

Delta Company

A Market-Partners Client Success Story

A national advertising and marketing company transforms to a proactive selling approach and achieves greater forecast accuracy.



About Market-Partners

Market-Partners is the leading independent consulting company focused on increasing sales effectiveness. We bring proven methods, thought-leadership, and pragmatic expertise together in offering solutions that provide swift, significant, and sustainable results. We have been working with clients since 1995, from start-ups to industry giants, and have worked with literally thousands of sales professionals in more than 39 countries.

For more information about our leading Customer Acquisition Management solutions, please get in touch with us at info@market-partners.com, or 707-575-4712.

Delta Company, a provider of advertising and marketing services, was suffering from flat revenue growth, and lacked the data to understand the cause. Sales leaders were having a difficult time managing the pipeline and forecasting accurately.

Sales reps were spending a greater proportion of their time engaged in non-selling activities, waiting for RFPs, and reacting to customer requests rather than selling proactively. A sales process had been developed in response to these issues, but front-line sales managers and sales reps were hesitant to use it, instead choosing to manage opportunities their own way. The lack of consistency around opportunity management made it impossible for sales leaders to obtain a clear view of the pipeline and focus the sales team on selling activities. Without accurate data to manage the business, senior sales leaders were unable to address and correct the problems underlying Delta's flat revenue growth.

Client Description	Delta Company provides advertising and marketing products and services to businesses ranging from small local shops to national store chains and brands throughout North America. Delta has over 1000 sales and customer service team members.
Highlights	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Delta Company, a provider of advertising and marketing services was suffering from flat revenue growth combined with resistance to change resulting, in part, from prior failed attempts to implement new selling strategies and methods.• Sales managers lacked the pipeline data to manage the business and forecast accurately.• The sales team was feeling increasingly overworked, spending too little time selling and too much time engaging in project management and customer service activities.• Market-Partners, with Delta senior managers, designed and implemented a change management program designed to alter both the sales team’s beliefs about using a sales process and their reactive selling behaviors.• Sales managers are reporting improved opportunity qualification and less time spent chasing false leads, while sales reps are closing more efficiently, and are better able to resolve stalled opportunities.• Senior leaders are reporting improved pipeline visibility and a better ability to forecast and manage the business.
Business Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mature market with customers moving towards lower cost solutions• Prior failed attempts to change selling strategies and methods left the sales team resistant to change:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Delta’s existing sales process was not being used• Low level of trust between the sales and customer service teams• Sales team feeling overworked, spending less time selling and more time engaging in customer service activities:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lack of clear accountability for selling versus customer services activities• The sales team was in “wait and react” mode, waiting for RFPs then reacting to them• Customers treated Delta as a commodity supplier rather than a business partner• Tendency by sales to give away services before qualifying the buyer• Sales managers lacked the pipeline data to manage the business and forecast accurately:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• No consistent method for forecasting, pipeline management, or opportunity management• No accountability for using the sales process

The Solution	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Market-Partners discovered that Delta’s sales reps typically were engaging with buyers too late to influence their requirements, and were reacting to buyers rather than influencing them.<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The sales reps’ reactive approach reduced their ability to partner with customers• Customers had come to expect Delta’s sales reps to do what they asked rather than act as an expert advisor• Market-Partners collaborated closely with Delta’s sales leaders to develop a change management program that made the entire organization accountable for implementing a new approach to opportunity and pipeline management.<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Market-Partners worked with senior leaders to communicate the need for a new selling approach, their commitment to it, and what was different from the prior process rollout.• The new sales process was rolled out by first starting with senior managers and then cascading down through the rest of the organization. This helped drive accountability at all levels.• All levels of the company participated in work assignments and personal action planning.• Senior leaders and sales managers were provided one-on-one coaching to help them use the new sales process for opportunity and pipeline management.<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Senior leaders redesigned their business reviews, so that the sales process was used as a basis for reporting by middle and first line sales managers.• Sales managers were provided multiple rounds of coaching to drive adoption of the sales process within selling teams.• The sales process was rolled out to a group of early adopters that created some initial successes, that were leveraged to reduce resistance to the new selling approach.• Change was measured and evaluated at each phase allowing the change management process to be fine-tuned.• The sales process was rolled out to the sales, marketing, and customer services organizations, providing them with a common language and method for determining how and when to apply resources to a sales opportunity.
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Results	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Resistance to change transformed into a belief in the value of a new selling approach as the sales team began seeing the benefit of actively managing later stage opportunities and seeking out to engage customers earlier in their buying cycles.• Sales managers are reporting improved opportunity qualification and less time spent chasing false leads.• Sales reps are closing more efficiently, and are better able to resolve stalled opportunities.• Sales reps are competing more on value and less on price.• Pipeline data is now consistent and senior leaders report they are better positioned to forecast accurately and manage the business.<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Trends and bottlenecks in the pipeline are readily identifiable• Senior leaders are conducting business reviews more efficiently and effectively, and are gaining a more realistic view of their business.
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