



THE REVENUE ACCELERATOR™

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High Impact Business Growth Solutions

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From The Editor

Welcome to the 15th issue of The Revenue Accelerator™. This publication was established as a direct result of recommendations from a recent Market Development Group, Inc. (MDG) client satisfaction survey. The purpose of the newsletter is to provide practical revenue and profit generator tools for MDG clients, colleagues and friends. The MDG staff encourages our readers to give feedback on the articles included in this newsletter. We welcome any suggestions of articles or topics you would like to have included in future issues.

Eric W. Wiedenmann

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What Successful Clients Are Doing to Beat the Great Recession

By: Eric Wiedenmann

Market Development Group, Inc. (MDG) clients are beating the Great Recession due to a myriad of reasons. Here are some examples of their success stories:

Example 1:

A manufacturer of testing equipment increased sales **20%** during the past 12 months due to focusing on the things that it does well and getting closer to their customers. This allowed them to take away a significant amount of market share from their competitors in a down market.

Example 2:

A manufacturer of thermal plastic assembly equipment increased **25-30%** by focusing on growth markets such as medical devices. This company is also working harder to get closer to their existing customers to get a larger SOW (Share of Wallet).

Example 3:

A medical device manufacturer has increased sales over **15%** by focusing on exporting products to the growing markets in the Far East. It is also getting closer to its customers through in-depth customer surveys.

Example 4:

A mechanical contractor is gaining market share in a down market and positioning itself to take advantage in the recovery through its "green initiatives" and Leadership in Energy Saving Design for commercial buildings. It also surveys its major customers on a consistent basis for the purpose of getting a larger SOW and being able to be included on major new projects.

Companies which are currently growing or will grow after the "Great Recession", have the following common characteristics:

- Getting closer to current customers through excellent service and 3rd party Customer Satisfaction Surveys.
- Providing goods and services to growth markets (not all vertical markets are down.)
- Developing new products and services (Apple's approach after the dot com crash and currently in the Great Recession.)
- Conducting competitive SWOT Analysis and gaining a larger market share.
- Spending more money than their competitors on customer acquisition.

About Eric Wiedenmann:

Eric W. Wiedenmann has held executive marketing and business development positions at Masco, Avery Dennison, British Petroleum and CBC Industries. He founded MDG (www.marketdevelopment.net) in 1998, which is based in Danville, California. MDG clients include Fortune 500 companies, mid-sized and startups nationwide. Mr. Wiedenmann received a B.S. in Economics and Marketing at Ashland University and an MBA from Northwestern University Kellogg Graduate School of Management. He is a lecturer at Ashland University and has published numerous articles. Mr. Wiedenmann has given business development speeches to various CEO and COO advisory groups. He lives in Danville, California with his wife, Anne, and son, William.

"Social Media Marketing" - Are You In The Conversation?

By: Kevin Dean

Should your company jump on the social media bandwagon? Recognize that for many people, more time is spent on social sites than on surfing the web, searching or watching television. This shift suggests that social media marketing needs to be on most companies' marketing plan radar.

The social media environment stresses interactive communications, keeping in touch, and staying up to date. The social media community consists of most age groups, demographics, and backgrounds, and the audience continues to grow.

Deciding the level of activity your company chooses to participate may depend on the type of services or products you provide, demographics of your clients and prospects, and your interest in testing new ideas online. Your level of activity also depends on your marketing budget, especially resources that are available for trying and possibly failing to show results on a new and relatively unproven method.

For the new social marketer, you might wish to test the reach of your message by initially advertising on Facebook with highly targeted graphic ads. Link your new prospects to a quality landing page on your website that relates directly to your ad and audience with a clear offer and call to action. Highly trackable, Facebook offers a pay per click environment like Google AdWords, where you can start to gauge how successful you might be with a more robust presence.

Initially, your company may look to manage your reputation that's already being discussed online. Yelp, Google Local, Yahoo Answers, and others offer your customers areas to post reviews and comments about

businesses. Recent studies have reported that these online reviews carry more weight than a company website or infomercial.

By monitoring what people are saying about you can help you see what people are already talking about, head off destructive comments by responding with responsible comments, and possibly address problems you might not even be aware of. Sites like Yelp now allow companies to confront and possibly remove some bad reviews, but it is often more powerful to drown out the negative comments with real, positive customer comments. Google Local will provide your local company greater online visibility when people add comments to your Google Local listings. Try adding a link from your site to your own Yelp business listing. Before a customer leaves your shop, or afterwards via email or postcard, encourage them to post online with a little reminder or special offer.

