

## From the Editor



Eric Wiedenmann

Welcome to the 30th issue of The Revenue Accelerator™. [Market Development Group](http://WWW.MARKETDEVELOPMENT.NET) (MDG) aims to provide practical revenue and profit generator tools for MDG clients, colleagues and friends. The Revenue Accelerator™ circulation has grown to over 3,500 business leaders worldwide since our first issue was published in 2006. We welcome any suggestions of articles or topics you would like to have included in future issues.

The guest writers in this issue are Trent Hughes, Marketing Manager for AllPoints Foodservice Parts & Supplies and Michael Cannon, CEO and Founder of Silver Bullet Group.

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## 6 Answers You Should Have From Your Customers to Set Yourself Up for Success in 2014

By: Eric Wiedenmann

### 1. What sets our company apart from the competition?

*There are many competitors – you must know and focus on your competitive advantage if you want to survive.*

### 2. Why do customers purchase our product or service?

*Your customers have a myriad of alternate choices. You should know the major reasons why they selected you. (features/benefits, price/value, location, relationships, recommendations, etc.)*

### 3. Would you recommend our company?

*This is the 'gut question' – you need a 90%+ rating to grow your business.*

### 4. What is your perception of our company?

*Perception is reality. This will determine if your position is correct and whether or not your branding/messaging is working.*

### 5. How would you rate our company on total value/total cost of ownership – did you get what you paid for?

*If you are not rated 8.5 out of 10, your customers may find an alternate source.*

### 6. What can our company do to earn more of your business?

*Knowing the Share of Wallet (SOW) that you have and what it takes to cross-sell or penetrate will reduce your selling costs and increase your margins.*

A **Customer Satisfaction Survey** implemented by an independent third party will provide you answers to these critical questions quickly, cost-effectively and objectively.

## 3 Ways to Increase Your Sales Team Effectiveness with Marketing Automation Software



By: Trent Hughes

**Gartner has estimated that by 2017, the CMO will spend more on technology than the CIO.** Where is all this money going? CRM and marketing automation software packages. The line between sales and marketing is blurring more every day and what we're seeing is a new hybrid model emerging. In this new model, marketing not only focuses on outbound promotion, but is also heavily involved with building processes within the selling cycle. This shift has brought about a number of opportunities to make the sales process more of a science where initiatives can be tested, evaluated and refined to perfection.

Here are 3 ways to increase sales effectiveness with Marketing Automation Software:

**1. Lead Nurturing** – Every company must convert leads to sustain growth, but how do you speed up the conversion process? Lead nurturing allows you to monitor a lead's activity on your website, track their interaction with digital content, and build custom, multi-touch point campaigns all with the goal of driving engagement. Cold calls can be effective, but the success rate of closing a deal on the first call is typically minimal and sales agent's time is valuable. Lead nurturing provides you the power to educate a potential customer about your company and develop their interest digitally at their own pace. Once the lead crosses an engagement threshold indicating they are close to making a buying decision, the software will let a sales rep know it's time to call or visit the lead and close the sale.

Nurturing campaigns can be as simplistic or complex as you want. You could setup a basic introductory email with a link to your website and track the number of page views. Or you could build a multi-stage campaign beginning with an email and then moving through a series of cause

and effect interactions for a defined period of time. The end result in either instance is sales doesn't enter the equation unless there is a high probability a sale can be closed.

**2. Account Prioritization** – Most sales teams use some type of priority system to move accounts and leads into A, B and C buckets and then drive communication frequency off of the priority bucket. This has already been proven an effective exercise, however it can also be time consuming to implement. With marketing automation software, you have the ability to define a grading system that follows a basic grading scale of A, B, C, D and F to classify an account's total opportunity. This is more than just a metric based on sales opportunity. You can increase or decrease the opportunity score based on factors such as a person's job title, location, industry and any other data you may collect.

Now the opportunity grade is only half of the equation. The other half is the engagement score mentioned above. By prioritizing accounts based on not only their opportunity or fit for your business but also by their interaction with your sales and marketing efforts, you have a prioritization system that is easy to create and manage, and helps your sales team determine where to effectively use their time.

**3. Communication Templates** – If your company consistently works through a large amount of leads, you've probably identified the first few conversations and interactions are essentially the same for every lead. Marketing automation software gives you the ability to build standard email templates for these communications that your sales reps can modify as needed to fit their situation. While this may seem like a minimal time savings, it adds up when you have multiple sales reps repeating the same process daily. Additionally, creating standard templates gives marketing the ability to define messaging and monitor each template's effectiveness in moving leads through the sales process.

Some examples of communications I have standardized with templates include:

*"Thanks for your time today. Here is a link to learn more about our company."*

*"Here is a link to download our credit app and a quick overview of the application process"*

*"If you would like to create a web account, here is a link to get started and an overview of the process and timeline"*

All of these examples are for B2B but the concept is the same for B2C; repetitive conversations are put into templates so sales reps can focus their time on selling.

Implementing Marketing Automation Software is not the only way to increase effectiveness with your sales team, but it is an emerging strategy that has proven highly effective for companies of all sizes. As the software continues to become more widely utilized, it will transition from competitive advantage to industry standard. The reason for its key role in many marketing departments is clear – facilitating effective collaboration of marketers and sales people in order to speed up sales cycles with well-timed, valuable communications.

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**About Trent**

Trent Hughes is the Marketing Manager for AllPoints Foodservice Parts & Supplies as well as marketing consultant in Boulder, CO. In his career, he has held marketing management and branding positions for Eaton Corporation and Watts Water Technologies. Trent is an Ashland University graduate with a degree in marketing. You can contact Trent at **440-396-8950** or [trentahughes@gmail.com](mailto:trentahughes@gmail.com).

