



Solutions

Developing New, High-Margin Revenue Streams: Our approach is based on the belief that publishers can consistently uncover the highest growth and margin sales initiatives when the sales teams and individuals fully understand and master complex account selling.

- Consulting: Creating successful key account selling strategies
- Workshop: Real world strategies for your top accounts for right now
- Workshop: Mastery of the sales call
- Coaching: High performance selling in complex accounts
- Coaching: Leading the sales team—strategies for sales managers

A High-Performance Sales Management System: Sustained sales success and profitability over time is an outgrowth of a reliable, high-performance system for sales management. Great sales organizations become greenhouses for learning and skill development. A sales team thrives when it is learning from the experience and knowledge of the best sales people and managers. We offer services that enable sales teams to become thriving, learning environments in a culture that raises the performance levels of the entire team; built to retain and attract the rising stars.

- Consulting: Creating a high-performance sales management system
- Coaching: Leading the sales team: strategies for sales managers

Audience Knowledge: The Publisher's Greatest Marketing Asset: With so many ways for advertisers to reach target markets, now more than ever it becomes imperative for online—and print—publishers to demonstrate why the advertiser needs to care about their audiences. Publishers need to do a good deal more than show decks of graphs and charts. A publisher needs to bring the audience to life. Harnessing to power, wisdom and advocacy of your audience will always distinguish you from the herd of publishers. We offer solutions designed to capitalize on your greatest assets.

- Consulting: Harnessing the power of your audience
- Consulting: Creating a strategic marketing plan
- Workshop: Harnessing user wisdom for extraordinary sales, marketing and product results

Consulting Solutions:

Creating Successful Key Account Selling Strategies

The 80/20 rule is all about key accounts.

The greatest revenue and profit opportunities tend to flow from those special few customers. The challenge very often is in uncovering new business with the largest advertisers or in maintaining margin levels, when volume often translates into steep discounts.

Yet with the right kind of selling approach it is not only possible but also even inevitable that key accounts can become the best sources of new and highly profitable business.

Leading publishing sales organizations' are masters at what we call the Strategic Client Objective (SCO). They succeed by recognizing that they are partners with their advertising clients in understanding customer preferences and behaviors and in showing how to win their hearts and minds.

Sky Road works with organizations to hatch the kind of SCO's that really matter to client-side executives, directors and their teams. These efforts lead to highly engaged, regular sales initiatives involving all key decision makers. By definition, SCO's will need to connect to the critical sales and marketing objectives of both the publisher and the advertiser.

We often begin by exploring your specific sales situation, challenges and opportunities. We conduct a collaborative analysis of your process for managing the key accounts—creating compelling SCO's, strengthening client relationships, strategic planning, and using the publisher's resources (people, knowledge, tools, etc.).

We do this exploration primarily through interviews with any or all of the following: publishing executives, sales and marketing directors, product teams, salespeople, clients, and agency representatives.

Key Account Selling Solutions

Our assessment of the selling situation enables us to make recommendations that connect our two decades of sales organizational leadership with our analysis of your specific selling and market situation.

We identify workable options for significant sales performance improvement that you may implement yourself or through the help of Sky Road.

Consulting Solutions:

Harnessing the power of your audience:

Let's say that you charge premium rates for site or publication. Why should an advertiser hesitate to go after \$1 CPMs or simply buy TV spots and choose advertising with you instead?

Differentiation is all about how well you bring the value of your audience to life. And bar graphs in PowerPoint presentations can only do so much.

The most successful publishers today understand that the greatest value they can offer advertisers is expert knowledge about the preferences, behaviors, and perspectives of their audience.

The insights gathered from research and direct relationships with the audience will always position publishers to establish exceptional relationships with customers. Such expertise is also the taproot for creating the best audience experience, product development, and marketing solutions.

We often begin by exploring how you are currently gathering and using your audience knowledge. We can offer a collaborative analysis of how you:

- Identify the power and influence of your audience in relation to specific key account current goals
- Gather, analyze and present research
- Directly engage your audience

We then assess together ways that you use that knowledge to advance your key account relationships and business. Additionally, we can also examine the ways that you utilize audience knowledge to generate superior content and advertising products.

