

Ddi Europe



Ddi Europe Ltd manufactures, provides design support and markets Printed Circuit Boards and associated precision metalwork products. It enhances the range of services offered to customers through its assembly (EMS) facilities and its capabilities encompass a wide range of cost effective solutions, which include the provision of leading edge technologies.

Ddi's entire business model has developed around producing product on a spot order basis with extremely short lead times, had been driven by an upwards trend in the telecoms market and supported by the absence of serious competition. The collapse of the Telecoms sector meant that much of its traditional customer base had suffered a serious and sudden downturn in demand. The very survival of the business depended on them being able to find a methodology for replacing large customers (often ordering up to £2 million per annum) with significant numbers of smaller customers.

John Calvert, VP Sales & Marketing Europe, realised that Ddi's sales force had become accustomed to deploying the industry's traditional sales techniques and methods and that creating a new sales philosophy and approach was not going to be easy. He turned for help to CCL, knowing that some of the questions likely to be asked were going to be potentially painful!

"We needed to understand better how our Sales Team was operating, so that we could adjust our methods and processes in order that we could meet our new sales challenges. The most difficult

part was convincing the Team that help was needed and getting their buy-in without them feeling threatened."

John felt that CCL's Consultant, Ian Ainsworth, managed the exercise very well and his experience and general common sense approach helped Ddi to focus on recognising the strengths and weaknesses of individuals within the business. Once this had been achieved it was much easier to set up new working practices and achieve the company's sales objectives. Attention was focused upon delivering and sustaining improved sales activity, the determination of the key performance indicators leading to success and the introduction of formal and rigorous performance review mechanisms.

"Ian hit us with some fairly fundamental home truths but he balanced this with always listening to our point of view, and he was prepared to adapt his approach whenever appropriate."

The project has proved a great success, but brought with it the recognition that the sales process cannot work in isolation; the whole business had to understand and accept the changes that had been implemented.

CCL have also assisted Ddi Europe in the development of its sales and marketing strategy and are now progressively rolling out the sales management process methodology within other Ddi business units.



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