For a company seeking to become part an active of the conversation, understanding your audience is important. Age, race, sex, buying cycle, reasons for buying, and more factors about your customers are vitally important in determining the best path to reach them. Like any conversation, time is required to gain trust and claim an identity, especially if you are new the conversation. Listening, contributing, posting images, movies, thoughts or provocative items online can move the conversation where you are the center of attention, or at least get you a little side discussion. Staying in the conversation requires continued contributions, response, and care so you can keep and build your audience.

Social site users are not looking to be sold to. They tend to sniff out and ignore blatant sales tactics. By participating in the conversation, your company can establish a beachhead against your competitors who might already be there.

Instead of starting by building a new audience, consider starting with your current clients. It is usually less expensive to sell to an existing client than to acquire a new one. Therefore, what could your clients be looking for online? If your business is information based, are there snippets of information that can be broadcast and maintained online for further reference or response? Is your product purchased on price or availability so coupons and special offers can be shared? Are there events, such as sales, concerts, parties, or conferences that come up and people will want to be aware of?

“Friend-building” is important in order to build your audience. Time, energy, and expense must be set aside to make prospects aware of your new channel. Awareness of your presence on social sites can be built via traditional manners, such as announcements and links on your website. Email marketing is still a strong communications tool, and it can be used to notify readers of your new pages with reasons why they should visit.

Remember how you develop traffic to your website – the domain name was added to your sent emails, stationary, receipts, invoices, and brochures. A similar commitment is required to let more people know you are active within the social spaces.

So, why spend time and money on a marketing initiative where the largest suppliers, including Twitter and Facebook, have not figured out how to make money? Because that’s where your customers are.

How do you know if it works for you? Set up goals and metrics during the early stages of the project. Success might be measured in number of friends or readers, as a metric of marketing reach. Send incoming contacts to a unique phone number and email address, making contacts easy to track. Online and printable coupons can be counted when used. Some sites are starting to offer basic statistics, and be sure to measure your site activity with a tool like Google Analytics.

If all of this sounds like a lot of work, it could be. However, but setting clear goals, testing ideas and measuring results over a period of time, it could provide benefits from your marketing budget that are unachievable using traditional marketing formats. People are moving and communicating online. It is time to join the conversation.

About Kevin Dean:

Kevin Dean is President of WSI Net Advantage in Fremont, CA. Kevin helps businesses find ways to get the most out of their online marketing efforts. Call him at (510) 687-9737 for a review of your website and search engine marketing techniques. kdean@WSINetAdvantage.com / www.WSINetAdvantage.com

Solving the Six Biggest Problems with BtoB Sales Training - Part Two

By: Michael Cannon

[Author's Note: In the conclusion of this two-part article on the six biggest problems that most commonly derail training programs, I will be discussing the remaining three problems — when the learning objectives are not aligned; when the customer messaging is ineffective; and when the visual and verbal delivery is poor — as well as offering solutions to each of those problems. In the previous edition of Sales Messaging Matters (Vol. 4, No. 1), Part One covered the other three major problems: when training is not developed in context; when the training goal is wrong; and when the training model is not correct.]

To reiterate the opening question in Part One, how would you answer the following?

"What is the goal of training developed by Marketing and delivered to Sales?"

Most BtoB product management/marketing professionals who develop sales training would answer this question with some version of: "Our training should teach Sales what it needs to know in order to effectively sell the product."

Wrong! That goal is one of the main reasons why most training developed by Marketing is loathed by Sales.

First, let's agree conceptually that Sales (inside/outside and channel) does indeed "need to know what it needs to know in order to effectively sell the product," and that from a sales support perspective, Marketing's job is to help Sales win more business by enabling Sales to sell the value of the company's products and services. Below we continue our close look at the problems that most commonly derail training programs when the focus is on that one overall goal and then explore some time-tested, actionable solutions to those problems.

Problem Four: The Learning Objectives Are Not Aligned

When you separate technical product training from sales enablement product training, it is much easier to see and get the learning objectives aligned and right.

For example, the learning objectives for technical product training might be to articulate what the product does, to explain how each feature works, to outline how the product is different from other company or competitive products, to demonstrate the product and/or key features, to install/configure the product for the client's needs, to train customers to use the product, etc.

