

Background and Problem

The Client was a well established manufacturer and supplier of giftware to the independent retail sector, multiple outlets, department stores and garden centres. They had a wide range of products, well accepted in the market place and were trying to introduce new products every year.

Although gifts are purchased all through the year approximately 40% of sales take place in the three months prior to Christmas.

For a number of years sales had stagnated and the introduction of more direct sales management by the client had not been successful. The incumbent sales personnel appeared to be doing everything that was asked of them.

Actions Taken

In order to identify the issues that were affecting poor performance and stagnating sales, a sales audit was carried out by the Consultant. Using a tool developed by the Consultant, the sales process was identified and various measurements were made so that each stage of the process was clearly defined. In addition all members of the sales team were interviewed so that individual and personal issues were identified and isolated. From this a report was drawn up identifying some of the issues in both process and personnel that was preventing the company going forward and recommendations were made to correct this position.

Subsequent to this the Consultant was further engaged to implement a plan covering the recommendations made. One of the main considerations was to refocus the sales team away from small accounts and to focus more of their time on accounts that could provide a larger 'take' as average order value was very low.

Management and reporting processes which up till then had been virtually non existent were implemented to monitor this refocusing exercise. Sales training was also carried out to refresh the skills of the sales team many of whom had never been trained. Field visits were made with the sales person to reinforce the training and to provide positive support.

The Result

Initially expected results did not materialise due to the resistance of the sales force to change their way of working and to the newer more disciplined approach to sales.

After a period some of the team decided to leave and this opened up the opportunity to recruit better quality, more experienced staff. Subsequent to the recruitment process which was carried out by the Consultant, new members of staff recognised the importance of the new way of working (indeed some had already experienced this).

As a consequence sales increased by 100% over a two year period.

**If you want to find out more about any of the areas covered in this case study
and how we can support your business – contact us today.**