

IS YOUR BUSINESS WINNING IN BD?



by Mary Erlain

One of the biggest mistakes I experience in working with companies is that their BD efforts are not run as one congruent effort between sales and marketing. These efforts become disjointed. We may see marketing professionals developing marketing plans and sales trainers/coaches teaching a selling methodology within the same company. These professionals may or may not be aware of each other, they rarely work together. This sets the stage for loss in opportunities as well as revenue and profitability. Let's look at an approach which brings the BD process together like perfectly calibrated gears in a Rolex watch.

"The link between sales and marketing understands how your customers buy what you are offering."

The link between sales and marketing reveals how your customers buy what you are offering. This sounds so elementary and we assume just because we have sold some stuff to our customers, we have mastered this.

We must focus on the steps of the buy—the process of buying the product or service from the customer's point of view. Let's take coffee as one example. Starbucks® and Dunkin' Donuts® are both wildly successful at selling coffee. There is significant loyalty that both companies have with their customers. The first step of their buying process is that their customers want a cup of coffee. That's where the similarities end. Take a look at the buying experience once you enter the drive-through or walk through the door. They are drastically different! Both companies are billions of dollars strong, but their processes are so different, why is that?

The answer is simple; they understand how their customers buy THEIR products. They have designed their selling process to meet their customer at every point of their unique buying needs.

It is important to make sure your BD efforts are selling things the way your customer wants to buy them. The steps of the sell process are then designed once we understand how people buy YOU. We find much efficiency when we marry the two steps and remove roadblocks in the process. The marriage of this process is "The Steps of the Sale" which becomes standard operating procedure for your company. It is the heartbeat of your BD efforts.

We then must look at how marketing efforts are supporting and driving the steps of the sale. By analyzing your industry, the competition, your target markets, pricing, and how and where you are advertising, marketing becomes a catalyst for driving BD. Back to my Starbucks and Dunkin' Donuts example, when was the last time you saw a Starbucks commercial on television? Never (or at best maybe once)? How about Dunkin' Donuts? Did you just say out loud or to yourself, "America runs on Dunkin'?" Wait, they both sell coffee and snacks (or a quick lunch)! They have adults buying their products and have stores in towns across America often within eyesight of each other. Why don't they market the same way?



IS YOUR BUSINESS WINNING IN BD?



At the end of the day, do you want your BD efforts to be happening by accident or design?

We come back to understanding how people buy the coffee and other products. They have invested time, money, and resources to understand how their customers are attracted to them. Starbucks indeed has commercials, I've seen them. They are

often used in gaming on tablet computers. They know that their customer base is in the DVR and app world. They don't waste money in the television market or in print advertising for coupons, it would be money wasted. Conversely, Dunkin' Donuts know that their customers are watching television the old fashioned way...live with commercials! They are coupon users and appreciate the discount or freebie.

How do your customers buy you? Do you know? Have you invested time, money, and resources in developing a strategic BD plan that encompasses your company's steps of the sell (the heartbeat), marketing, talent, and systems? If you do, you will find so many inefficiencies and gaps where the money and sales are slipping through the cracks.

At the end of the day, do you want your BD efforts to be happening by accident or design? •

Mary Erlain is President of Peak Development Strategies since 2007. As a published author of the "10 Answer Keys" business book series, international speaker, coach, and consultant, she helps her clients significantly accelerate growth in their businesses. Mary offers business professionals the support, guidance, and direction they need to thrive in their business roles. She is the Director of Training and Development as well as a Certified Sales Auditor with Verde Martin. Mary can be reached at M.Erlain@Peak-DS.com. Visit her websites at www.peak-ds.com and www.the5generations.com.

18



CONSTRUCTION ECONOMIC UPDATE

NO CHANGE FOR CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS PRICES IN AUGUST

Tuesday, September 16, 2014

Construction materials prices were unchanged in August but are 1.7 percent higher than this time last year, according to a Sept. 16 producer price index (PPI) release by the Department of Labor. Inputs to nonresidential construction, which also remained unchanged in August, are 1 percent higher than in August of 2013.

Nonresidential Construction Employment Retains Momentum in August - Friday, September 05, 2014

The U.S. construction industry added 20,000 jobs in August, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics report released Sept. 5 and July's estimate was revised upward from 22,000 to 31,000 net new jobs. Nonresidential construction added 5,500 jobs in August, which could be considered a bit soft, but the segment added 15,200 jobs in July (revised upward from 6,600).

TELL US HOW WE'RE DOING

Both Larry Silver and Ron McKenzie have spent much time developing the content and the editorial direction of the BD4AEC Business Development E-zine. We are very interested in getting feedback as to the direction we've taken as well as ideas for future articles.

Or, perhaps you would like to join in and be a guest columnist?

We would appreciate your thoughts to make this publication even better for you! Contact us by sending Larry an email at: larry@contractormarketing.com