



CRM and Your Go-to-Market *Execution Plan*

A CRM implementation must take into consideration how you plan to execute your go-to-market strategy. The go-to-market execution plan can be defined by a three step process. First, you must refine the positioning of your products and services to reflect current market conditions. Concurrence must be gained at all levels of management on the positioning you will be going to market with. This refined positioning is the cornerstone of your new Go-to-Market execution plan. Second, create a Sales & Marketing Playbook that documents your positioning, sales execution plan, target buyers, messages, sales process and sales tools needed to execute the sales process defined in the CRM system. Finally, enable the sales force to carry out the sales execution plan using the processes and tools documented in the playbook and make them accessible via the web through your CRM system.

Repositioning – The Cornerstone of Effective Execution

One of the most important elements of the go-to-market strategy is how you position or reposition your product/service within your chosen market segment. There are two choices: (1) tactical positioning or (2) strategic positioning. To strategically position your product in the mind of the target buyer, you must correlate four things:

- The essential core of what the product does – product category
- The value-add product features and services – how it differs
- The financial benefit it provides the target market segment – its value
- The critical success factors of importance to a given market segment that the product can help improve – creates a “must have” in the mind of the buyer.

Positioning your products strategically allows you to meet an important need of target buyers by improving their critical success factors and providing positive financial impact. If you can fill a strategic need within your target market, you become recession proof. Buyers don't stop buying in a weak economy but they do limit their spending to only those things that can make a strategic difference. The new positioning can help you create the following:

1. Compelling value propositions
2. Strategic messages
3. Solutions linked to improving critical success factors
4. Differentiation based on business value
5. Executive sponsorship

Sales Playbooks – The Power to Execute

The key to effective sales execution is to assemble everything a sales rep would need into a Sales Playbook. Sales Playbooks are instruction manuals on how to sell into your target market. These playbooks contain the following information:

- Target market overview and opportunities for growth
- Sales plan of attack – the execution plan
- Strategic positioning – why you are a “must buy”
- Solution descriptions
- Target buyers and the buying hierarchy
- Messages and prospecting techniques
- Executive briefing presentations
- Financial justification models
- Differentiation needed to knock off the competition
- Sales process mapped to the buying process & buying hierarchy
- Sales tools to help execute each step of the sales process

Armed with the information, sales process and sales tools needed to execute, sales can effectively attack the target market in question. The Sales Playbook now becomes the document used to educate and enable the sales force. In addition, Sales Playbooks have proven to shorten sales cycles, increase the average size of a deal, increase win/loss ratios and increase the number of deals sold.

Sales Enablement – Developing the Sales Organization

Sales enablement can be achieved by focusing on five critical elements of sales development:

- ✓ Knowledge
- ✓ Process
- ✓ Tools
- ✓ Skills
- ✓ Method of Delivery

Knowledge

Knowledge is the area of sales competence that provides the salesperson with the necessary context to perform. A meaningful sales call can only be made with the appropriate knowledge that establishes credibility and creates potential value in the mind of a prospect. The requirement of the effective sales organization is to receive “applied” knowledge – information and insight which feeds directly into the sales process for creating and winning opportunities.

Examples of applied knowledge include: target buyers and their pain, solutions tied to critical success factors that remove the pain, presentations that highlight the value of the solution not its functionality, how to financial justify the solution and how to differentiate it. The Sales Playbook provides the “applied” knowledge required by the sales organization.

Process

To improve the effectiveness of a sales organization, one of the first steps is to install a best-in-class sales process. A sales process is a learnable and repeatable methodology. The sales process should directly map into the buying hierarchy and buying process. Depending on the buying hierarchy, a process can be a bottom-up or top-down approach. Top-down approaches have proven to be the most effective when the solution you are selling satisfies a strategic need. The Sales Playbook describes the sales process in detail. It describes the steps of the process; actions to be taken in each step; and the milestone to be achieved before going on to the next step.

Tools

One of the major reasons that sales organizations fail to execute is the lack of sales tools needed to effectively complete specific steps of the sales process. For example, if you are selling a strategic solution that requires financial justification and you don’t provide a financial justification tool, you are limiting the effectiveness of the sales organization. The Sales Playbook includes tools to execute every step of the recommended sales process.

These tools include:

- Account analysis tool used to target high potential prospects
- Prospecting letters and scripts
- Twenty second elevator scripts
- Executive briefing presentations
- Opportunity assessment tool
- Strategic product position to educate and influence
- Financial justification tool
- Model of comparison to defuse the competition
- GAP analysis tool
- Strategy development tool
- Reference stories

Skills

All sales people have already developed many of the required sales skills in their pre-selling careers, and then are able, with coaching and training, to hone those skills to meet the competitive and demanding situations in which they find themselves. However, today there is an apparent need for new “differentiating” skills that serve sales people and teams as they compete in today’s market and prepare for future market environments. Specifically, these skills include the ability to establish credibility with senior executives, and the ability to determine and communicate compelling, business-based value propositions to prospects and customers. These two skill areas separate merely adequate selling from truly exceptional sales performance.

Method of Delivery

Sales enablement often depends on the most effective way to educate and reinforce the required knowledge, process, and tools needed by the sales force. It is a well know fact that without reinforcement, 60% of what is taught in a classroom setting is forgotten within 60 days. There needs to be a better education paradigm. This better approach embraces the idea of e-learning. These e-learning concepts can be implemented in the form of an ePlaybook. An electronic playbook is web based and can be used as a real time learning and reinforcement tool via your CRM system. All the information, processes and sales tools are made available on an as needed basis. ePlaybooks are very easy to keep current and have proven to dramatically improve sales effectiveness and drive revenue growth.

Summary:

Sales execution is the key to sustained revenue growth. There are many causes for failed sales execution ... some of these include:

- Not providing the sales processes and tools that will be effective in selling to a specific market segment and buying hierarchy.
- Not being able to financially justify your product or solution
- Lack of or outdated knowledge about the target market.
- Not updating the go-to-market strategy and sales execution plan to reflect changing conditions in the market.
- Not providing an electronic means to deliver needed information via your CRM system.

About Ambit Software

Ambit Software helps enterprises globally to become agile - adapt rapidly and cost effectively in response to changes in the business environment through the efficient use of IT. Ambit partners with its clients to understand their business pain points and arrives at appropriate IT led interventions to deliver a relevant solution.

Ambit helps organizations across sectors such as Discrete and Process Manufacturing, Financial Services, Logistics, Consumer Goods, Hospitality etc. to achieve their business goals through effective use of technology.

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