**The #1 Ingredient in Sales Enablement Success**



By: Michael Cannon

Your sales enablement program is probably going to be less successful than you expect because, according to a [decade of 3<sup>rd</sup> party research](#), it's highly likely that:

- Over 50% of your marketing and sales communications aren't relevant to your customer
- More than 70% of your marketing content isn't relevant to your sales teams

This summary data indicates that you can have all the right sales enablement components (people, process, technology, knowledge, and assets) in place and still have an underperforming program because the majority of "words" coming from your sales and marketing teams are not relevant and useful.

### Enabling Sales Enablement

To address this substantial customer communications problem, organizations are using persuasive messaging as the core enablement tool because:

- It's more highly correlated to the primary actions Sales and Marketing want the customer to take, and to what the customer wants to know
- It enables both Sales and Marketing to engage customers with more relevant and influential conversations and content.

### What Is Persuasive Messaging?

Messaging is a summary answer to the prospective customer's primary and secondary buying questions, a.k.a. the key points that must be communicated in order to convince a person to engage and buy. Messaging is integrated into content via the copywriting/creative process and integrated into sales conversations via the communicator. Content can be delivered in the form of documents, audio, and video.

The two messaging styles are descriptive and persuasive. The categories of messaging can include: Company, Solution, Platform/Product, and Market Segment/Role messaging. ([See a Typical Customer Communications Model with these styles and categories of messaging.](#))

Persuasive messaging is to sales enablement as octane is to gasoline. It makes all the "words" coming from your sales and marketing engines more effective. It's a quick win with Sales. It's a practical way to align Marketing and Sales. It's why persuasive messaging should be the #1 ingredient in your successful sales enablement program too.

As an example, descriptive product messaging is the typical "what and how" content in a product brochure. It answers the customer's secondary buying questions, such as:

- What does the product do?
- How does it work?
- What features are included/optional?
- What are the key benefits?

Persuasive product messaging is the “why” content that is typically missing from a product brochure. It provides clear, relevant, differentiated, provable, business-language answers to the customer’s primary buying questions, a.k.a. persuasive messaging types, such as these:

- “Why should I consider your product?” for demand creation
- “Why should I meet with you?” for meeting creation
- “Why should I change from the status quo to a new solution?” for opportunity creation
- “Why should I buy this new solution from your company instead of your competitors?” for order creation
- “Why should I buy now?” for urgency creation

As you can see, persuasive messaging is more highly correlated to key Marketing and Sales objectives than descriptive messaging, and to what the customer needs to know in order to engage and buy.

### How Persuasive Messaging Enables Sales Enablement

Imagine a 1-page persuasive battle card ([see examples](#)) or best-practice answer to some of the “why” questions above, such as “Why Change?” and “Why You?” These cards enable your sales team to be an instantly influential Subject Matter Expert (SME) in customer conversations. They help Sales get and prepare for meetings, qualify, sell solutions, set landmines for the competition, etc. They are exactly what Sales wants.

As one Sales Manager said about the order-creation or competitive messaging: “It has made our competitive information much more concise; it is information that the salespeople now use. It has taught them how to ask the right questions to steer customers our way.”

Imagine a version of this same 1-page persuasive messaging summary is also deployed into the majority of pre-sales marketing content, such as collateral, demand-generation campaigns, sales tools, and sales support training. These cards enable each piece of content to be much more relevant and influential.

Without persuasive messaging-enabled content, Sales is not likely return to the sales portal and is likely to return to their old ways. And, given that 30-60% of the buying process occurs online, persuasive messaging-enabled content is also critical to the success of your “content selling” effort.

As one Product Sales Manager said: “Highly persuasive competitive messaging increased our products’ win rate by 30% and reduced the time we spent supporting the field by around 50%.”

Persuasive messaging is to sales enablement as octane is to gasoline. It makes all the “words” coming from your sales and marketing engines more effective. It’s a quick win with Sales. It’s a practical way to align Marketing and Sales. It’s why persuasive messaging should be the #1 ingredient in your successful sales enablement program too.

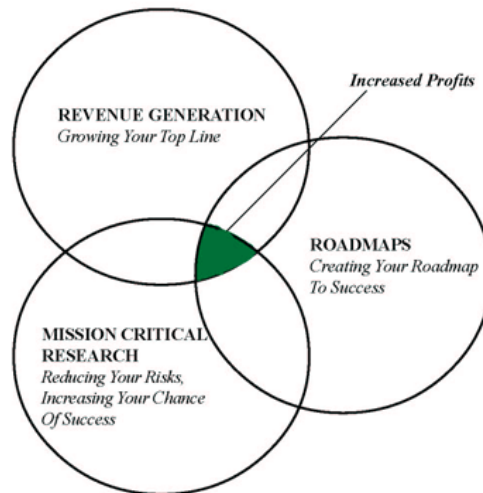


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**About Michael**

Michael Cannon is an internationally renowned marketing and sales effectiveness expert, best-selling author, speaker and an authority on enabling B2B companies to engage customers with the most influential communications. For more information, visit [www.silverbulletgroup.com](http://www.silverbulletgroup.com).

## This Is How MDG Helps Clients Increase Sales Efficiently and Cost Effectively



### Revenue Generation:

- Increasing Closure Rate
- Finding Untapped Markets
- Time/Territory Management
- Developing New Channels
- Business Development



### Research:

- Helping Companies Make the Right Mission Critical Decisions
- Customized Market Research
- Competitive Intelligence
- Opportunity Identification
- Customer Surveys
- Finding Acquisition Candidates



### Roadmaps:

- Strategic Marketing Plans
- Rapid Response High Impact Sales Plans

Contact **Eric Wiedenmann** to learn how **MDG** can help increase your company's sales and profit goals quickly and cost-effectively.

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