

Sales Team Success

Dealerships share how they hire, train & motivate reps

by: Brent Hoskins, Office Technology Magazine

Are you fully satisfied with how your dealership hires, trains and motivates sales reps? If not, the following BTA member dealership profiles provide a brief look at some of their methods in these areas. Perhaps the comments they share will provide you with the guidance you are seeking.

Fraser Advanced Information Systems

Founded in 1971, Fraser Advanced Information Systems' (Fraser) sales territory encompasses eastern and central Pennsylvania and western New Jersey. Headquartered in West Reading, Pennsylvania, with four additional locations in the state, the dealership offers Sharp, Canon, HP, Kyocera and Lexmark imaging products. In addition, Fraser has a sister IT company — Watchkeep.

Today, Fraser has 47 sales team members focused on imaging products, including three regional managers, one major account manager, three production specialists and three managed print specialists. There are three sales employees at Watchkeep.

The goal is for each new sales rep to be “the right person for the right job for the right reason,” says Michael Macri, vice president of sales. He provides a look at the hiring and onboarding process at Fraser. “We have found that the best way to find salespeople is through employee referrals,” he says. “It is amazing the number of successful people on our sales team who came to us through referrals. We provide the referring employee a strong incentive upfront and another incentive after the new hire’s first year of employment.”

In addition, “we use LinkedIn a lot,” Macri says. “That is a strong means of seeing the profiles out there. We have a very good LinkedIn program where we reach out to sales candidates, sometimes in other industries. Plus, we have a full-time, in-house recruiter. She is responsible for filling the pipeline with candidates.”

Once a good candidate is identified, the assessment and interview process begins. “We’re looking for people who display hunting skills in some way, shape or form,” Macri



says. “If we think they are good candidates, we bring them in for behavior assessments, which could lead to pretty lengthy interviews where we really dig into what makes them tick, why they would be good candidates and why they would be good fits for Fraser.”

Once a rep is hired, the sales development process begins. “We have at least two people who are actively involved in the development of new reps; the first 90 days are critical,” Macri says. “We measure a significant number of metrics.

Plus, we use Smartsheet.com to send an automated email to new reps each week asking them to indicate what’s working, what’s not working and what they need help with. That automatically gets distributed to the right people, all the way up to the dealership’s owner, Bill Fraser, and our president, Melissa Confalone. We really care about making sure the new rep has the right resources to give him or her every chance to succeed.”

Another critical component of sales rep development at Fraser is training. The dealership uses Sandler Sales Training. “They’ve developed ‘Fraser Sales Training’ for us; every account executive goes through the training,” Macri says. “It takes about eight weeks for the initial training, but then is ongoing, often used in our weekly sales meetings.”

Fraser also works with Kate Kingston of Kingston Training Group. “She is foundational when it comes to providing training on the most important thing a new sales executive can do, which is to set meetings,” Macri says. “She provides amazing content that allows each sales executive to customize it to his or her own language.”

New reps quickly see that Fraser is a “work-hard-and-play-hard company,” Macri says, noting that the dealership’s regional managers offer “gate-driven” rewards. “For example, it may be tickets to a Philadelphia Eagles game or a concert that reps can qualify for by hitting certain metrics. And, certainly, we have a President’s Club trip for which they can qualify.”

Reps have to “work hard” to achieve the “play hard” rewards, Macri emphasizes, noting that reps are tracked monthly in four key areas — top-line revenue, net-new

business, production equipment sales and managed print. “The majority of the reps are focused on the ‘play-hard’ rewards, but not everyone achieves them. But when they do, they don’t want to miss the next one. These rewards are highly motivating.”

Frontier Business Products

Headquartered in Aurora, Colorado, Frontier Business Products (Frontier), has four other offices across the state. While its primary imaging brands are Ricoh and Sharp, it also carries Brother, HP, Lexmark and RISO products. In addition, Frontier offers managed IT and managed print services. Currently, the dealership has 23 salespeople — including sales managers — at each location.

