

# Sales & Marketing Innovators November '14 Breakfast Roundtable:

How to reach the next level in B2B sales growth by transitioning  
from product-centric to business-centric selling



# Introduction

- From startups to large companies like Oracle and SunGard senior marketing and sales executives have realized that they need to go from selling multiple products to technical buyers to selling business “solutions” to business decision makers. In order to make this transition they first need to create their own unique sales process that defines the way they sell, allocate resources, and build an infrastructure that supports their go-to-market strategy.

# Introduction (cont)

- Takeaways from this discussion include what key elements in your go-to-market strategy may have to change to successfully transform:
  - How the sales force is organized and managed (roles, territories, & processes)
  - Marketing messaging and the relationship between marketing & sales
  - Selling behaviors and the relationship with customers
- The following slides include observations for discussion ...

# How the sales force is organized and managed

## Product Centric

- Resources aligned by product
  - Field sales
  - Inside sales
  - Pre-sales
- Simple sales process
  - Territory Planning
    - Geographical
    - Some vertical
    - Channel partners
- Sales support
  - Product specialists
  - Sales engineers

## Business Centric

- Resources aligned by business “solutions”
  - Field sales by region/vertical
  - Assigned accounts by vertical – GAMs & Account Managers
  - Start to see bifurcation of transaction sales (SMB) versus enterprise sales – Inside Sales team
- More complex process/infrastructure
  - Territory planning
  - Account planning
  - Opportunity management
  - Relationship management
  - Formal sales process
    - Aligned w/buyer’s journey
    - Enablement tools aligned with sales process
- Sales support
  - Solution specialists
  - Business Consultants

# How the sales force is organized and managed (continued)

## Product Centric

- Simple organization
  - VP Sales
  - Sales Operations
- Forecast at product level
  - Pipeline health determined by revenue volume (3x)
  - Sales cycles 1 – 3 months
- Adding new logos
- Hiring process
  - Looking for the typical sales “Hunter”
  - Resume and results
  - “Gut” feel

## Business Centric

- Organizational maturity
  - VP Sales Enablement
  - VP Training & Development
  - VP Sales Operations
  - VP Inside Sales
- Forecast at opportunity level
  - Tracking milestone outcomes
  - Pipeline health determined by revenue volume distribution
  - Sales cycles 3 – 6 months, up to a year
- Adding new logos but also:
  - Increasing order value
  - Penetrating existing accounts
  - More services/partners
- Hiring process
  - Looking for multiple sales styles for specialized roles: hunters, farmers, etc.
  - Resume and results
  - Assessments
  - “Gut” feel

# Relationship Between Marketing & Sales

## Product Centric

- Focused on product training
  - Product knowledge
  - What “It” is
  - What “It’s” benefits are
- Sales competencies
  - Interpersonal – Rapport
  - Communication – Value proposition, product benefits
  - Presentation - demo
  - Negotiation - closing
- One-to-many messaging “deliverables”
  - Product sheets
  - Presentations
  - Demos

## Business Centric

- Put customer at center of processes, enablement tools, and marketing & sales activities
- Sales competencies
  - Interpersonal – rapport
  - Communications – Conversation/Listening skills
  - Business acumen – Cost/Benefit analysis
  - Presentation – demo for proof
  - Project management – Evaluation plans
  - Negotiation – access, implementation plan, final terms and conditions, leverage cost/benefit to hold pricing
- One-to-one messaging “feedback loop”
  - Aligned with sales steps
  - Support conversations
  - Support buyer journey

# Customer Relationship

## Product Centric

- Product is the biggest part of the brand experience
  - Sellers leads with product as a “noun” and talk about what “IT” is
- Customers treat product as a commodity
- Establish “Vendor” relationship
  - Focus on customer “need” or problem
  - Differentiate on feature, function, benefit, and price
- Tech buyers, end users w/budget (expense)

## Business Centric

- The seller takes a larger role in the “brand” experience
  - Business conversations
  - Sharing insight on “usage - The product as a verb
  - Sharing results and understanding value
  - Managing implementation risk
  - Facilitating group buying decisions
- Business decision makers w/o budget (investment)
- Opportunity to become “trusted advisor”
  - Need to understand customers business issues, goals, and objectives to add value as a sales person
  - Differentiate on the way you sell
  - Become more strategic
- Bigger impact on buyer
  - Change in business processes
  - Change in behavior
  - More costs
  - More risks
  - Higher return

# Want to discuss transitioning from being product-centric to business-centric selling?

Join us at the Sales & Marketing Innovators Breakfast Roundtable

## When

Thursday November 20, 2014 from 7:00 AM to 8:30 AM EST

## Where

**Newton Marriot - in the Riverbend Restaurant**

2345 Commonwealth Avenue

(at intersection of Rt. 128 and Rt. 30)

Newton, MA 02466

Jim Naro will lead this discussion based on his decade-plus of sales management experience at GTE Internetworking as well as 15 years of sales consulting to B2B companies of all sizes.



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