

Situation This diverse business was a nationwide provider of commercial furniture distribution and installation and in addition, office design services. The sales and distribution channel consisted of more than 25 geographically defined market centers, each with both common and unique characteristics:

- A senior furniture sales executive
- A team of furniture sales and sales support personnel
- Market nuances caused by competition, vertical market predominance, and market internal capabilities
- Differing degrees of strength in office design capabilities

These market centers had a degree of autonomy and took individual responsibility for development of their sales plan and subsequent sales funnel. There was a very mixed track record of sales success in the markets, little understanding of what drove market success or failure, and a general sense that there was substantial unrealized opportunity.

This sense of unrealized opportunity, along with economic market forecasts predicting a down year for commercial furniture sales, caused this company to look at making some significant changes in how they increase sales productivity and drive profitable sales growth.

Approach Used market analysis, market sales team and customer focus groups, analysis of historical customer buying behavior, and competitive assessments to accomplish the following:

- Identification of historical growth impediments
- Clarification of business value proposition
- Identification and evaluation of new growth opportunities
- Augmentation of organizational capability to achieve specific marketplace and sales growth goals
- Development of sales strategy and tactical sales programs
- Implementation of selected tactical sales programs

Results This analysis and strategic sales plan became the blueprint for two years of commercial furniture division success, resulting in the following:

- An ability to identify target opportunities for sales growth including existing customer base, target geographic markets, target market segments, and product category growth
- Substantial market share increases - 18% sales growth in a down market
- Development of lead generation and management programs that delivered unheard of ROIs
- Development of a sales funnel that exceeded \$500,000,000 in potential sales in the first year
- High performing individual geographic market growth rates higher than 100%

