

Reversing Seasonal Product Share Loss in the Hospital Lab Market

Testing a Scalable Program

⊕ Challenge

A global company and leader in the diagnostic market operated a sales model that functioned with an account manager; without the benefit of a sales team, the account manager could not focus on the dozens of products/hospital accounts assigned.

⊕ Action

Utilizing our Sales Prototype® model gave our client the sales and infrastructure resources needed to build trust with their hospital clients.

⊕ Results

Rapid sales growth was achieved and so successful, that the process of expansion was repeated.

Defining the Focus

A global company and leader in the diagnostic market operated a sales model that functioned with an account manager as the primary contact point with its hospital laboratory customers. The account managers had sales responsibility for more than two-dozen complex products, both seasonal and non-seasonal. If a hospital lab was interested in learning more about a specific product, the account manager could bring in a product specialist.

Because the account managers were responsible for so many products (most of which were non-seasonal), sales time and focus on the seasonal products were diluted. This lack of focus caused seasonal products to lose market share and the company to lose its market leadership in this product category. In an effort to regain share in this growing market, the company sought to test a new strategy, utilizing a focused, specialty sales team to sell this product and an effective method to measure the results so that a fact-based decision could be made.

Piloting a Program

SalesForce4Hire worked with this client to implement its Sales Prototype model, within the client's budget. This prototype design approach was used to answer the following:

- 1) Would the product lose traction if pulled out of the account manager's bag?
- 2) Would it remain a marginal product?
- 3) Would it be worth investing in and scaling up?

In order to quickly predict where this product would land on the Prototyping scale, the Sales Accelerator System™ was utilized to qualify and prioritize the market segments, understand the complexities of the sales cycle, including using analytics to uncover risk and barriers to entry. Next, the infrastructure to support the sales specialists

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was put in place. This included clinical, economic and operational support and the determination of the optimal number of sales specialists for this pilot. In this project, based on the client's budget and the anticipated ROI, two sales specialists were recruited and trained to participate in the first deployment in key geographic territories.

These sales specialists became responsible for the seasonal product in these territories, and one of the first discoveries was that consistent time and focus is required throughout the year to gain commitment and conversion, not just when purchases took place during the product's season.

The sales specialists, managed by SalesForce4Hire, were required to not only sell to clinical laboratories, but also to coordinate with purchasing departments and distributors. The SalesForce4Hire team focused on pricing, reimbursement and the value proposition in order to gain acceptance from the hospital to convert to the client's products; once the customer agreed to convert, based on clinical performance, the sales specialist was then charged with gaining agreement from the hospital purchasing department and coordinating pricing details with the distributor.

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One of the sales specialists in the pilot simultaneously acted as the project manager and tracked and communicated field activity reports, customer and competitive information and sales metrics reports via weekly conference calls and email. This provided real-time customer and project status feedback that allowed the client to proactively develop sales and marketing strategies to further contribute to sales growth. This data was aggregated and combined with key insights and recommendations so our client could make critical sales, marketing and channel decisions to develop a blueprint for successful deployment.

Positive Results Yields Expansion

In the territories that had implemented a SalesForce4Hire sales specialist, our client realized rapid sales growth. The client's account managers whose territories were not assigned a sales specialist during the initial prototyping launch began to hear about the benefits of having a sales specialist and requested that a sales specialist be added to their territory.

Encouraged by the return on investment of the Sales Prototype, the client company expanded the sales specialist team three times. Each territory reached profitability within approximately six to eight weeks. Expansion occurred only after the existing territories became self-funding. Based upon the proven success of our model, the client made a decision to fully implement a SalesForce4Hire team that was quadruple in size to the expanded team to launch an exciting new technology platform and product and penetrate a previously untapped market.

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