

Your sales strategy

Effective marketing is crucial to the success of any business. But simply understanding your market is not enough. You need to build on your marketing plans, turning theory into profits. A good sales strategy will help you identify and take advantage of the best opportunities.

This briefing covers:

- Clarifying your sales objectives.
- Deciding how to reach target customers.
- Planning and supporting your sales effort.
- Monitoring and improving effectiveness.

1 The right approach

1.1 Base your sales strategy on your business and marketing plans.

- Set out in detail how you will deliver marketing objectives, target market segments and support major marketing activities, such as promotional drives.
- Identify the key aims of your strategy. For example, which target markets you are aiming for and the timescales involved.
- Get realistic, accurate plans by involving sales people.

1.2 Understand your market.

- Find out more about your customers. For example, their needs, what products they want and what level of service they expect.
- Establish when, where and how your existing customers buy.

If you sell to other businesses, identify who influences buying decisions, who actually makes them, and who places the orders.

- Monitor the key trends in your market, such as market changes and the activities of competitors.
Take into account changing customer tastes and developments in technology or legislation.
Identify the key drivers of your business.

1.3 Concentrate on generating profitable business.

- Rank customers in order of profitability, identifying existing, potential and key customers. Take into account the total cost of selling to each one.
- Identify criteria that will enable you to understand what a profitable customer looks like. Use this profile to market to similar organisations.
- Identify what you are good at by analysing

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