When we have gathered the relevant information, we share our perspectives and provide recommendations on how you can turn audience intelligence into sales, marketing and product development success. We will offer solutions that you can execute yourself or we can collaborate with you to implement.

Consulting Solutions:

Creating a high-performance sales management system

High-profit producing sales organizations are characterized by the ongoing emergence of individuals who attain the kind of advanced business skills typically associated with senior executives. These sales teams become hotbeds of learning—dynamically sharing market expertise and powerful selling methods

At Sky Road, we begin with an exploration of the how the sales organization learns successful selling strategies and tactics. We do a collaborative analysis of the ways sales people master account knowledge and form strategic relationships.

We also look at the relationships that sales managers have with individual salespeople and their ability to determine the scope of sales opportunities, collaborate on strategic planning, and effectively engage senior executives within the publishing organization. And we examine the ways the sales team acquires selling expertise and market knowledge and how managers facilitate team learning from individual experience.

When we have gathered the relevant information, we share our perspectives on what's working and recommend ways to improve your ability to turn audience intelligence into sales, marketing and product development success.

We will offer solutions that either you can execute yourself or we can collaborate with you to implement.

Consulting Solutions:

Creating a Marketing Strategy

Online and print publishers who reach the highest plateaus of success effectively communicate the core value they offer. Discovering this value is an evolving process, as the market is always moving. Great publishers learn to keep their eyes and ears on their audience and their customers' needs. These publishers seek to continually refine their own marketing message—keeping it fresh, vibrant, and focused on what customers need to know.

Sky Road works with publishers to identify the unique value they offer advertisers and their audiences. We then collaborate and formulate clearly focused, expertly communicated messages. We produce a marketing plan that will position you to realize rapid and steady gains in profitable sales, operational, and marketing results.

Initial Meeting: We spend time with key members of your organization in order to understand your vision, goals, and concerns. At this meeting, we collect your existing marketing communications.

Strategy Brainstorming: During this session we set goals and explore various strategies and tactics.

Strategy Formation: We take the time necessary to analyze our findings and discussions. We then shape a strategic plan designed to achieve the results you are seeking.

Presentation of Strategic Plan: We meet to present our concepts and to collaborate with you to identify the best ideas and we work with you to understand areas of improvement.

Actionable Marketing Strategy: We deliver a strategic marketing plan that will be ready for you to implement. During this phase, we can be available to offer advice or help in executing the plan.

Timeframe: Total: approximately 10-12 weeks—a week or two between the Initial and Strategy Brainstorming sessions, six weeks for the Strategy Formation, and two weeks between the Presentation and the Actionable Marketing Strategy phases.

Workshops:

Real World Selling Strategies for Key Accounts

Great salespeople are masters of strategy. They know how to establish relationships with senior executives. They form networks of influence at client companies. They can marshal a publisher's people, knowledge, and tools to remove obstacles in the path to successfully closing major deals. This workshop provides teams with a repeatable method for planning strategies that lead to successful key account engagements.

What you and your team will gain:

- A proven method for key account selling that is predictable, efficient & repeatable
- Effective ways to identify hidden buying influences and how to sell to them
- Improving selling efficiencies through strategic planning
- Greater capacity to leverage your people, ideas, and resources
- Strategic plans that enable senior managers to know the current situation, challenges, and roles people in the organization can play to close significant deals

Day 1: Training on concepts that will be utilized throughout the workshop:

- Establishing the Strategic Client Objective (SCO) and sales goal
- The four buying influence roles
 - How each type of influence determines business and personal ROI
 - Building a key client network through client coaches
- Developing a strategic roadmap
- Leveraging the your people, knowledge, and tools
- Managing the sale to close

Day 2: Workshop: Applying strategic selling in specific, real world account settings

- Half day: building strategic plans for key account objectives
- Half day: presenting plans to the group for comments, questions, and suggestions

Day 3 (One Month Later): Workshop: Revision and reshaping the strategic plans

- Half day: progress review of strategic plans for comments, questions, and revisions
- Half day: (if needed) availability for individual meetings with salespeople to review progress or extended group work

Day 4 (One Month Later): Workshop: Outcomes of strategies

- Half day: salespeople present the outcomes of their strategic selling work. We conclude by presenting how they can integrate these methods in all of their key account work.
- Half day: (if needed) availability for individual meetings with salespeople to review progress or extended group work

Workshops:

Mastery of the individual sales call

Sales calls are successful when both parties believe they have moved significantly closer to a great outcome. This requires clearly articulated call objectives that deliver value, well-formulated questions and careful listening. It also demands readiness to share relevant knowledge, insights and recommendations. This workshop provides teams with a repeatable method for planning and executing successful sales calls.

