

360° Dynamic Marketing

You know how important it is to communicate to your targeted customers, to do survey research in order to find out what their needs are, and to spend time making sales calls to hot prospects. Your company has focused on the powerful tools of advertising, the Internet, public relations, and sales support tactics. Is the job done? NO WAY!

Successful companies implement 360° Dynamic Marketing

Rather than focusing your efforts on only the traditional external markets and communicating to existing customers and prospects, energize your selling effort by focusing your sales communication efforts not only externally but internally as well. In other words focus your sales effort in all directions and be proactive. Look at your employees as your “stealth sales force” - powerful, but often unnoticed. Too few firms recognize that their employees are an efficient and cost effective way to increase sales and profits. Often, these are the same firms who bemoan the cost of sales and cannot think of more effective ways to increase their sales.

Energize Your Stealth Sales Force

Don't be lulled into thinking that each employee is self-motivated to promote your product and that they are product knowledgeable. Assumptions like this are as faulty as assuming your customers know all about your services. You need to educate your employees to know what the company is selling, why, and the benefit the product provides to the customer. The employee may never develop the same level of product knowledge as exists in your primary sales force, but this secondary sales force will be your competitive advantage.

Why take the time? Why spend the money to do internal sales development when your employees are not your primary buyers? In other words, why have a company wide sales culture?

Who answers the calls when the customer calls the company? Who ships out the product and is responsible for getting it delivered on time? Who is packing up the product and needs to be sure the product arrives in the shape it is intended? During each of the above steps, and many others from billing to maintenance, the employees can stamp their quality “sales signature” on the service provided and impress the customer with the product they receive. These clerical functions can be a major factor in your company's sales success!

One company recently realized they had a problem when they tried to introduce a new product and was met with a hostile response due to employees being cynical about management's motives. The source of the dissatisfaction was based on previous decisions, which the employees misunderstood. Their cynical attitude permeated the workplace and was reflected not just in their reception to the new product but also in the lackadaisical manner in which they serviced customers. This had a detrimental effect on sales.

Another company realized they had more than just an employee motivation problem when calls into the company about product information were met with “I don't know” management never tells us anything. The level of customer service, sales and employee retention all suffered because of this feeling that management keeps them in the dark.

How to get started with implementing a 360? Dynamic Marketing Program

1. Before launching a new product hold information sessions for the employees. These meetings don't take the place of sales training for your sales force but provides to the rest of the employees the reasons for the new product, the benefits the product provides to the customer and potential benefits to the employees.
2. Post product brochures on bulleting boards and include the importance of the product in the employee newsletter. You don't have an internal newsletter? Implement one immediately. If you have an Intranet capability use it for product information as well as general company information and policy changes. If you don't communicate consistently with your employees the misunderstandings will undermined the maximum potential of your sales programs.
3. Do a product-knowledge contest with fun prizes for those employees who know the most correct answers. (You many want to exclude the sales force personnel for this event, and have a separate contest just for them.) This general-employee product-knowledge contest provides valuable feedback on product confusion and you can then develop ways to correct this important information void. You may also be surprised to learn that your potential customers have the same points of confusion as your employees. You can, therefore, save considerable wasted effort by identifying these potential pitfalls before the product launch.

By including your employees in your sales communications plan you will be the beneficiary of greater sales, improved profits and more satisfied employees who are excited about coming to work. Who knows, you may even discover a new “sales person” in your backroom staff who is excited about selling.

By Rich Delaney