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Transforming Your Product Sales Training

Date: March 2020
Reading Time: 3 minutes

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Your sales reps know HOW to sell, teach them how to sell YOUR products.

Transforming Your Product Sales Training

Manufacturer representatives and re-seller sales representatives (SRs) typically sell numerous products, in many different categories, often from several manufacturers. To be successful they need to stay current on product updates, new product introductions and technology advances that are important to their accounts. All of these learning requirements take away from their selling time and their primary motivators – sales goals and commission checks.

Far too often, the only product-specific sales "training" (Product Sales Training) these SRs get is a stack of marketing collateral (sell sheets, brochures, product spec sheets, technical support papers) and a link to the manufacturer's website.

The volume of information can be overwhelming, and the material itself often lacks key information the SRs need. It's not presented using their vocabulary. It can raise more questions than it answers.

Who wrote this sell sheet?

Did the marketing department get solid input from a knowledgeable product manager? Companies manage the collateral development process in different ways, and it can be hard for the SR to know which ones can be trusted.

The volume of information can be overwhelming, and the material itself often lacks key information the SRs need. It can raise more questions than it answers.

When there are multiple products in a product line, trying to assemble an integrated picture can feel like putting together a jigsaw puzzle without a guiding image.

How current is this information?

Collateral rarely includes a "publication date". When SRs receive a series of marketing pieces from one product line without this kind of dating, they spend unproductive time trying to determine (sometimes unsuccessfully) which is the foundational information and what subsequent collateral is the most current and accurate.

How do all these products relate?

When there are multiple products in a product line, trying to assemble an integrated picture of that line from the collateral for each of the individual products can feel like putting together a jigsaw puzzle without a guiding image. What is the overall value proposition for the line? Why should the customer buy this product vs. the competitor's product?

How can I guide the customer when I can't put the picture together myself?

Sometimes several collateral pieces supporting a single product line or category can have different voicing, emphasis, layout or design. This can lead to selling confusion for SRs, making it difficult for them to clearly explain product choices to their customers.

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Collateral while readily available is created for other audiences and objectives.

Are these just new words describing the same features, or is this a new or different feature?

When terminology for what appears to be similar features differs between collateral pieces, does that reflect real product differences, or just the preferred vocabularies of different writers?

Is the company deliberately changing its message?

One piece of collateral may have subtly different messaging from the others. What is the most important message? Was a change really intended? Or was a new writer just trying to add their own touch?

At the same time they are swimming in questions, SRs can also feel buried under a mass of specification details. Like a computer with a fixed amount of RAM, human beings can only take in so much information before they lose the ability to retain it all.

Who was the collateral originally prepared for?

Collateral, while readily available, is created for other audiences and objectives:

- Sell-Sheets are leave-behinds for sales calls
- Technical specs are for technical purchasers, installation and service staff.

None of this is prepared specifically for the key person in the distribution process – the sales rep.

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Quality sales reps deserve better training ... and they will sell more if they get it.

Even when there's a formally developed and consistently presented product training format and delivery platform, the material is frequently prepared by people who have in-depth product knowledge (sometimes too deep) but little understanding of specific product selling requirements, the Product Sales Training components, that front-line sales reps really need.

Quality sales reps deserve better—and they will sell more if they get it.

Quality Sales Reps Deserve Better Training.

Product sales training based solely on sell sheets and marketing collateral is simply no longer effective for SRs. It is time consuming, counterproductive, inadequate, and worst of all, boring.

The better solution is Product Sales Training that is laser-focused on what SRs most need and will respond to—the key selling propositions—with the additional details readily accessible as they need it.

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The better solution is Product Sales Training that is laser-focused on what sales reps most need and will respond to – the key selling propositions.

Transforming Your Product Sales Training.

The focus of specialized product sales training should be on helping sales reps be motivated and effective. For reps to be motivated, they need to know enough about how to sell (and earn) from the product to grasp the value of investing the time to learn about it.

A consistent and reliable Product Sales Training program delivers that level of confidence. Important information and training elements SRs need include:

- **Market background** (Brochures, sell sheets and websites don't typically include information on market size and growth, and rarely identify market opportunities, even indirectly).
- **Category information** (size, growth trends, technology advances, relationship to other product categories and technology)
- **Product information** (value proposition, feature/benefits, technology advances)
- **Competitive set information** (comparative product information with an emphasis on superior characteristics)
- **Pricing and delivery** (volume discounts, promotions, production cycles)

That information often requires timely distribution and updating, characteristics that are difficult to execute with printed material.

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Transformed training tells an integrated, cohesive story, addressing why the rep should be interested and why the customer should buy.

With a true Product Sales Training program manufacturers demonstrate their commitment to the front line sales reps, who in turn will be:

- More informed
- Better prepared
- More confident
- Better sales people!

Transformed training is better training.

Transformative training material is written for sales reps, and to their requirements and needs. It tells an integrated, cohesive story, addressing why the rep should be interested and why the customer should buy. It is based upon easy to absorb written "sound bites", with quick access to additional details upon request, and it is consistent in information structure and presentation, voicing and terminology. Lastly, next-level training is available when and where the sales reps want it, so that it doesn't intrude on their valuable selling time.

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TechScholar, founded in 2009, creates professionally prepared, web delivered Product Sales Training for some of the most widely recognized tech companies in the world.

The company has created over 200 Product Training Modules, trained hundreds of sales reps worldwide and administered and reported on an accumulated 50,000 hours of web based training. With TechScholar, all product training costs are in a single budget line, and manufacturers and distributors get reports on training activities and performance that allow them to evaluate and validate their spend.

To learn more about how a TechScholar Product Sales Training campus can solve your company's training challenges, contact us today.

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