The learning objectives for sales enablement product training might be to understand what the product does, to know which customers and buyers to target, to understand the size of the opportunity, to know what key customer applications to focus on, to understand conceptually how the product solves the customer's key business challenges, to understand conceptually how the product is different from other company or competitive products, to understand what tools are available to help them sell the product, etc.

Most Training Requested By Sales and/or Delivered By Marketing Is On A Specific Topic

Getting the learning objectives right requires a change in process. Most training requested by Sales and/or delivered by Marketing is on a specific topic, product, competitor, or market opportunity. A discussion on the required learning objectives and associated content modules for the topic is missing.

This occurs primarily because Sales is not experienced enough in instructional design methodologies to communicate what it needs to this level of detail. And Marketing is not experienced enough in instructional design methodologies to help Sales think through what it needs.

The result of this lack of alignment on learning objectives is a lot of frustration. Sales feels its time was wasted because it did not get what it wanted or needed. Marketing feels a lot of its time was wasted developing and delivering training that was not useful to or valued by Sales.

There are two ways to solve this problem: ad hoc or organizational. With the ad-hoc solution, each time that training is requested/proposed, the developer must initiate a discussion with Sales about the category, type, learning objectives, and associated content modules of training (for example, sales enablement product training with the learning objectives as defined above).

With the organizational solution, Sales and Marketing jointly create and agree on a sales training requirements matrix, which incorporates the points above into a set of courses that Sales can request, or Marketing can propose, on topics of its choosing. Training templates are then created and used for the development of each course. It's an efficient way to establish a set of best practice sales training courses

that quickly eliminates most of the sales training problems.

Problem Five: The Customer Messaging Is Ineffective

Most companies and the marketing firms that support them produce only descriptive corporate, market, and product messaging. These categories of customer messaging provide a description of what the company does, the solutions offered to select markets, the products and services offered, the features of each offering, and, if done well, a little bit about the benefits of doing business with your company and the benefits of buying your offerings.

What customers want most, for each of your offerings, is a persuasive answer to questions such as:

- "Why should I meet with you?"
- "Why should I change-out my current solution for a new solution?"
- "Why should I buy your solution rather than competitive alternatives?"

What Sales also wants most is to have, and to provide customers with, persuasive answers to the same buying questions.

You can see the problem. Most of the messaging provided to customers and to Sales is descriptive, but not persuasive as well. What is missing is sales messaging. This new category of customer messaging provides persuasive answers to the customer's key buying questions (see above) for each of the products and services you offer. Great sales messaging communicates your key capability advantages, how they solve meaningful customer business problems, and how they produce significant customer business value. Sales messaging also aligns with two of the learning objectives mentioned above: to understand conceptually how the product solves the customer's key business challenges ("Why Change?"™), and how the product is different from competitive products ("Why Buy"™ from Your Company?").

Most Of The Messaging Provided To Customers And To Sales Is Descriptive, But Not Persuasive As Well

The impact of not providing customers and Sales with persuasive sales messaging or not answering these key buying questions is enormous. It's the main reason why most customer messaging is ineffective and is a key contributor to why Sales product training is also considered ineffective by Sales. You can solve this problem by adding sales messaging into your customer messaging platform. The first step is to learn the methodology and principles needed to create and integrate sales messaging into your sales training programs (see the Resources box below to learn more).

Problem Six: Visual and Verbal Delivery Is Poor

Lastly, you can address all five problems above and still have a less-than-effective training course if your visual and/or verbal delivery is poor. Typical visual delivery problems include slides that are mostly text, have dense text, or consist of visuals that don't clearly support the key point of the slide. It's like having a bad producer produce what could potentially have been a great movie; the movie ends up not doing very well. You can solve these problems by making sure your developer has been trained in basic instructional design and PowerPoint creation. Typical verbal delivery problems include, in the reading of slides, a flat tone/pitch, a lack of excitement, and/or a heavy accent. It's like having a bad actor perform in what would otherwise have been a great movie; the movie ends up being a flop. You can solve these problems by making sure your presenter has been trained in basic presentation skills.

It's critically important that you have the right producer and actor for your sales training, meaning that they have the knowledge, development and delivery skills to implement the solutions above, and that you get Sales excited about the opportunity, confident that it can be successful, and committed to "start selling" the value of your product.

