

For Success Choose Partners with Experience & Training

ByKatie Klick

Category: Business Solutions | Issue: April Issue | Posted Online: Tuesday, April 05, 2011

Everyone's looking for new and creative ways to meet their goals this year. Do your objectives in growing your own company include making MPS a core part of your business? Or finding new ways to motivate your staff to find MPS opportunities while keeping your manufacturers satisfied by selling lots of new hardware? Or even partnering with key companies that will help you achieve your objectives?

What do you look for when finding a partner to fulfill all of these needs? Hopefully, Industry Experience, Real Life Industry Education, Comprehensive Solutions, and most importantly, Great Training! After all, if your team doesn't truly understand your vision, where the industry is headed, and how to use the new tools you are providing them, how can they possibly contribute to reaching your company's goals? Well, there are good companies that have found this perfect combination; a few are highlighted in this article.

With technology in the present day, we have limitless options to get our staff up to speed on current Industry Trends. This includes Webinars, Conference Calls, flying staff to localized National Conferences, bringing in Specialized On-Site Trainers, having your own In-House Trainer or Consultant for educating your employees, etc. But unless you have a complimentary Industry Partner who can accommodate all these variances, you're basically doing what you tell your customers not to do; use multiple vendors when you can just use one!

Long Term Goals

You need to consider your long term goals. Ask yourself, "Are my Software Partners continually developing their product to evolve with our industry?" Too many times dealerships invest in a solution, only to outgrow their initial investment. When looking for a partner it is essential to partner with people who understand where the industry is headed as well as take your ideas and turn them into solutions to grow with your business. Flexibility and continual development is extremely important to your success, both internally with your own business model and with the companies you rely on to get you there.

"In the past we've invested in products that may have seemed like a perfect fit at the time, only to find that they were not willing to adjust in our changing market, and we were forced to implement new solutions to meet our needs," says Jeff Theilacker, president of Diversified Business Solutions in San Diego, CA.

In other words, don't waste your time with generic products that aren't industry specific, and whose staff aren't qualified to consult with you. You need to ask the right question in the forefront when choosing your Software Partners: "Are you willing to customize or continually develop your product to fulfill my expanding needs?"

- "Are you and your employees educated enough and continually educating themselves to best advise our Company on what we need to do to stay ahead of the competition?"
- "Do you and your employees understand where the industry is headed, and know what to do to help me succeed?"
- "Can you provide us with all the tools and training we need and give us direction to be successful in the MPS market?"

If all answers are not a big "yes," you need to explore your options. Choosing partners who are engaged in what you are dealing with in real life is extremely important when making an investment. Choose companies who offer ongoing web based or on-site training programs to educate your sales force on industry trends, can integrate their product into your real life sales cycle, offer best practice sharing, and who can say "we've been

there, done that.” Most importantly, are flexible and innovative, and grow with you to help you become profitable and successful.

Dealer Examples

DocuSource, a Los Angeles based Ricoh and HP Dealer, selected Compass Sales Solutions as their partner. They utilized Compass’s suite of offerings including its TCO Generator, Asset Strategy tool, Equipment Import Feature, Electronic Price Book and Proposal Generation product, Compass Sherpa. DocuSource’s president, Les Walker remarked, “Not only did we have an all encompassing product to take us from contact to close, but Compass CFO George Gallian worked with our Sales executives and managers continually, as well share his experience in the Cost Per Page Market.”

Gallian, a 30 year veteran in owning and managing profitable dealerships, adds, “Part of helping to develop a great product is to stay in the game. We are continually enhancing our product to meet the needs of our clients, and we can’t do this without exposing ourselves to the current challenges that sales reps and managers are facing in the field, and this includes being in the field with them.”

In addition, DocuSource, who had no MPS customers prior to this partnership, has gained millions of contracted clicks as a result of leveraging not only the power of the software, but by using the applied training and consulting offerings offered to create a clear road map to make MPS successful.

While hands-on support is an apparent need in the success of any company’s objective, the convenience of web tools in combination of personalized programs are also key to achieving goals in the global market. For example, Mike Steinhoff, President of Rhyme, located in the greater Wisconsin area, and is recognized as one of the Top 100 Dealers in the United States, realized this when recruiting partners and trainers to fulfill his needs. “We had a solid ERP System in place for years and we were using a reputable data collection tool, but needed something more to tie it all together in an all-inclusive software for our Sales staff.” This is when Rhyme started to explore the options of a standardized CRM System where all their investments work together in a Sales Automation Tool.

“We needed to achieve our goals for streamlining forecasting, and managing our sales funnel, and found that a system like Compass allowed us to have one product for our Sales staff to achieve all their goals.” Mike also elected Katie Klick as a dedicated trainer for Rhyme. “After recommendations from our major manufacturer,” says Steinhoff, “we elected to pursue an ongoing training program that included a combination of onsite training and web-based training. “ Klick adds, “It is my job to train others in this industry, whether it is sales or administrative roles. I want to see people reach success, and I believe our product will help them achieve that better than other products in the market.”

Troy Casper, president and founder of Compass Sales Solutions, believes in “helping clients reach their goals by providing an all encompassing solution to take them not only to the next level - but into the future.”

Katie Klick is an experienced trainer for Compass Sales Solutions, a specialized copy and print industry sales force automation and print management software developer. Visit www.compass.com for info.