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7 Modern Techniques Distributors Are Using To Increase Sales

Introduction

The economic landscape that distributors face is changing, and challenges can surface sometimes out of the blue. In light of this, many distributors are looking to modernize their systems and update their strategies.

Provided in this document are 7 tips to help distributors determine whether their approach or their tools are in need of an update. These tips could have a significant positive impact on your business— increasing your sales by as much as 38%. At any point along the way, feel free to get in touch with us with any questions you may have.

Congratulations on taking the first step in improving your distribution sales!

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Tip 1: **Efficient lead distribution**

Lead distribution is a huge priority—a vital activity—for every distribution company. Your team is making possibly hundreds of sales calls a day.

Choosing the right leads to give to the right sales rep is an important decision, and if you're stuck doing manual processes, it's also a time-consuming one. That being said, it's important not to rush through these activities and accidentally misassign someone or something. Getting good information quickly is the name of the game.

01 **Work Smarter**
Get better data to make better decisions

02 **Move Faster**
Execute lead distribution faster with automations

46% of B2B sales reps list lead quantity and quality as their top challenge.
(Spotio)

Key Takeaway

Automate your lead distribution
Lead assignment is key to day-to-day success—a modern platform will make that process better, smoother, and faster.

A modern platform is going to help you at every level of lead distribution. It's going to help you sort and assign the leads using AI-powered functionality. And with bulk edit and bulk assign capabilities, it's going to cut the time down from decision to execution to mere seconds. This places vital sales information into the hands of sales reps faster, and it makes the quality of that sales information richer and more productive.

Tip 2: **Live KPI reporting and goal tracking**

Lots of software packages can give you data. Reams of data. Buckets of data. More data than you can use or need, in some cases. The challenge isn't necessarily to get a bunch of data to look at—it's getting the right data at the right time in the right format.

A modern platform is going to give you just that—the data that you need when you need it. It will let you set and track goals and KPIs for daily or monthly increments. It will allow you to see how individuals and teams are performing overall, and it will give you the option to drill down into the data to see exactly where someone is struggling or striving.

Is one rep receiving a lot of calls but not very long call durations? Does one rep do well when they have good momentum—a couple of days of strong selling—but struggle during dry periods? A modern platform will let you diagnose problems and celebrate achievements that are rep-specific—and will give reps themselves transparency into their own successes and encourage productive behaviors.

60,000x

Humans can process images 60,000 times faster than text.

Therefore, seeing a graph, chart, or other visual representation of data is more comfortable for the brain to process.

(MIS Research Center)

Key Takeaway

Make your data work for you

Setting and tracking KPIs makes your data work for you. Sales teams know exactly where they are and what is expected, and managers have insights into individual performance.

01 **Goal Viability**
Increased transparency and personal accountability

02 **Flexible Tracking**
Set and track goals for teams or individuals

Tip 3: **Eliminate busywork with workflows & automation**

Here's a phrase that might not sound that exciting at first—data usability. But when you hear the words "data usability" you should really think "improved productivity."

Most systems and platforms will give you access to plenty of data—more data than you need, in some cases—but a truly powerful and useful platform will surface the right data at the right time.

01 **Upgrade Efficiency**
Sales and workflow automations save valuable time

02 **Improve Outcomes**
Automations reduce opportunities for human error

Only 39% of a sales rep's time is spent selling or interacting with prospects and customers.
(CSO Insights)

Improved data usability means you're using your time more effectively, and the same goes for sales and workflow automations. Automating sections of your sales process and general workflow mean you have more time to close sales and grow your business. If time is as valuable as money, make sure you're investing in a platform that can provide you with both.

Key Takeaway

Keep your sales team selling

Sales and workflow automations increase efficiency, allowing your sales team to spend more time selling, and less time doing data entry.

Tip 4: **Use customer insights for upsell opportunities**

It is crucial to be able to sort, filter, and display your customer data. You'll need to be able to cover all of the touchpoints of a customer's journey, from a lead to a happy relationship. With the right data at your disposal, you should be able to understand the minds of your clients, what they need and when they need it.

Part of that in-depth customer data should focus on insights into their buying patterns. Understanding their order history means you have access to the data regarding the types of purchases they've made. A modern platform will allow you to pair that data with potential upselling and cross-selling opportunities suggested via the platform's AI functionality.

01 **The More You Know**
Understanding buying patterns means anticipating future purchases

02 **Seize the Opportunity**
Create opportunities for upselling and cross-selling

Increased data accessibility shortens sales cycles by **8-14%**
(Nucleus Research)

The best kind of customer service includes anticipating what clients need, sometimes before they know they need it. A modern platform should furnish you with all of these insights and more.

Key Takeaway

Better Service, Better Sales
In-depth customer data allows you to understand and better serve your customers' needs, including upselling and cross-selling opportunities.

Tip 5: Utilize integrated modern e-commerce

A modern e-commerce platform adds so much to your distribution business, such as online ordering capabilities, around the clock service, and increased customer retention. Finding an e-commerce platform that specifically addresses your needs is vital.

A white-labeled e-commerce portal allows users to experience a seamless brand experience. And e-commerce with dual order entry means that sales reps can assist with purchase orders, or can place orders on behalf of customers, and have visability into abandoned carts, cutting down on incomplete orders.

