

## **Background and Problem**

The Group consists of three separate organisations all of which offer the same sound recording services to advertising agencies, TV stations and film companies. All three locations are within 100 yards of each other. They operate under three different brand names. The Group was founded in 1978. They had been extremely successful and well known but over the last few years have lost their way, their identity, and to a certain extent their enthusiasm

The challenges fell into five main areas:

- A dramatic fall in individual studio utilisation rates over a 5 year period
- A lack of 'Brand' awareness in the market place
- No understanding internally of why a customer should chose their services over and above the competition
- No clear sales and marketing strategy
- A lack of internal communications within the Group itself

## **Actions Taken**

A member of the LGBA was contracted to undertake a seven day Sales and Marketing Health Check. This included investigating the complete sales process, the current marketing and branding strategy, the actual utilisation rates being achieved by each studio and the internal communications and reporting structure within the Group. The resulting report contained 31 action recommendations, all of which were accepted by the Group and an action implementation plan was agreed.

The first recommendations to be implemented were:

- To market the company as one Group and not as three separate organisations
- To strengthen the brand by increasing the number of group companies to include training, technology and production services
- To define the groups unique selling points
- To implement a customer satisfaction process
- To recruit a business development manager
- To set achievable but challenging targets for each department
- To reorganise the internal sale process
- To implement a group steering committee
- To appoint a non executive sales and marketing director to help and advise the implementation of each individual recommendation.

## **The Result**

The immediate effect was a sharp rise in staff morale and a new understanding that everyone in a company sells. Commitment to targets and ownership of challenges greatly improved. The company is now seen as a large and important group with clearly defined unique selling points that distinguish it from the competition, and not as three separate and smaller organisations. Utilisation rates are starting to improve. The company was so pleased with the initial recommendations that the LGBA member was appointed as the non executive sales and marketing director.

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### **Background & Problem**

The company had several years trading and built up a good reputation. However they had no resources to exploit Sales opportunities, and had survived on reputation alone. However with natural wastage of clients the business was dropping. The initial task was to create an identity, and indeed a proactive regime that stood it apart from its many competitors. The second area of need was new clients.

Without a product identity, the company were always prone to new developments at their clients that made their work redundant. Therefore new clients were essential to the survival of the company. The third area of concern was a 'product identity'. This would be the opportunity to increase profit margins and provide greater control over a fairly 'spasmodic' business.

### **Actions taken**

A Sales Consultant from the SGBA approached the company and reviewed the needs and acted accordingly. The initial action was to design a simple sales flyer, something that the client had never had. This was done and part of the design process involved many of the workshop operatives for their input. This was a departure from normal practices, as up till then the staff had little input into any strategic matters. This also provided some lateral thinking to the business owner.

A simple sales plan was raised by the consultant. The consultant then implemented a research project into potential clients, and a simple sales database established. A telesales exercise worked concurrently with the research, as new clients were viewed as both a short and medium term requirement. Lead qualification was followed by a controlled mailshot, and follow up. More recently both the Consultant and the Company have worked together to create a product identity. This product is now being launched with the Consultant wholly responsible for driving the product into the market

### **The Result**

Some two years after a sales plan of action was implemented, five out of the top eight clients were as a result of the exercise. And of course the business has grown. Also with a Product Launch imminent, the company are highly enthusiastic about the future.

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### **Background and Problem**

A major global brand was required to respond to formal tender documents in order to win a very substantial order. Although previously the clear World Leaders in their field, they had lost three of four major projects over the past few years to a competitor - all of which were placed by direct negotiation. Their “pre-qualifying” documentation was very arrogant, and was met with derision by the customer who privately instructed them to “raise their game”. At this point there were only around six weeks to finalise the tender response and they needed to revise their whole approach to the whole bid process.

### **Actions Taken**

Tim Colman established a bid team within the company and developed a clear time line for all the bid processes. The overall bid structure was agreed within a week and resource was allocated to production of specialized plans, drawings and financial data. The team identified the real client requirements which were substantially different from what the brand was going to offer – albeit totally within their expertise. Existing documentation – which for the brand concerned was not in their mother tongue - was re-written in good English and all new documentation was meticulously checked. The benefits of working with the brand were very clearly stated, and the opportunity for changes in the scope of supply (upwards) were clearly identified. The bid was presented on time.

### **The Result**

The company won the project without any re-bidding. In fact the scope of supply did increase substantially (adding well over three million dollars to the overall value) – as a result of opportunities identified in the tender response documents. The same basic “framework” was used by the company to win a similar project four year later. The core members of the bid team were then bought together to bid for a multi-year contract worth nearly one billion dollars over a ten year period. The competition have not won a single major contract in this period.

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## **Background and Problem**

A large software company had been providing software and services to a UK telecommunications company (telco) over many years. As a result, the telco was using several different software packages from the client, along with a variety of support, maintenance and other services, each of which was subject to different terms and conditions and commercial structures.

This caused confusion and conflict in the relationship and prevented the companies from viewing one another as long-term strategic partners. The company wished to persuade the telco to upgrade all of its sites to the latest software package under a single set of terms.

