

POWERING REVENUE ENGINES

Maximizing Sales Force Time and Effectiveness

Blue Ridge Partners is the most experienced, impactful and respected firm exclusively focused on helping companies improve the performance of their “revenue engine”. This is one in a series of case studies that describes our work and demonstrates the value we create for our clients.

A food service products manufacturer experienced steep sales declines. Company management and private equity owners were unhappy with the company’s performance. Some thought that much of the decline was due to an unskilled sales force that was ineffective in using their available time. The company believed that changes were required in their sales strategy but was concerned that these changes could not be well-executed by the sales force.

Blue Ridge Partners was asked to review the capabilities and sales processes of the sales team and make recommendations for necessary improvements. We reviewed current sales practices, interviewed current customers and sales managers, implemented a time-tracking tool, and observed sales visits on a firsthand basis. Our findings included sales managers spending inordinate time on unproductive tasks, inconsistent sales processes within and across regions and inadequate customer segmentation of the company’s most important accounts. Our recommendations included specific organization and procedural improvements leading to maximum effectiveness of the sales force.

“Blue Ridge Partners’ study opened my eyes to what our sales people were really doing today and what we need to have them do tomorrow.”

- SVP Food Service Division

**What we recommended for accelerating revenue growth**

- ▶ Implement process changes to reduce administrative burden on sales personnel and provide more selling time
- ▶ Employ similar sales planning, procedures and reporting across regions to improve sales management as well as sales consistency and execution
- ▶ Segment customers to identify those most important to core revenue growth
- ▶ Reorient sales force to focus face-to-face time on the most important customer accounts
- ▶ Provide sales managers with greater authority for pricing and related decisions to improve sales conversions and timing

HEADQUARTERS
1350 Beverly Road, Suite 115
McLean, Virginia 22101

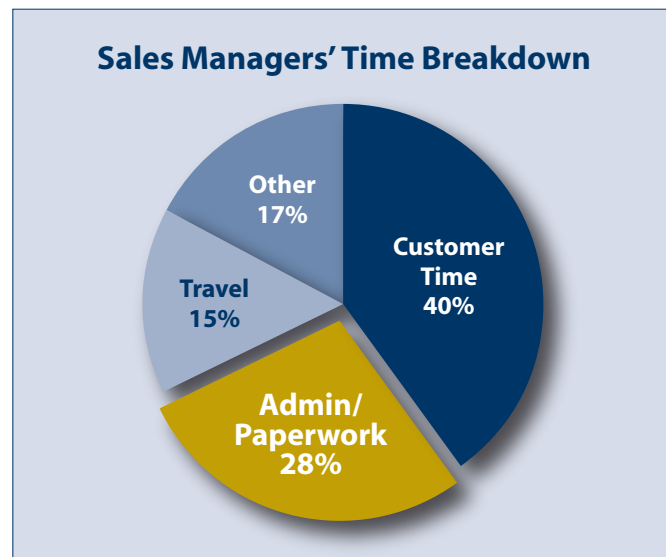
INFORMATION
www.blueridgepartners.com
info@blueridgepartners.com
phone 703-448-1881



Tools we used to assess their revenue growth

- ▶ *The Nine Voices of the Market*™ to gather critical feedback from customers and current sales force managers
- ▶ Time-tracking tool to study the time spent by sales managers on day-to-day activities
- ▶ Ride-along customer visits with sales managers for firsthand knowledge of the sales process
- ▶ Analysis of existing sales systems, including customer management, incentives, and pricing processes

We analyzed Sales Managers' day-to-day activities and identified an inordinate amount of time allocated to administrative and paperwork tasks



Ineffective Behaviors Leading to Recommendations

- ▶ With no headquarters guidance, many regional managers developed their own sales processes, creating inconsistencies between regions
- ▶ Lead management is handled independently by region; some regions assign leads and accounts based on a master approach while others require sales managers to identify prospects and leads themselves
- ▶ Regional managers have different approaches for tracking opportunities and leads; there is no standard protocol for reporting or aggregating these opportunities at zone or corporate levels
- ▶ Without reliable sales tracking and reporting, sales personnel incentives are highly qualitative and largely team-based
- ▶ Recent marketing efforts created a flow of new leads supplied to the sales team but the leads are not pre-qualified and require valuable time and effort of the sales managers to determine whether the lead might be worthwhile
- ▶ Most sales managers tried to meet face-to-face with all customers, regardless of size or importance. Key customers were not always receiving the attention or time they deserved

If you aren't seeing superior growth in profitable revenue, contact us for an actionable evaluation of your company's revenue engine.