What you and your team will gain:

- A proven method for call planning and execution
- Benchmarks for measuring the success of any call
- Practice in formulating and asking the four types of sales questions
- Knowing when and how to present relevant information
- Identify and learn how to get all necessary commitments

Day 1: Training on concepts that will be utilized through the workshop:

- Establishing the individual call objective
- Setting expectations for client commitments the result from the call
- The four types of sales call questions
- What to present and how to present relevant information
- Listening skills
- Managing the call from open to close

Day 2: Workshop: Applying sales call concepts to current account scenarios

- Half day: planning sales calls and critiquing the plans
- Half day: role playing the sales calls

Day 3 (One Month Later): Workshop: Review and further training on sales calls

- Half day: review of selected sales calls for questions and revisions

Day 4 (One Month Later): Workshop: Outcomes of sales call planning

- Half day: salespeople present the outcomes of their sales call work. We facilitate comments and make suggestions for improvement.

Workshops:

Harnessing user wisdom to drive extraordinary sales, product and marketing results

Many companies will do focus groups, conduct surveys, or chat with random site visitors to get feedback and ideas on how to enhance their websites. What often gets missed is invaluable insight that can be gained from observing the actual user experience of the site. This workshop enables the publisher to see the site from the user perspective and gain clarity about what is working and what needs to be changed.

What you can expect to gain:

- Identifying the most critical roadblocks to a fulfilling user experience
- Specific recommendations on how to strengthen the site
- Understanding how to make content valuable to the user and more easily accessible
- Insight into ways that users regard and utilize specific advertising programs
- Recommendations to improve the user experience so that the site produces higher levels of traffic, page views and engagements with advertising products

Program:

We collaborate with you to identify and recruit five users to participate in the workshop. We meet with each user individually for sessions that are one hour in length.

We facilitate the sessions that guide the user through a set of tasks that the publisher team and Sky Road have determined ahead of time. We observe as the user seeks to accomplish each task.

We listen to users describe their expectations and reactions to whatever they experience. Our observations will yield us the information we need to understand what is working and what improvements can be made to achieve your goals for a better and more effective website.

In addition we engage the user in a discussion about what they do, how the site connects with their priorities, and how it provides value relative to competitive sites.

Coaching:

High performance selling in complex accounts

Selling to complex accounts involves effective planning, the ability to form strategic relationships, and the leadership to connect the people, knowledge and resources in your own organization to the client's needs. This 3-month program offers the sales professional a path to long-term key account selling success.

We focus, as needed, on these critical areas:

- Current key account challenges
- Managing the complex sales process
- Forming strategic relationships—especially at the client
- Leveraging your company's resources—people, knowledge, creativity, etc.
- Writing winning proposals and presentations
- Managing multiple sales objectives

We focus on how you demonstrate and establish value for those complex accounts. Depending on your needs, we may work on writing a winning proposal, mastering the sales cycle, or handling competitive selling situations. Because our goal is to help you build your business, we will discuss specific client situations, such as evaluating a sales opportunity, managing a client relationship, or discussing an upcoming meeting.

Coaching:

Leading the sales team—strategies for sales managers

Inspiring teams and coaching individuals to achieve their full potential is no doubt the hallmark of a leader. In this 3-month program, we coach managers who seek to become more effective leaders by focusing on removing the obstacles to bringing out the best in others. Our ultimate goal is to work with managers so that they can cultivate an environment where team members seek to help each other learn, acquire key skills, and achieve spectacular results.

We typically cover these critical areas:

- Current challenges in leading the sales team
- Selling vs. leading others to sell effectively
- Collaborating on strategic planning
- Leading effective sales team meetings
- The sales call: the sales manager's role before, during and after
- Coaching stars and strugglers
- Creating a sales team “greenhouse” of shared learning

Our work together will focus on your highest priorities. In a coaching role, Sky Road will offer you the kinds of questions, perspectives, and suggestions that have enabled others to realize their full leadership potential.