Are Your Sales Efforts Like Popcorn?

As the heat grows, a kernel explodes and then another until the canister is full of careening kernels bouncing in every direction.

By Dave Kahle

Years of economic muddle!

That was the title on the seminar brochure I received recently. As I survey some of the forces flowing through our economy, and witness the way in which they impact my clients, I have to agree.

Unfortunately, these forces have brought a cloud of confusion to CEOs and sales executives trying to grow their businesses.

ARE YOU JUST CHASING GOOD IDEAS?

One common response to this cloud of confusion is what I call “Popcorn.” Imagine kernels of popcorn simmering in hot oil in the bottom of an old-fashioned popcorn popper. As the heat grows, one of the kernels explodes and rockets off against the side of the popper. A few moments later, another kernel explodes and shoots off in another direction. Before long, the canister is full of careening kernels bouncing in every direction.

That’s my analogy to the way in which many businesses attempt to increase their sales when the temperature created by the economic downturn gets hot. As the heat of the situation grows, they know they have to do something. Then along comes a good idea and, pop, like a kernel of exploding popcorn, they lunge at the good idea.

The good idea can be anything. Maybe it’s a media representative who suggests a new advertisement. That sounds like a good idea. So, “pop,” off they go after that good idea. Or it could be a salesperson suggesting that a computer program will solve their problems. That sounds like a good idea, so “pop,” off they go after that good idea. Next is an advertising agency suggesting a new brochure. That also sounds good, and “pop,” like kernels of corn exploding in every direction, they expend money and energy in short term “good ideas.”

Like kernels of popcorn, they frantically chase lots of good ideas hoping that one will be the answer to the marketing problems. The problem is that these good ideas rarely have any relationship to one another. And, they generally present superficial solutions to problems that are often deeper. The company’s time and energy is diverted toward these superficial “good ideas,” and away from the deeper solutions.

For example, an advertisement in a trade journal may be a superficial solution for a company that does not have a system for identifying qualified prospects. And a new brochure may be a superficial response for an organization that doesn’t have a feedback mechanism in place to adequately understand its customers.

The unfortunate consequences are often more pressure, more confusion, and more energy expended in the wrong places.

CREATE A POWERFUL SALES AND MARKETING SYSTEM

Is there a better way? Sure. A far more effective response is to create a powerful sales and marketing system. A sales and marketing
A well-designed system is the solution

When your system is designed, you’ll also have a set of criteria in place to help you adequately assess the potential in such things as advertisements, brochures, computer programs, etc.

A well-designed system allows you to move out of the desperate reactive mode characterized by “Popcorn” and into a confident pro-active mode. The system is the solution.

About the author

Dave Kahle has trained tens of thousands of distributor and B2B sales people and sales managers to be more effective in the 21st Century economy. He’s authored eight books, and presented in 47 states and seven countries. Sign up for his weekly Ezine, or visit his blog. To learn more, see Dave’s new book, How to Sell Anything to Anyone Anytime, or visit The Sales Resource Center.

www.davekahle.com