

Janitorial Services Case History

The Problem:

Commodity offerings like janitorial services tend to be purchased on the basis of price. Most prospective customers think that all vendors are the same, or at least they think that there are enough of them, and they are so competitive with one another, that they (the potential customers,) can ignore the differences in quality and service and simply beat the vendors down on price. The reality is, though, that there really are differences in quality, service and value. So how do you get people to acknowledge the differences? And even if you can't get them to pay more, how do you separate yourself from the low-price/low-quality pack so they'll want to consider you for their cleaning and maintenance?

What They Tried:

For one national vendor of janitorial and maintenance services, networking was the key to getting started in the retail market. Exhibiting at trade shows, making contacts, and developing a personal relationship gave them a chance to differentiate themselves, and start to establish a value proposition among the large national retailers. The problem was that there weren't enough shows, they took a lot of time to prepare, and decision makers usually weren't in attendance. And worse was the fact that once the business started coming in, account management took up all the salespeople's time. The business became self-limiting, and they couldn't grow, and they certainly couldn't get to the big national retailers.

JV/M's Solution:

Getting in with large retailers is quite different from getting in with small retailers. The large ones have complex hierarchies and detailed vendor qualification processes, while small retailers are harried, cost-conscious and parochial. In both cases, though, the challenge ultimately is the same: getting the decision maker on the phone, getting his attention, and getting him to see the value. And nothing works better than B2B telemarketing. So when JV/M started targeting large retailers for this janitorial services company with B2B telemarketing, it took just a little while to find the right person, and just a little longer to educate them, but it was worth it. We got them into dozens of accounts, at high level; we uncovered needs before the first meeting, and positioned them to win the business.

Summary

Even when you're selling a commodity service like janitorial services, people can be educated about the differences and the value. And nothing works better than B2B telemarketing.