When Frontier President Scott Schnabel joined the company three years ago, he brought with him a history of working with internal recruiters. “Within about six months after I started at Frontier, we added a recruiter to help us with our growth efforts, finding the right people,” he says. “Last summer, we added a second recruiter to further advance our efforts to identify great talent. Having two recruiters has made a huge difference.”

All prospective employees initially meet with Schnabel. “Once a recruiter finds a candidate, I do the first interview,” he says. “It helps if they are talking to the president of the company early on. I think that has some substance from the candidate’s viewpoint that is important.”

Ultimately, all hiring decisions are made by a team of people. “Everyone involved has to give the candidate a thumbs up; it’s a joint effort,” Schnabel says. “If one person in the mix says, ‘I’m not sure about this person,’ we take a pass.”

For sales rep candidates, the interview process includes both a ride-along and a mock sales presentation. “I have a couple of key individuals who conduct the ride-alongs,” Schnabel says. “So, whether the Frontier sales team member is cold calling (knocking on doors), going on appointments or doing a demonstration, the candidate will shadow that individual. Of course, actually, the candidate is being evaluated. Our person is considering, on our behalf, ‘Do I think this sales rep candidate is a good candidate?’”

In terms of the mock presentation, each candidate is provided with literature regarding Frontier and one of its product offerings and “the sales manager and I will sit there as if we’re clients, with the candidate representing Frontier,” Schnabel says. “That’s a 10-to-15-minute presentation. We

“The majority of the reps are focused on the ‘play-hard’ rewards, but not everyone achieves them. But when they do, they don’t want to miss the next one. These rewards are highly motivating.”



— Michael Macri
Fraser Advanced Information Systems

are looking at their preparation, presentation abilities and communication skills. This helps us make sure we are finding the right people to represent our organization.”

Once candidates are hired, they attend Frontier University, two weeks of “mostly classroom-style training,” Schnabel says. “There are two primary things we try to impress upon them. The first is our consultative sales process

— how we go to market and how we differentiate ourselves from competitors. The second is learning the technology we represent. On the last day of training, I’ll come in ‘as a customer.’ Each candidate will conduct a demonstration of a solution. There is then the proposal phase, where the candidate tries to close the deal with me.”

That level of focus on training is a regular part of the job at Frontier, both for sales management, who periodically attend on-site Learning Outsource Group training, and for sales reps, who attend training with the full sales team about every quarter and in semiweekly hour-long training meetings on Mondays and Wednesdays. Reps are also required to complete “reflection documents,” where they record highlights, areas in which they are working to improve and activity levels based on key benchmarks. The reports are reviewed one-on-one with sales management weekly.

In terms of strategies to motivate and recognize reps, Schnabel notes that there are two incentive trips annually, including the President’s Club trip. There are also regular activities focused on building team camaraderie; past outings have included Colorado Rockies games and Topgolf. Beyond that, there is the Frontier’s Finest program. Each month, employees have the opportunity to submit the names of any fellow employees “doing something above and beyond,” he says. “Those on the list are recognized at the end of the month. There is a separate drawing for those chosen by their peers. These are non-sales employees who can be recognized and also have a chance to participate in our President’s Club trip.”

WiZiX Technology Group

Although WiZiX Technology Group is a young dealership, it has grown quickly. Founded in 2017 and based in Roseville, California, the dealership has approximately 70 employees working in six locations — five in California and one in Nevada. WiZiX sells Brother, KIP, Kyocera, Ricoh and Toshiba imaging devices. It also offers EV charging stations and VoIP systems.

Across the dealership’s six locations are 22 sales employees.

Effective Sales Development



Look for Leadership

97% of high-performing sales teams have a collaborative culture, which highlights the value of individual contributors' leadership and how they use teamwork and collaboration to achieve success.



Customer Personas

Companies that develop and use buyer personas see a 50% increase in win rates.