01 **Digital Storefront**
Seamless brand experience

02 **Dual Order Entry**
CRM integration allows for dual order entry, resulting in better service and reduction in abandoned carts

In 2021, online B2B e-commerce sales increased

17.8% to $1.63 trillion

(BigCommerce)

A modern e-commerce platform also allows easy payment options, including credit cards and ACH payments. And with e-commerce fully integrated into the CRM, sales reps can access order histories and cross-selling and upselling opportunities while they're serving customers.

Key Takeaway

Empower Your Customers

A modern e-commerce platform means customers can shop the way they want, when they want.

Tip 6: **Use Inventory insights to know what to sell**

Inventory insights provide immense value to distributors. Having quick access to all of your inventory information, including minimum prices, actual prices, short date information, and items on hand, provides sales reps with the tools they need to sell more product.

By integrating your e-commerce platform with your CRM you will be able to group items to create custom quotes for clients, and record competitive pricing information so sales reps know who and what they're competing against.

A modern platform will also integrate seamlessly with an ERP, if you use one. It makes all of your inventory data available at a glance through the CRM, transforming that data and making it usable alongside all of your equally vital customer data.

84% of sales executives cited content search and utilization as their top productivity improvement *(G2)*

Together, an ERP and CRM allow you to have total confidence in your inventory while also giving your sales team everything they need to shorten sales cycles and increase overall revenue.

01 **Flexible Service**
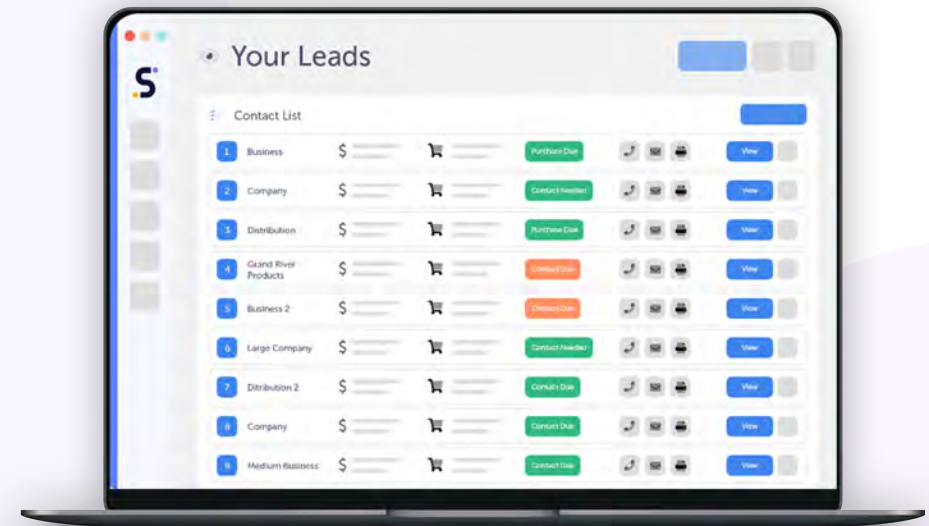Customized quotes for better customer service

02 **Important Integrations**
CRM and ERP integrations mean increased inventory confidence while maintaining sales automations and data usability

Key Takeaway

Better Data, Better Outcomes

In-depth inventory data means that you can get information into the hands of customers faster, and that your whole team is up-to-date.

Tip 7: **Optimize opportunity pipelines**

Data usability upgrades paired with workflow automations mean your team is spending more time selling and less time getting ready to start selling.

Knowing who to call and what to sell is something sales reps have eternally struggled with. Prioritizing leads can be difficult because lead information can be hard to come by or the criteria for prioritizing the leads are unclear. Ideally, having a system that can automate this process by using predetermined criteria keeps your reps doing what they do best.

With all of your opportunity pipelines optimized, your business will get more customers and more sales. That means that the time and money spent on implementing a proper lead distribution system will pay for itself, by way of increased efficiencies and improved sales numbers.

01 **Lead Prioritization**
Have an understanding of what criteria makes a lead more valuable

02 **Save Time, Increase Efficiency**
Sales and workflow automations make sales cycles that much more efficient

Key Takeaway

Empower your sales team

Improving lead distribution efficiency saves your team's time, so they can focus on making more sales.

These 7 techniques result in an **average of 38% increase in sales**

(SupplyMover)

Implementing tips like these can supercharge your profits and reenergize your team. The tools available for distributors have grown exponentially in recent years. Below are some of the highlighted features distributors are taking advantage of today:

- Automated lead distribution
- KPI and goal tracking/reporting
- Sales and workflow automations
- Customer insights and in-depth order history
- Fully integrated e-commerce platform with dual order entry
- Prebuilt ERP integrations
- Multiple opportunity pipeline automations

Consider implementing multiple methods for improved efficiency and sales in your business.

Key Takeaway

Efficiency multiplied

With so many tools to make you more efficient and profitable, the key becomes how best to implement these tools effectively and in a timely manner to stimulate growth.

For help implementing any of the previous tips, schedule a 15-minute discovery call with our team!

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7 Proven Sales Tools Distributors Are Using To Increase Revenue

The economic landscape that distributors face is changing, and challenges can surface sometimes out of the blue.

📅 Scheduled: June 23rd 2022

🕐 Starts: 1:00 PM (EDT)

Register