## **Actions Taken**

A member of TVBA helped the company to structure a deal with the telco that protected both parties' investment in their relationship and rewarded the telco for making the move to the new software.

This involved extensive contract drafting and negotiation work and some creative thinking to ensure that the medium and long-term business needs of both parties were met.

## **The Result**

A five year agreement was signed, which outlined how the parties would work together to migrate the telco onto a single software platform and how the licences for the various software applications would be managed in the interim. It also set out a common set of service levels for all applications, simplifying the interfaces between the two organisations. The telco benefited from a clear understanding of the total cost of ownership of the software over the five-year period and from the reduced rates, which reflected its long-term commitment.

The company benefited from being able to plan its resource requirements to ensure that the telco would be properly supported during its migration and other project activities, as well as by having a known revenue stream for the five-year period.

As a result of the agreement, both parties are able to work together in a more co-ordinated and consistent manner. This has also resulted in a more co-operative and closer working relationship between the two organisations which has delivered benefits to both sides.

The company was so pleased with the results of the negotiation that the TVBA member was toasted by the company's VP Sales at a champagne reception!

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### **Background and Problem**

The company sources and supplies an impressive selection of quality seafood to the international luxury cruise line industry, which is a very price sensitive, seasonal and specialised market. The company had been trading for more than ten years, yet had seen little growth beyond its current product range and customer portfolio, and had seen profits reducing year on year.

### **Actions Taken**

The company participated in a marketing and business operational review under a “Business Support Programme” with the specific objectives to identify why the company was not growing and why profits were declining. The operational review identified that the company needed to increase its awareness of the stock held in cold-store and to gain an understanding of the investments associated with doing business with its customers.

With access only to a limited supplier base the company was often at the mercy of the suppliers stock availability and seasonal buying trends. First actions were to implement stock management systems to keep track of suppliers, prices, purchases, stock and deliveries, and then to re-negotiate the service agreement with the cold-store. Improvements were also implemented to the purchase-to-pay and order-to-cash processes. Alternate suppliers for existing and comparable products were identified, along with suppliers of new product lines that could be introduced.

Additionally the arrangements with current suppliers were re-negotiated. The marketing review revealed there was significant potential available from existing customers and which customer relationships would need to be developed to gain access to this potential.

Further analysis identified and prioritise those customers with the greatest potential and specific initiatives were implemented to unlock the potential available from these customers.

### **The Results**

Six months after the initial stock-take the value of stock held was reduced by over 42%, whilst simultaneously the range of products held increased. Profitability for each product and each customer could be measured and monitored on an order-by-order basis. Customers soon acknowledged the increased level of quality, product availability, and customer service improvements, so with growing confidence, customers became more comfortable placing more orders with the company.

After six months sales from existing customers have increased by 23%, and the company has seen profits sore by in excess of 38%!

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### **Background and Problem**

A well established IT training company in Lincolnshire, with close links with the University of Lincoln, providing government funded training across a range of social and business communities were looking to expand into new areas, as their growth in Lincoln had slowed. With Training centres and offices across Lincolnshire and a well established local brand, they were unsure of where to consider next and how to approach it.

### **Action taken**

Having found further sources of Government funding in Leicestershire for IT training, MGBA were engaged to market the full range of courses provided by the company across the Leicestershire region supported by this new funding stream. With appropriate market sector analysis and focused marketing campaigns, combining telemarketing, events and exhibitions over a period of six months, the company gained a significant new market sector in the larger commercial B2B area.

### **The result**

The success of these campaigns in engaging with some of the major enterprises in the Leicestershire, combined with further market analysis, provided the company with a new focus and confidence to go forward with a new business plan including other counties bordering Lincolnshire. This has allowed the company to re-think their strategy for the future and direct resources into other counties for the new year. New objectives have been set and the company feels confident to roll out the training offerings to other areas in the future.

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### **Background and Problem**

The company had been running for several years and had a good reputation amongst its customers but struggled to get new ones. The company was operating from a small building in the garden of the owner's house.

The company was only two people (MD and engineer) with some part time administration support

### **Actions Taken**

We undertook comprehensive review of the marketing. This went through a number of steps including clarifying the long term objectives of the owner and contacting existing clients to understand why they bought from the company.

Following this initial research a range of cost effective marketing initiatives were put in place. These included:

- Producing a professional website
- Producing a range of literature both for the company overall and targeted at specific market segments
- Focused networking to build relationships
- Using every opportunity to get the company name in front of prospects
- Training to get all the company to "think marketing" and be aware of opportunities at all points
- Undertaking focussed direct marketing campaigns
- The plan was for small but continuous marketing activities.

### **The Result**

Once the programme was up and running many of the activities were carried out by the company employees.

Eighteen months after the process started the company has just moved into its own high street premises with a showroom and engineering facility. This has happened on the back of continual profitable increase in turnover since the marketing started. The number of staff has now increased to 5 full time with one part time support. Some non-core activities have been outsourced.

It is planned to continue with the regular drip feed of marketing activities.

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