Make the Process Repeatable

Organizations with a standardized sales process see a 28% increase in revenue compared to those without.



Leverage Business Questions

Top performers ask 40% more business, not product, questions, in discovery.



Boost Output Efficiency

Sales reps spend 77% of their time on non-sales-related activities, so equip your team with scripts and templates to do the heavy lifting, making it easier to increase outreach activities.

Source: Forrester, Harvard Business Review, McKinsey & Company, and Salesforce

"Last summer, we added a second recruiter to further advance our efforts to identify great talent. Having two recruiters has made a huge difference."



— Scott Schnabel
Frontier Business Products

They include five sales leaders and 17 sales reps. Each employee in sales management is a selling manager.

WiZiX has built its sales team through various means, says Eric McIntosh, senior vice president of sales. "It's like cold calling; you can't just focus in one area," he says. "You have to be multifaceted, whether it's through Linked-In, job postings on ZipRecruiter or Indeed, or through hiring recruiters; we've done them all."

However, most of the time, WiZiX reps are found through "some sort of connection, such as an employee referral or family-friend tie," McIntosh says. "I'm not saying that we only hire our best friends, but there is usually some sort of referral or connection that brings the employee candidate to our organization."

Tyler Johnson, one of three vice presidents of sales, provides insight into the WiZiX interview process. "We start with a phone call — an important first step in the vetting process," he says. "Vetted candidates then have a first interview; if that goes well, there will be a second interview. Then we have a ride-along, typically with a rep who has been in the industry for 10 to 15 years. That allows candidates to see the real grind of our industry. When candidates are not scared off by the ride-along, we write offer letters and get them onboarded."

The onboarding process is focused on ensuring the new hire buys into the company culture, learns how WiZiX operates, understands the dealership's strategic offerings and embraces its CRM, Johnson says, noting that the person also works closely alongside his (or her) manager for the first two weeks. For example, "a new hire here in Roseville is riding along with me for all of my appointments and is with me when I prepare proposals," he says. "At WiZiX, new hires are 'attached at the hip' to their managers for the first two weeks."

New hires also attend virtual training by Derek Shebby of Modern Sales Training "as soon as possible," Johnson says. "We think Derek has put together a training program that fits well with our offerings, but then also sets the tone of 'You need to get out there and cold call.' That's 'job one' in our business."

WiZiX works hard to maintain a team focus among its reps, McIntosh says, acknowledging that can be a challenge with the team members spread across six offices. “What we really try to emphasize is that we are one team, not six teams,” he says. “So, once a month, we have what’s called a ‘Rep Roundtable’ by way of Microsoft Teams. The meeting lasts about an hour and a half to two hours. There is not a big agenda. Instead, it’s a safe place for reps to ask questions of one another, whether it’s new reps or experienced reps.”

While there are also quarterly breakfasts, fun outings, end-of-year awards, the President’s Club trip, etc., Johnson and McIntosh share two other WiZiX practices designed to both recognize and motivate. Says Johnson: “Each rep has

“ ... A new hire ... is riding along with me for all of my appointments and is with me when I prepare proposals. At WiZiX, new hires are ‘attached at the hip’ to their managers for the first two weeks.”



— Tyler Johnson
WiZiX Technology Group

stands for the month, what they’ve sold. It’s a leaderboard. It is a very motivating way to get deals on the board.” ■

Brent Hoskins, executive director of the Business Technology Association, is editor of Office Technology magazine. He can be reached at (816) 303-4040 or brent@bta.org.



a ‘Champagne Goal.’ At the beginning of the year, a rep writes on a champagne bottle his or her goal for the year; that can be numbers driven or whatever has to do with sales. When the rep hits the goal, we pop the bottle and share a toast to the achievement.” Says McIntosh: “At 5 p.m. Monday through Friday, we send out a ‘Closing Bell’ email to all reps, stack ranking where each of them