



November 7, 2008

## ICMA Workshop



**Make your  
call center  
a profit center**

**Prepared by:**  
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**Proprietary  
And Confidential**

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**November 7, 2008**

**Presented by: Beverly Crandon**

## **Workshop Synopsis:**

**Make your Call Center a Profit Center**

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### Slides 2 to 4

- Web 2.0 has changed the way advertisers interact with traditional media or media in general, for example:
  - Increased usage of self service tools
  - Advertisers are blogging to bring awareness to their products, services or business
  - SEM and SEO are more important to advertiser now more than ever
  - Social networks and virtual worlds are being used, especially in the recruitment industry

### Slide 5 to 6

- On average, inbound call volumes have decreased by 19% when comparing 2007 to 2006
- The decline in contact has affected both the commercial and private departments

### Slides 7 to 14

- With changes to contact methodologies, inside sales teams still remain relevant to a publishers business:
  - Publishers are reviewing sales structures
  - They are looking to move more duties inside, due to efficiency gains, for example:
    - Have Tier A and B commercial customers handled by outside sales reps and then have Tier C and some B handled by the inside sales teams

### Slides 17 to 75

- Given the relevance for inside sales teams in this new advertiser market place, sales leaders must position their teams for excellence.
- Creating an efficient outbound sales structure is important
- The imperatives to a successful sales team and structure are:

## The Approach

- You must consider the competitive marketplace on each customer approach – don't behave as though you are the only game in town
- Think agency and not service center when working with advertisers

## The Dialing Strategy

- A dialing strategy is very important!
- Dialing strategies must also be created, re-evaluated, and re-invented to ensure success
- Segmentation (customer, list, internal sales rep) is key to any good dialing strategy
- Some things to look at if you have having trouble with segmentation are:
  - Look at your market's key economic drivers
  - What industries perform especially well for you?
  - Would they perform better with a specific strategy?
  - What is your penetration in key consumer verticals?
  - Could a product or ad package be developed for that vertical?
  - Review incumbent customers and sales reports
  - What's worked well for you? Capitalize on those successes!
  - Focus on specific geographies. Do they,
    - Work better at different times
    - Buy particular products
    - Different reactions to different types of sales reps

## The Product

- Determine the product based on the customers' needs. Consider things such as,
  - Bundles
  - Multimedia

- Online only
- Advertorials / customer profiles
- Longer buys
- What are customers telling you?
- Be creative!

### Coaching Regiments/Employing the Right People

- Inbound calls down 19% (2007)
- Too many inbound reps
- Not enough outbound sales
- Publishers are moving inbound trained reps to outbound positions
- But outbound and solutions selling is not for everyone
  - These are two very important skills that today's successful sales rep must have
- Sales leaders also play a role in the success of their sales reps
- Leaders should review the following: "*Have I helped my sales reps with?*"

  - Online market awareness
  - Online market share
  - Vertical trends online
  - Online training (the terms)
  - Print, online: Complementary?
  - Coaching and performance improvement?

- When hiring a sales rep in today's market place, you should feel comfortable in their ability in the following areas:
  - How do they deal with rejection?

- Comfort level using the phone?
- Listening skills?
- Does he / she have the ability to ask appropriate probing questions?
- How perceptive is the representative?
- Does he/she understand relationship building?
- Flexible approach?
- Attracted to commission pay structures?
- Are they a self-starter?
- The ideal manager should fit the following profile:
  - Trained as a coach
    - **In actuality, 75% of their time should be spent coaching**
  - Motivator
  - Understands the market place – online and in print
  - Asks questions (of reps and leaders)
  - Knows top 5% of advertisers
  - Likes to ‘roll up their sleeves’ and get involved
  - Not afraid of change
  - Thinking about the *next* best thing

### Slides 71 to 95

- Center Consolidation and Outsourcing have been the recent trend in the Call Center arena
- Consolidating makes sense when:
  - Groups with multiple centers
  - Activity declines at each center
  - Talent retention issues

- Cost savings possible?
- Some of the consolidation benefits are:
  - Management process unified
  - Customer-facing activity unified
  - Succession planning improves
  - Strategic initiatives strengthened
  - Revenue increases
  - Staff turnover declines
  - Customer relations improve
- There are some must do's when thinking about consolidating
  - Build a timeline ... *stick with it!*
  - Work with key department players
    - Involve HR and IT early
  - Build a solid communication plan
  - Streamline product offerings
    - Eliminate weak ones
    - Add bundles, standalone services
  - Involve reps in hiring process
  - Be creative in hiring
- Outsourcing makes sense when something falls out of your core competency
- Some of the benefits to outsourcing are :
  - Third-party centre handles calls
    - Call centre is *all they do*
  - Lets you think strategically about other internal initiatives
- There are some “must do’s” and things you should remember when looking to outsource:
  - The vendor you choose represents you and your brand

- They still require management, so, appoint one person to act as the ‘vendor manager’
  - Communicate constantly
  - Train continuously