

Strategic Sales Program - Overview

Background

The sales environment has changed. Products are more complex, their benefits are more sophisticated and they change more often. Competition is tough and it is much harder to close sales. Customers' needs are changing too – in the past a “technology” sale would have been enough, but now your customers want to see the business benefits, they want to buy a complete solution, and they may even expect their supplier to share the business risk.

These new challenges serve to increase the focus on sales effectiveness. It is essential for all salespeople to be able to represent your product & services effectively to their assigned accounts. This simple goal is by no means easy to achieve, and is made even more challenging if you are expanding the salesforce through new-hires or acquisitions, or using indirect channels such as distributors, resellers and Systems Integrators, or if your salesforce is geographically distributed.

Objectives

The objective of the Strategic Sales Program is simple – to increase sales of your products and solutions by providing the information and skills your salespeople need to be fully effective. It boosts sales by giving all your salespeople “insider” information that tells them exactly:

- Why the solution is of interest to their market
- The profile of a likely target customer
- Who to call on in the target company
- What “pains” to look for on their sales calls
- Which customer reference stories to use to demonstrate and quantify the benefits
- How to maximise your strengths and exploit the weak points of your competition
- How to qualify the customer as a real prospect
- Who to call on for specialist help once the customer has been qualified
- How to progress the sale through to close

As a result your salespeople, both direct and in channel partners, are able to address the right customers for each solution, present the solution in the most effective way, swiftly qualify the customer in or out, and proceed to the close. The Strategic Sales Program does not attempt to teach salespeople how to sell, it provides them with the information they need to sell more effectively, enabling you to meet the challenges of today's market.

Structure of the Program

A full Strategic Sales Program is comprised of 10 components, the first of which forms the foundation of the program, with the others being optional extras selected according to your specific needs:

1. Strategic Sales Program Sales Guide
2. Interactive Sales Kit (ISK)
3. Channel Customisation Module
4. Market Overview
5. Solution Brochure
6. Customer Success Story
7. Solution Presentation
8. Return on Investment Study
9. Launch & Coaching Module
10. Sales Update

The **Sales Guide** encapsulates the key information needed by a salesperson to effectively sell your product or solution. It is typically 20 pages long – large enough to encapsulate the crucial information but not so long that your salespeople waste time reading massive volumes. Standard section headings include:

- Opportunity Overview – why a salesperson should take notice
- The Customer – why your customer will be interested
- The Solution in Depth – how we contribute to a customer's business objectives
- The First Call – how to conduct the first calls
- The Sales Cycle – how to execute the sale to closure

Often the Sales Guide alone is enough to create a substantial sales boost, but for even greater impact any of the following optional additions can be deployed:

The **Interactive Sales Kit** is a soft version of the Sales Guide for mounting on your intranet site or distribution to salespeople on CD.

The **Channel Customisation Module** takes a generic Sales Guide and customises it to an indirect sales channel, so you can personalise the guide to each specific channel partner.

The **Market Overview** is designed to give salespeople a broader view of a particular market area. It is a compact brochure that summarises trends in the market, brings out the opportunities that exist, outlines the business issues that customers are considering, shows how your solutions match market needs, and identifies the competing solutions a salesperson will meet.

The **Solution Brochure** provides an item of customer collateral that conveys the business benefits brought out in the Sales Guide. Sometimes our clients find that their existing collateral describes the product but not the business benefits – our Solution Brochure plugs this gap.

The **Customer Success Story** is a description of a successful customer implementation of your solution, designed to be used as collateral and given to customers and prospects.

The **Solution Presentation** is a 12–15 slide scripted presentation for use by salespeople at initial customer meetings.

The **Return on Investment Study** provides a resource that salespeople can use to prove to your customers that your solution costs-in. We interview existing users and develop a fully quantified and validated business case which can be delivered as an ROI model ready for your salespeople to plug-in the figures that pertain to their sales prospect.

The **Launch and Coaching Module** provides a customised program that combines the launch of the Strategic Sales Program and follow-up personal sales coaching service so that sales of your solution are maximised.

The **Sales Update** is designed to provide a “mid-life kicker” to an established solution and can be used to update an existing Strategic Sales Program Sales Guide.

Process

To create a Strategic Sales Program Sales Guide we conduct a Marketing Workshop with the main client personnel who are involved in the product, a minimum of one representative from the product group, one from marketing and one from sales. The workshop is carefully structured to clarify, formulate and derive agreement on intended sales messages and positioning. In addition to managing the workshop in order that the necessary information is obtained, our consultant is there to challenge the assumptions of client personnel and to add their own market knowledge in order that the resulting information is of a considerably higher quality than could have been achieved any other way. The material gathered at this workshop enables us to create all of the components of the program, which are refined through successive client reviews prior to publication. Through this process we minimise the time that your people have to devote to the program, because we realise you have plenty of other things to do

Results

The result of a Strategic Sales Program is very straightforward – because your Salespeople have better information they can sell more effectively, so you get increased sales.

Next Steps

This overview has given a brief and generalised description of the Strategic Sales Program. No doubt you have specific needs and issues, so if this has generated an interest please get in touch so that we can relate the Strategic Sales Program to your individual requirements.

Contact

Expertek Consultants Ltd



www.expertek.co.uk



+44 (0) 1926 401960



info@expertek.co.uk



+44 (0) 870 7061448

The Strategic Sales Program is delivered in association with Solutions for Sales Ltd.