STONERIDGE, INC.

Refining the Stoneridge Program Launch Process

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Stoneridge, Inc. is a leader in the worldwide automotive market headquartered in Novi, MI. They produce control devices and electronic components for commercial, passenger, and agricultural vehicles. Over the decades, Stoneridge has experienced rapid growth, in part fueled by acquisitions, with annual revenue for 2019 projected at over $830M. The company has three business segments—Electronics, PST Electronics, and Control Devices—and employs 4,600 individuals across 25 locations in 15 countries.

As a result of rapid growth, there is significant opportunity for improvement in program launch. Recent programs have incurred significant post-launch costs and extended timelines. The Tauber team was tasked with understanding the missed opportunities in launch through analyzing two recent launches in Stoneridge's actuation and emissions product lines. It was expected that their findings would be applied to a new phase-gating launch process to ensure optimized process flow and time.

The Tauber team began their work by conducting 70 interviews with employees at Stoneridge sites in Michigan, Ohio, Massachusetts, Mexico, and Estonia. Next, the team mapped the actual and intended process flows in Sweden, using findings from a project management workshop. During these activities, the team identified documentation that would support program execution and pinpointed areas for cost saving opportunities.

Their recommendations include adjustment of organizational teams during launch, alteration of the process flow diagram, evaluation of 60 workstreams, and revision of 12 documents. Additionally, the team identified phases of excessive spend in launch and suggested four processes for improvement: increased cross-functional communication, improved supplier selection, greater product manufacturability, and concurrent engineering practices. Using secondary research and internal resources, the team determined that implementing their recommendations could result in estimated total savings of $20M annually. The benefits of these recommendations go beyond improvement of internal processes and reduction of launch costs—they can lead to increased productivity, engagement, and satisfaction at Stoneridge, Inc.