

White Paper: Addressing growing pains in Sales and Marketing and the role of out of the box thinking.

WHEN YOUR SALES AND MARKETING NEEDS OUTGROW YOUR BUSINESS PLAN

The rules of business are changing. Growing companies with aggressive sales and revenue targets often hit a plateau when their sales organizations and go-to-market strategies are not directly mapped to market opportunities and business plans. Without the internal expertise to achieve their revenue goals, these developing companies often struggle to identify and execute a viable sales plan and go-to-market strategy. A well-defined and scalable sales and marketing plan should include the following elements:

- ◆ Accurate definition of the true market opportunity
- ◆ Solid go-to-market strategies
- ◆ Concrete understanding of your own and your competitors' value propositions
- ◆ Scalable sales and marketing plan that is mapped directly to the opportunity and business plan
- ◆ Effective sales and marketing collateral and support
- ◆ Powerful measurements and controls to aid you in running the business
- ◆ Training for your existing sales and marketing staff, to help them carry out the new plan and strategies

This concept paper is intended to educate you on obstacles that are preventing your organization from capitalizing on your true market opportunity, and your investment. The strategy to achieve your maximum return on investment involves “out of the box thinking” that often times can only be realized by bringing in outside expertise to guide your executive team in revamping sales and marketing plans and initiatives.

ACCORDING TO THE MINNESOTA HOME BASED ENTREPRENEURS ASSOCIATION 2002 BUSINESS SURVEY, NEARLY 30% OF RESPONDENTS CLAIMED THAT IMPROVED SALES/MARKETING IS THE SINGLE THING THAT WOULD HELP THEM BE MORE SUCCESSFUL.

BURSTING THE COMFORT AND KNOWLEDGE BUBBLE

More than any other type of organization, a developing company is constrained by the knowledge and leadership style of a single, or a very limited number of, “leaders”, whose business expertise will determine how well the company does in its early growth stages. Many times these entrepreneurs have limited business knowledge, often choosing to model the organization's structure and focus within parameters that are comfortable for them on a personal level, irrespective of whether the model is effective. Unfortunately, it is often hard for these entrepreneurs to reach outside of their comfort and knowledge “bubble” to find a new way of

doing things when the needs of the business dictate change. This may put the organization at risk for not reaching its full revenue potential.

BEING PROACTIVE VS REACTIVE

During rapid growth phases, rather than being proactive; which means anticipating problems and opportunities and addressing them before they occur; the developing organization often becomes reactive by necessity, causing them to apply “band aid patches” to their sales and marketing organizations. This reactive stance is necessitated by the fact that the organization does not have the internal skill and knowledge to build out its sales organization, or to anticipate roadblocks along the way. Because of their size and revenue structures, these growing businesses often shy away from the idea of creating a high-level, permanent, executive slot for an experienced Sales and Marketing Executive, trying instead to fill in with existing personnel who don’t really understand the basics of a successful Sales and Marketing Plan. This approach puts critical elements of the sales and marketing strategy at risk, making the organization non-competitive.

A SUCCESSFUL SALES AND MARKETING PLAN

The following diagram displays the major elements of a successful sales and marketing plan. Within a developing organization, some or all of these critical elements most likely have been subjected to short-term fixes. The odds of achieving organizational success and maximizing your return on investment are diminished if these elements are not properly addressed:



During rapid growth phases, executive management needs to constantly monitor and re-direct resources pertaining to these critical elements to ensure maximum success. What companies

discover during these growth phases is that weakened elements compromise their ability to capitalize on true market opportunities. The end result is that even the most knowledgeable and effective sales professionals will fall short of sales revenues and profit objectives if all aspects of the sales plan are not addressed properly.

THINKING OUTSIDE THE BOX

Creative thinking means thinking outside of the box. An easy way to inject out-of-the-box thinking into a growing organization, without locking the business into the long-term expense and commitment of hiring an Executive-level Sales professional, is to engage with an outside Consultant. The developing business will benefit many times over from a fresh set of eyes and ears, as well as Consultant-level expertise in the area where internal knowledge is lacking. This independent review of a growing business’ sales and marketing strategies will help the organization identify areas for suggested improvements and put a plan in place to help it reach its full potential.

The following table provides suggested areas for improvement, and gives examples for how a knowledgeable consultant can help a developing organization address them:

Areas for Sales and Marketing Improvement	How Sales and Marketing Pros Can Help
Enhanced Marketing and Sales Channel development	Write a sales and marketing plan that will maximize revenues, re-organize for effectiveness, and build the customer base
Sales Collateral that sells	Transform existing collateral into strong, effective marketing aids, focused toward improving customer sales
Winning Proposals	Increase closing rates by improving the content, format, and overall quality of sales proposals
An effective website	Build or re-design the look and feel of the organization’s website, and strengthen the message it provides, creating another valuable tool for selling services and products
Effective Sales Training	Train the sales team to better qualify prospects, develop needs, define solutions, set buying criteria, and improve closing rates
Focused Data Harvesting and Research	Use powerful research tools to gather competitive information that will help the organization gain industry insight and get a competitive edge
Negotiating to win	Teach customer-facing personnel how to negotiate to win on a daily basis

CONQUER THAT GROWTH HAMPERING PLATEAU TODAY

The rules of business are changing. As an entrepreneur, you had the knowledge and expertise to build your business into a profitable enterprise that has continued to grow. However, successful entrepreneurs know that they will only remain successful if they continue to grow and learn from others who are knowledgeable in areas where they are not. This is why developing companies benefit from the expertise of an outside Consultant, to help you move outside of your comfort and knowledge bubble and conquer that growth and revenue plateau that has you stumped.

Getting started is easy. All you need to do is contact Sales and Marketing Pros to learn how our trained staff of professionals can work for you to maximize revenues. SMP offers a complimentary 2-hour due diligence session for our new customers. In this session we will work with you to develop an understanding of your specific business needs. The goal of this session will be to frame a customized Statement of Work that will address your short and long-term sales and marketing goals.

Act now to schedule this initial appointment by calling:

Bob Decker, President & CEO, Sales and Marketing Pros
Cell Phone 765-883-1944
Email bob@smpemail.com