

JANEK PERFORMANCE GROUP

CASE STUDY

Case Profile

Company Name:

Daimler Trucks
North America

Industry:

Motor Vehicle Manufacturer

Size of Company:

20,000 employees

Key Challenges:

- Facing a time of high volume and low demand where all marketing dollars need to be maximized
- Need to better capitalize on the critical first point of customer contact by providing inside sales professionals with the skills and best practices necessary to ultimately convert more sales center visits

Who was Interviewed:

- Brad Hice – Manager, Sales & Finance Programs



Challenge

The industrial equipment industry was experiencing sales volumes at historic lows. Used truck values were dropping, and the level of demand was also going down. With sales opportunities shrinking, Daimler identified the point of first contact – a prospect calling the sales center for information – as a critical event in the sales process. These calls needed to shift in purpose from a simple question/answer dialogue to a brief, yet engaging interaction where the sales rep gains an initial understanding of needs and presents value to the customer.

After a few weeks of reviewing recorded inbound sales calls, Daimler recognized an opportunity to better capitalize on the calls that were resulting from their marketing efforts; ensuring no money was being left on the table. In observation, many of the calls sounded fairly consistent; prospects calling in to check availability of a used truck they saw advertised or for price checks on a specific vehicle, with many of the calls ending with no further action taken. In those cases, the customer's need was not being met, and the sales professional was not gaining a center visit.

The major challenge and true business need was to discover creative methods to shift the calls to more of a Need-Based Selling, or, a consultative selling approach – thereby collecting information about the caller's needs and beginning the relationship-building process. This way, regardless of the availability of the inquired vehicle or price point, the sales professionals would have the information they needed to make further recommendations. In order to reach the ultimate goal of a sales center visit, the customer first needed to see the value in making the visit to the sales center; and connecting with the sales rep was key in meeting this outcome.

A significant advantage in meeting this challenge would be the aid of the pre-recorded phone calls. The ability to listen to these authentic interactions would provide invaluable insight on where communication could be enhanced. Once missed sales opportunities were identified, a strategy to maximize marketing dollars could be created and implemented across the Daimler's network of sales centers nationwide.

Bottom Line:

DTNA needed to identify a strategy and consistent selling process to quickly identify needs, qualify prospective customers and convert the highest potential level of new, telephone-based inquiries into sales center visits.

Solution

Daimler needed to implement changes in its telephone sales operations. In order to excite and motivate the sales team, the change would need to give purpose to this now critical event in the sales process. Transforming this initial point of contact would be key in funneling leads to face-to-face interactions at the sales centers.

Daimler recognized the need to enlist the help of an outside sales performance group, and with that, had specific attributes in mind for their desired partner: "This is a critical audience. We needed a partner that would take the time to understand our industry and achieve buy-in from our reps. The program needed to truly resonate with the audience so that they believed the training would be time well-spent," said Brad Hice, Manager, Sales & Finance Programs.

An initial conversation with Nick Kane, one of Janek Performance Group's managing partners, provided the desired credibility and assurance that Daimler was after. Kane was able to demonstrate Janek's ability to truly engage and partner with clients to develop and implement customized solutions.

Upon being selected, Janek set out to learn about the industry, the network, and the business model. They visited sales centers, worked in the field, analyzed recorded calls, and interviewed the company's sales team at every level – from the Director of Sales to the inside sales reps themselves, all in an effort to accurately identify the opportunities that would be impacted by the training initiative.

Concurrent to the investigative process, Janek had to achieve buy-in from sales management and the inside sales reps. Serendipitous timing enabled Kane to administer numerous breakout sessions at Daimler's annual leadership conference. These breakout sessions allowed Kane an opportunity to not only deliver Janek's rationale on sales evolution but also to describe program specifics, including the shifting of inbound telephone interactions from product-based to consultative and the resulting increased opportunities and marketing ROI. This interaction generated excitement and true anticipation for the program.

Janek's Instructional Design Team continued to collaborate with Daimler to develop a customized **Critical TeleSelling® Skills** workshop to be rolled out to the entire network in two centralized locations over a three-week period. Classroom sizes were capped at 20 participants ensuring significant interactions, role plays and case practices for all.

The regimen also included the development and delivery of formal coaching tools to be used by Sales Center Managers to support ongoing coaching and reinforcement efforts. These coaching tools were deployed online through a series of webinars, held jointly by Janek and DTNA leadership.

Bottom Line:

Janek developed and delivered a customized Critical TeleSelling Skills program for Daimler's insidensales professionals. Its ability to achieve buy-in from such an experienced sales team was key to the program's custom development and its initial reception. The change required was significant, so gaining the trust of everyone involved and putting the Center Managers in a position to effectively coach to the skills following the training would be critical to the success of the initiative.

"The audience was full of veteran sales reps that would be skeptical to new ideas and change. Janek's facilitators really made the effort to understand how we do business. It really paid off. We had great buy-in...no negative feedback. Our 'old dogs' came away very positive and could see the potential results. No one felt it was a waste of time. It was time well-spent and a great investment."

Brad Hice
Manager, Sales & Finance Programs

Results

Janek designed a high-level scorecard that was simple yet robust for measuring performance 90 days following the training. This proved the program to be a winner as Daimler saw higher retention rates in their new skills than other types of training provided in the past.

Through Janek's measurement & evaluation process, it was determined that:

- 75% of the audience surveyed felt the training would highly support building stronger relationships with customers
- 84% of the audience surveyed felt the training would be highly impactful in obtaining new customers

Return on Investment at 90 days following the training indicated a return of 601%.

Janek's Critical **TeleSelling® Skills** workshop showed the reps the importance of using a Need-Based Selling approach on their telephone interactions.

Further, because the training and follow-up were simple and easy to incorporate into their routine, it became second nature to the reps – a newly developed muscle memory of how to work with customers during the initial phone interaction and beyond.

Bottom Line:

Perhaps the most telling sign of the program's long-term success is Daimler's decision to integrate the dynamic and powerful workshop into the onboarding of new hires. They hope to continue with the newfound momentum, encouraging the notion of taking control of the initial contact with prospects to generate more interest in the value of the company's products and converting more telephone inquiries into sales center visits.

"They woke up and saw that the phone means cash. Becoming a trusted advisor meant turning more calls into opportunities, and turning opportunities into sales."

Brad Hice
Manager, Sales & Finance Programs

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