



Breakthrough Ideas

Accelerating through the Turn Winning in the Downturn

Have you noticed that most car races are won in the turn?

Anyone can floor it on the straight-a-way. The best racers position themselves to take the lead in the turn. It is the same in sales and marketing. The best people in sales and marketing are able to win in the tightly competed deals or take market share when market growth slows. This way they can accelerate out of the turn- when the market turns up- with a lead on the competition!



How do they do this?

1. They identify the sweet spot of their market.

Identify the segment of your market that has a need they will act on- even in hard times. Focus on those prospects for which your product delivers significant value, such as helping them accelerate sales growth, conserve cash or reduce costs. Identify and target the segments of your customer base that are still doing well in spite of the downturn- to generate shorter-term sales... while keeping the process going with longer-term prospects.

2. They show the financial impact of solving the problem.

Explore how the problem is currently impacting your prospect's business. Show them how your solution will solve those problems and either eliminate a negative trend (i.e. cost, lost sales) or accelerate a positive trend (i.e. incremental or repeat business). Beyond the obvious costs, lay the hidden costs of changing to the new solution. So, the positive impact must be substantially greater than the cost of the solution to endure "the cost of changing" (including the cost of training, time away from the job and other implementation costs).

3. They demonstrate how they solve the problem better.

You must demonstrate in practical terms how your solution is significantly better than a competitive offering they are considering- specifically what it does faster, easier, better and how that will impact their business. Beyond identifying their decision criteria, you must influence the criteria by understanding how they do the job currently and how your solution does it better. This includes using ROI analysis and case studies that demonstrate a real improvement in key business results. Due to the natural resistance to change, if your solution is just a little better, it is not worth the time and effort to make the change.

4. They make it easy to succeed with their product/service.

Design your products/services to be "user obvious"... as easy to use as possible. Beyond this, provide resources to help users up the learning curve and to resolve support issues as quickly as possible. The ramp up phase is critical to success. The last thing you want is to get the reputation amongst users that your product is hard to use or is not reliable. It is important to help your customers track how your product/service is impacting their results- so they can see the tangible business value delivered.



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5. They are top of mind when the “precipitating event” occurs.

There is often a precipitating event that causes the purchase to be made- sometimes very precipitously. How many times have you witnessed a prospect that is aware of the problem, but does not act to solve it? Then something bad happens and the decision to solve the problem is made very quickly. If you are not top of mind or easy to find on the web, you are out of luck. Someone else will scoop the sale- even if they do not have the best solution, because the decision is being driven by urgency rather than rationality! Beyond just staying in touch- i.e. via nurture marketing- make sure you are covering all the key people involved in the decision... adding value (knowledge, perspective, connecting them with key people, etc.) in each interaction.

If you or someone you know would like to discuss how to do this in their environment, please invite them to contact me.

Good Luck- winning in the turn!

Ron

Ron Snyder

Breakthrough, Inc.

650-508-0622

www.breakthrough-inc.com

Accelerating Revenue Profitably!