templates to plan and carry out post-launch audits.

Market Window Compliance

Launch Activity	Plan	Actual	Variance & Reason
Controlled introduction date	April 1	May 10	40-day delay due to incorrect logo on packaging and delayed arrival of instructional insert from the printer (because the Document Production department did not have this in its project plan).
General availability date	July 15	September 5	Product defect in early deliveries was found in a sourced component. QA never checked the component because its engineer left the company.

Executive Sponsorship

Launch Activity	Plan	Actual	Variance & Reason
Decision on which venue to use for the launch ceremony and public announcement	February 5	March 12	Executive champion was not available for the event planning meetings due to previous commitments. The Marketing team did not have the authority to bind the company to the preferred venue and so lost the time slot and venue. Furthermore, the key industry analyst who was available only in the location was then committed by her company to another project.

Timing of Marketing Material

Launch Activity	Plan	Actual	Variance & Reason
Product brochure	March 15	May 30	Several reasons are cited for the delay: 1. Marcomm attempted to write the content but in the end decided it needed a copywriter, which took several weeks to find and secure a purchase order. 2. The product models were never ordered for the photographer because this was not on anyone's project plan. 3. The brochure verbiage review by Legal was overlooked. 4. The team did not know the internal printing department was closed because of cost cutting, and an external printer needed to be located. 4. No one took responsibility to communicate to the printer that final printed copies were to be shipped to the sales offices.

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Adequacy of Sales Training

Launch Activity	Plan	Actual	Variance & Reason
Sales training: Eastern religion	To be carried out between May 10 & May 20	June 12	The email notice to the head of the Eastern region went out on April 20 instead of March 10. The brochures were not ready on time due to writing and publishing delays.
Sales training: Western religion	To be carried out between May 20 & May 30	June 19	The product demos that were supposed to be delivered by Development were not ready until the first week of June. The developer in charge missed the second launch meeting and didn't send a delegate.

Operational Impacts

Launch Activity	Plan	Actual	Variance & Reason
Update product codes in the product catalog system	April 15	June 15	The product manager did not know this was needed or how to get a code entered because it was his first launch program.
Train the customer service agents on the product and install up-sell scripts in the CRM system	June 15	July 12	1. The scripts were not developed on time because no one was assigned to it and the scripting tool had a defect in its workflow generator. 2. The training date for customer service also had to be delayed because the sales training (which was also delayed) took place on the dates originally set aside for customer service training. 3. The Customer Service department was to hire three more agents, and has not been able to secure them because HR didn't approve the hiring requisitions because of budget cutbacks.

Launch Metrics

Launch Activity	Plan	Actual	Variance & Reason
Order-processing time	3 days	6 days	The web-based order input system is not always accessible by salespeople, so they are faxing orders one or two days after the actual order time. The order-processing center is short on staff, so orders are in a state of backlog.
Time from order shipment to receipt of payment (order-to-cash)	43 days	67 days	Several customers refusing to pay until defects are fixed.
Number of customer complaints	250 in the first 30 days after launch	820 in the first 30 days after launch	1. Most complaints are divided into two categories: product performance and product documentation, as determined by statistics filed by customer service agents and in listening to call recordings.
	150 in the next 30 days	1,624 in the next 30 days	2. One of the main problems reported is that the product's functionality doesn't work as represented, and the second is that customers complain that the instructional insert is inaccurate. 3. They are both related. The more the product was sold, the higher the number of complaints. Customer recordings also reveal greater dissatisfaction as hold times increase due to a rising number of complaints.