MARKETCUES

How are your sales and marketing *going*?

A discussion on the Keys to Integration of an effective Business Sales and Marketing Program.

Sales and Marketing Real-World Cases

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>> INCREASED COMPETITION is astounding and becoming increasingly difficult each day.

> **Extended Buying Cycles** require marketing and sales to engage prospects for a much longer time.

> **Reduced Resources** with constant revenue demands strain sales and marketing efficiency.

> **Lack of Direction** leads to missed opportunities.

Business sales and marketing communications are constantly evolving as companies seek better ways to develop new clients and reach new markets faster. For many entrepreneurial companies, the next stage in the development process is sales marketing integration (SMI). SMI engages organizations to communicate better, collaborate more effectively and run more efficiently within a relatively short period of time, regardless the market niche.

SMI drives sales, marketing, and customer service toward a unified platform and gives the full team the tools they need to achieve their organization's goals more quickly. By combining lead generation, media communications, sales strategy, social marketing and related web marketing into one cohesive group strategy and activity, criss-crossing of messages and resources are eliminated that so often accompanies a growing organization with several departments.

This Sales Marketing Integration Guide shows the SMI approach and tells you what to look for in a SMI solution. The bottom line is that the SMI solutions provide:

- A way to integrate all sales, marketing and customer service into one SMI platform
- New sales and marketing strategies and tactics
- Significant overall customer development and revenue builds
- Major improvements in marketing campaign efficiency through a strategic approach that monitors both the marketing spend and ROI factoring
- Complete and professional integration of both sales and marketing operations

Regardless of the type of business you run, your company's ability to create new customer relationships is the lifeblood that keeps your company growing – not to mention profitable. A tightly designed integration of sales and marketing operations can bring you a competitive edge in your key market niches.

SMI brings together the **diagnosis** of an organization's primary **challenges** and **unites** it with specific **strategies** that are implemented across the company's **sales**, **marketing** and customer **service** departments.

Overview:
Companies who continue to rely upon the sales and marketing principles that made them successful in years past often find themselves with lackluster results because the underlying foundation no longer applies to many segments of their business. For instance, cold calling without a diagnosed market concentration will usually produce limited results. Industry sales and marketing surveys of entrepreneurial companies often cite the ineffectiveness of these types of processes for producing new business sales development.

> > "...if you think about your how your sales and marketing team was put together businesses usually find that it was accomplished using piece-meal steps. No other aspect of a business is typically developed in this way. That's why sales marketing programs so often fail."

MarketCues' SMI approach establishes revenue-building processes that are strategic and measurable by the company who deploys them. The bi-product of this type of sales marketing program is prospects and customers alike have many new ways of interacting with the company thus creating a continuous stream of new selling opportunities. For satellite sales representatives who are fairly self-contained, a strong SMI program provides these individuals with a set of targeted sales marketing tools that can generate leads in their geography and make a targeted presentation that closes business. Regional and national sales marketing representatives can work off of shared objectives and budgets that bring the team together in a cohesive and productive way. This approach also provides executive management with objective ways to evaluate projects and team members.

SMI integrates six sales and marketing communications areas: market research, strategy, lead generation, sales promotions, market specific presentations, closure tools and ROI tools. A successful SMI platform will be streamlined and simple to use. There are no long learning curves required. This produces swift positive results to the top and bottom lines of a company. This means more profits.

SAMPLE **SMI** INTEGRATION

A successful SMI platform will be streamlined and simple to use using the six SMI sales marketing areas. There are no long learning curves required. Some companies have reported that they experienced near immediate results once they implemented SMI within their sales, marketing and customer service departments.

1. Market Research
   - Identify top market targets
   - Value Proposition Development
2. Sales & Marketing Strategy
   - Alignment with target market buying cycle and company key objectives
   - Identify keys drivers inside and outside of company to leverage resources
3. Marketing execution
   - Tactics & tools to achieve goals
   - Messaging that matters
4. Lead Generation
   - Inbound and outbound – understanding how to grow opportunities
   - Seamless conversion from marketing to sales
5. Sales Management
   - Sales process development and implementation
   - Sales channel maximization
6. Results Analysis
   - Close the loop – service them and keep them coming back
   - Understand and apply to continue growing

CASE STUDY: MID-SIZE MANUFACTURING COMPANY

CHALLENGE

Revenue was down and no one seemed to know if the marketing wasn't performing correctly or if the sales team was ineffective, or both. The sales team was saying, "It's the economy and we're sure we will do better this year now that things seem to be picking up."

> > "...without a strong sales *and* marketing program a company puts itself at risk in more ways that can be calculated on a monthly sales report. There are simply too many variables for one individual to consider when it comes to lead generation, management and distribution."

When management tried to dig down into what was really happening the answers they formed were not specific and not reassuring. Marketing, on the other hand, was producing a good amount of leads but they didn't seem to ever lead to solid sales.

This company was a privately owned company in its second generation and was unfamiliar with these types of challenges. Over the past few years sales had not been going up, in fact they had been going down at disturbing percentages. Something needed to be done but no one was confident in what to do. The company had relied upon its commercial grade customers for referrals so they were not using a sales marketing integration program, meaning sales, marketing, and customer service each had its own 'system' and the most sharing between them was the customer's invoice.

SOLUTION

The MarketCues team mapped a strategy that focused the entire organization on the areas of greatest impact - *for their customers*.

The company had been too internally focused and had missed the changes in the buying process and motivations of their core markets. Our team identified the core markets with sub-sets and customer profiles and developed guidelines for the sales team that match the buying processes of each. Specific territory development and sales team member training/ coaching plans were designed so that managers could implement the strategic and tactical changes while showing an immediate impact on revenue and new customer acquisition.

Emphasis shifted from sales techniques and product features to understanding buying behaviors and focused customer solutions. Plans with actionable items, timing, and accountability were developed for each sales team member to allow everyone to see how their efforts related to overall company goals.

WHERE DO WE START?

Breakthrough Strategy Session:

To unclog your sales and marketing program and to get your full sales program going, MarketCues recommends you start with a Breakthrough Strategy Session.

A Breakthrough Strategy Session consists of a comprehensive evaluation of your product/service sales and marketing strategy, and an analysis of key strategic ratios related to the product marketing activities of an organization. The assessment is prepared on a collaborative basis between MarketCues, Inc. consultants with specialties in strategy, sales, marketing, research and product/ service marketing planning. Ask about this session. It can change your business in a major way.

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About the author

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Tom Marin has worked with all sizes of organizations including Fortune 1000, large middle-market entrepreneurial and nonprofits. His 25-year track record is filled with dynamic business startups as well as progressive growth successes including Fuji Film, Whirlpool/Roper, Rand McNally, First of America Bank and CNA Insurance Companies. Tom is a member of the Business Marketing Association and is a past Marketing Chair in Chicago where he ran his national marketing agency for 20 years. Tom serves on a number of advisory panels and boards in Florida in an effort to put back some of what he has gained from others over the years. Examples include SBDC/ Disney Entrepreneur Center, Industry Advisor to Joint/City Seminole County Advisory Committee, Advisor to Seminole Advisory Board Council and The Sharing Center. He is a frequent writer of brand strategy articles and speaks at conferences.

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