

ChangeBEAT



Sales Force Enablement at NSB Retail

Case study



Abstract

Chris Precious, the sales director of NSB, an international supplier of fashion retail software, wanted to implement a consistent sales process to increase win rate and to reduce problem projects.

The business had little existing process having grown rapidly by acquisition and so adopted ChangeBEAT's ExecKIT methodology, suitably customised. The process was rolled out in a series of three-day workshops which also refreshed key sales skills.

As Chris said "We could see benefits in the first month. Over the next two years we were able to increase our win rate by 20% and eliminate the significant cost of problem projects."

Introduction

NSB Retail Systems (NSB) was a specialist supplier of store, supply chain and multi-channel retailing systems to retailers around the globe. Formed in 1995, NSB committed to a business growth strategy which comprised a mixture of in-house development, and significant corporate merger and acquisition activities.

The company employed over 1,400 people in offices in the UK, Canada, North America, France and Germany. The company was acquired by Epicor Software Corporation in February 2008.

The opportunity

NSB recognised that the company's rapid growth had led to a need to implement an improved sales approach across the whole company.

The objective was to increase the productivity and effectiveness of the sales team, as well as creating greater cohesion between the previously disparate teams which had worked for the different companies acquired by NSB.

The benefits for sales would include

- improved productivity from better qualification and win rate
- a clear route to gaining management "buy in" for prospects
- a more controlled and higher level sales message
- better sales campaign management (and win rate)
- better deployment of sales and pre-sales resource
- better cross-company account management leading to better business
- improved margins from planned and controlled negotiation
- fewer problem projects because of better risk management.

There would be further benefits to finance and senior management in having a robust and reliable sales forecast and in enabling pre-emptive management action.

It was also anticipated that delivery would experience improved quality and effectiveness from fewer problem



projects, improved resource planning and a clear handover from sales to delivery.

The challenge

Chris Precious, sales director at NSB, engaged *ChangeBEAT* to help develop a tailored sales process, a sales support system and the necessary training. Using *ExecKIT*, *ChangeBEAT*'s library of industry best practice, NSB immediately had the basis of their new process.

“We adapted and customised the *ExecKIT* material incorporating our own existing procedures. We liked the fact that we were building a sales process that had been a proven success by other IT software and services companies.”

The process was customised through a series of “consensus” building, information gathering workshops and interviews. In the interests of simplicity and manageability the process included only four mandatory authorisation points, or “gateways”. The stages in the process were as follows

- Qualification
- Bid planning
- Sales campaign planning
- Risk planning and bid review
- Sales negotiation
- Contract negotiation
- Contract signature
- Order acceptance and project initiation
- Sales forecasting

“I knew that if the project was to be successfully and smoothly implemented, it would need to be well managed across the disparate groups including our European offices. *ChangeBEAT*'s approach helped us to meet this challenge” explains Chris.

John McAleese, Programme Manager, led the training programme to both the sales and delivery teams. “The roll-out of the new process provided us with an excellent opportunity to combine a team building exercise with a refresher course on the relevant sales skills. *ChangeBEAT* ran three three-day workshops for 35 people and each has been a great success.”



The results

Chris says “Within one month the new sales process was already showing benefits, particularly in the areas of qualification and risk planning and bid review.

“Over the next two years we were able to increase our win rate significantly and also reduce the number and cost of problem projects.

“*ChangeBEAT* did a thoroughly professional job.”



ChangeBEAT defines, develops and executes change programmes that help achieve enduring business benefit rapidly and reliably. Our people have practical field experience, and are equipped with WingBEAT, our proven change methodology, and our extensive tools. We are professional, pragmatic and action oriented.

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