Recommended Resources to Improve Sales and Marketing Effectiveness

- Read free articles about sales messaging at SBG's [Resources Center](#).
- Evaluate the effectiveness of your messaging today with the one-hour, on-demand audio training course, [Top Ten Principles of Great Sales Messaging](#), which includes a 14-page workbook.
- Learn a methodology for implementing great sales messaging with the 10-page eBriefing, [Best Way to Increase Your Sales](#).

About Michael Cannon:

Michael Cannon is an internationally renowned sales and marketing effectiveness expert and best-selling author on topics related to sales messaging and sales planning. For more information, visit www.silverbulletgroup.com or call 925-930-9436.

About MDG

Market Development Group Inc. (MDG) is a professional organization specializing in value added, quick turnaround and fast payback of sales, marketing and product management solutions for entrepreneurial, mid-sized and Fortune 500 companies. MDG has over 50 clients nationwide.

MDG Provides the Following Benefits to Its Clients

Revenue/profit growth by finding and developing new sources of revenue

- Sales and marketing programs implemented timely and cost-effectively
- Gathers and provides critical market research to help clients make better informed strategic decisions
- Increased competitive advantage through "SWOT" (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) Analysis

MDG Difference/Why You Should Work with MDG

MDG provides a unique blend of customized, practical, objective, timely and cost effective business development, market research/market intelligence and "road maps" to successful program implementation services. MDG's mission is to deliver a fast R.O.I. to all clients. As an objective independent service provider, MDG is able to craft creative solutions for our clients. MDG is the originator of "The Rapid Response High Impact Sales Plan™."

What Our Clients Say About MDG

MDG was a significant factor in taking a business unit from six figures to middle seven figures. He has some "quick and dirty" ways of getting a lot of information without spending a lot of money and time.

Ron Prescott - President, RJP Inc.
He's dependable, he's thorough, he meets his deliverables, and he keeps you informed.
John Pendergrass - COO, TRW-Lucas NovaSensor

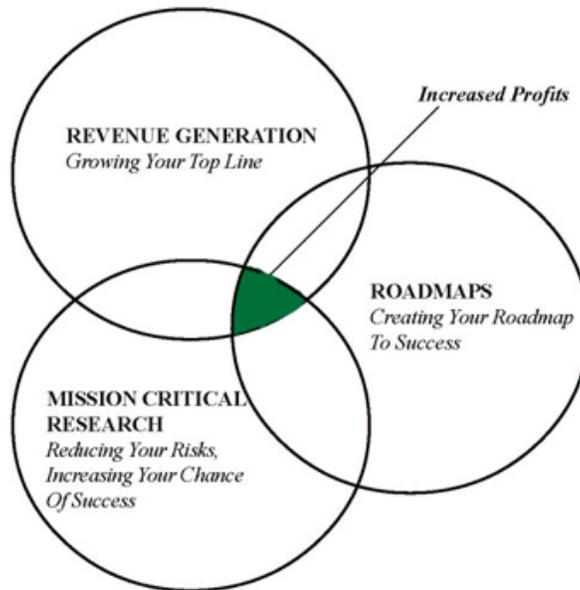
Eric is a very focused, cost-effective way to generate marketing information and strategic data.
Dave Marshburn - Sr. Director, Seagate Technologies

MDG provided me with a marketing plan that I could use to develop a larger client base. MDG can zero in on what the objective is, reduce some of the minutia you're going through, and put together a marketing program that really works for you.
Darren Merritt - VP, Boardwalk Investments

MDG is proactive, has excellent follow-through, and exceeds service expectations.
Todd Schuelke - Vice President, Eclipse Group, Inc.

Eric's willingness to take the extra step, spend the extra hours and pull the team together was a big ingredient to our current success.
Albert R. Steele - President, CBC Industries

**Increasing Sales and Profits Quickly and Cost Effectively
This Is How MDG Helps Its Clients**



Revenue Generation:

- Increasing Closure Rates
- Finding Untapped Markets
- Time/Territory Management
- Developing New Sales Channels
- Business Development
- Interim and "As Needed" Sales Management Services



Research:

- Helping Companies Make the Right Mission Critical Decisions
- Customized Market Research
- Competitive Intelligence (SWOT)
- Opportunity Identification
- Market Size Validation
- Customer Surveys
- Finding Acquisition Candidates



Roadmaps:

- Business Plans
- Strategic Marketing Plans
- Rapid Response High Impact Sales Plans

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