

Creating a Roadmap for Consistent Sales Growth, Repeatability and Scalability

TERRITORY MANAGEMENT ▼

by Kate Gluck



Points to remember:

- » *Make sure your sales managers are integrally involved in the creation and implementation of your territory plan.*
- » *Ensure you have the CRM and management systems in place to guarantee all activities are aligned with, and measured against, your organizational goals.*
- » *Remember that a territory plan is not static, but instead something that needs to be refined and nurtured to adjust to fluctuations in the marketplace.*

"MANAGEMENT IS EFFICIENCY IN CLIMBING THE LADDER OF SUCCESS; LEADERSHIP DETERMINES WHETHER THE LADDER IS LEANING AGAINST THE RIGHT WALL." – STEVEN COVEY

When it comes to getting to from point A to point B, the navigational process has evolved considerably over the years. While early settlers looked to the sun and the moon for guidance, nowadays we just turn on our GPS, plug in the address of our destination and mindlessly follow directions. **The only hitch? You have to know how to use it and you have to know where you want to go. Without those key bits of information, the GPS is virtually useless.**

It would be stretching it to say that with a plan and the right technology in place, navigating a sales cycle is as easy as plugging an address into a GPS and driving to your next appointment or making your next phone call. It is not a stretch to say, however, that *without* a territory management plan, an understanding of the buying process, a CRM system, a defined end goal and an understanding of how to maximize the effectiveness of the technology available, your organization will struggle to reach its sales objectives.

A good territory management plan is an absolute necessity for organizations looking for repeatability and scalability in their sales efforts. Essentially a roadmap of where you want to spend your time and why, it is a wide scale plan that pulls together multiple facets of your organization in a unified effort to:

- Drive new business growth
- Enhance the productivity of your sales reps
- Improve sales coverage
- Streamline your organizational selling procedures
- Create a structure for performance measurement

It will not only force you to define and communicate your destination, when executed properly it will also help you get there in the most efficient manner.

A Unified Effort

Involved leadership is integral to the success of any comprehensive selling strategy. It is no different with territory management. A territory plan needs to be a function of the entire selling organization, not just the individual reps.

Think sports. Letting sales representatives come up with their own individual plans for managing their territories could be compared to throwing five guys out on a basketball court with no playbook, no coach and no defined roles. Sure they might score some points, but the likelihood that they are working to their potential is slim.

"A great coach or a great leader always has a set structure in place and remains involved in the process on a day to day basis. Instead of a rep operating as a lone duck, he or she needs to have a framework to operate in and a resource to turn to comfortably for advice and mentoring," said Greg Tillar, CEO of NuGrowth Solutions.

"Great leaders set targets, help carry out the plan, lead by example, grow the people/ talent in the organization and make it a place worth caring about. They are committed to delivering on the company promise to the market and as a result they are rewarded by hitting their financial targets," he added.

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Getting The Pieces In Place

In addition to a defined end-goal and involved leadership an organization needs to have the right infrastructure (CRM systems, rewards, training and feedback) in place so that all activities are aligned and measured with the overall goal of the organization. Not only does this streamline the process so your entire team is working towards the same goal in the same manner, it also enables the methodic cadence needed to manage daily sales activities.

As the market changes, so must your systems. It is important to realize that these elements are not static but dynamic and have to evolve as things change quarter to quarter and year to year.

So Where Do You Get Started?

Leveraging existing customer relationships as a reference anchor, create a plan based on what you know about the marketplace.

- Determine whether the main territory driver will be geography, vertical market or both.
- Develop a lead segmentation strategy (active, dormant, etc.) so that messaging can be more targeted based upon what you know about the account.
- Establish a distinct methodology (outbound calls, targeted emails, broad-based thought leadership emails, etc.) for reaching out to each segment with a dedicated, consistent cadence.
- Establish parameters for how long a lead will stay active before being moved out of the active sales cycle into the LeadGen program

Structure your contact relationship management system

to give you a birds-eye view of what you have in the pipeline at all times. Ensure your CRM aligns with the buying process so it accurately reflects the reality of the actual opportunities.

Pull in your marketing team to build and consistently execute effective lead generation marketing and targeted email campaigns to support the sales efforts, build the brand and communicate a consistent story about what makes the product compelling.

Establish a system of review and measurement

and report weekly on success of outbound calling, targeted mailing, impression mailings, opportunities created and deals closed.

- How many calls made/ emails sent?
- How many responses / opens?
- How many move from target to dormant/ active each week?
- How many move from response to opportunity to close?
- What is the messaging?
- What is the age of the list / last refresh?
- How fast is follow up taking place?

In summary, to execute a successful territory management plan, make sure your sales managers are integrally involved in the process, create a plan based on what you know about the marketplace, structure your contact relationship management system accordingly so that it will provide you insight into how you are moving leads to opportunities to clients, consistently review progress and adjust strategy as necessary.

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