

## PRINTING & PUBLISHING

### Sales performance increases 29%

The client offers the most comprehensive and innovative package of voice and data services in the market. It's joint venture operation is the fastest growing online search directory in the US, providing exposure to more than 90 million monthly consumer business searches. Consumers can locate merchants, search directories, research products and services, obtain maps and directions and plan entertainment, leisure and travel activities. Our client was looking for publishing cost reduction as well as sales growth through an increased customer base and greater revenues.

The business review utilized a number of tools including 'a day in the life' (shadowing of sales representatives to identify how they spend their day), process mapping and attitudinal surveys. During the review we found that:

- Sales staff were not spending enough time actively selling – major account reps spent only 5% of their time selling and sales reps spent less than 20% of their time selling and only 6% of their time prospecting. It was not unusual for non value added activities such as traveling or administration taking up 25% of their time.
- Sales meetings were ineffective – when in a sales situation, sales staff spent too much time presenting solutions and not enough time listening and understanding the client's needs.
- Front line supervisors spent most

of their time doing administrative work rather managing, coaching or training. Coaching and development took place when someone was 'in trouble' or at risk of losing an account. Coaches missed opportunities to provide feedback.

- Systems to record information and manage resources were inadequate – notes from sales meetings were recorded on yellow sticky pads.
- Artists responsible for publishing production were working to unrealistic goals and were undertaking a lot of rework due to errors from sales staff.

#### WHAT WE DID

Alexander Proudfoot worked with the client over a couple of projects aimed at raising salesforce effectiveness and productivity.

Sales systems – Proudfoot helped to introduce a range of systems and processes to concentrate effort into active selling. It implemented weekly sales meetings and weekly 'huddles' amongst the sales team where opportunities and strategies were shared. It created a daily-weekly planner for sales reps to help organize their time more efficiently and the installation of visual management boards with employee rankings helped encourage competition and achievement.

Coaching – A coaching model was installed for first line managers including but not limited to time management and performance management. For the first time, managers were given tools to

help them coach others such as 'power prompts' (scripts) and coaching videos.

Production management – An operational management system ensured resources were deployed effectively with first line and middle management being appropriately trained. Communication between artists and sales departments was improved and 'proof checklists' decreased the need for rework.

Sustainable results owned and implemented by the organisation:

The project had a huge impact on sales effectiveness:

- Productivity for each customer care centre increased by raising the number of calls handled and directories processed
- Sales performance increased by 29% in the major KPIs of call count, number of appointments and buyers per day.
- Sales revenue increased through increased productivity: for telephone sales not only did the number of calls each rep made per day increase but also the amount each customer bought. This led to US\$5.5 million in benefits.

Finally, to ensure the results were sustained without reliance on ongoing support from a consulting resource, an internal consultant team were trained and coached in the implementation and follow up techniques developed during the project.