

SCA: a well-packaged customer experience



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Huthwaite’s behaviour-based approach to performance improvement has been a perfect match for SCA Packaging’s broader business development drive.

“In selling more complex solutions, our sales teams now have the tools to ensure a better understanding of each customer, their markets and their needs,” says McAneny.

SCA Packaging is one of Europe's leading designers and producers of corrugated board-based packaging, with a strong reputation for innovation and sustainable design.



Employing 13,500 people across 25 countries, the company offers a huge portfolio of products ranging from protective heavy-duty transit packaging to highly-sophisticated consumer packaging and promotional display materials. In addition, it is building a personalised service solutions business, enabling customers to outsource their purchasing requirements to SCA Packaging.

In responding to a much more competitive buying environment, SCA Packaging undertook a programme of transformation across sales and marketing. As part of this, the company was looking to take its sellers in a new direction.

“Our sales strategy has been to raise the bar in how we create, capture and communicate value for our customers, company and our shareholders,” says Stephen McAneny, VP Sales & Marketing SCA Packaging. *“Today we operate in a complex and dynamic business environment. Our objective was to move our sales organization from a product to a solution selling organization. The main deliverable of the initiative was to ensure we deliver value and insight to our customers by developing an SCA Packaging value proposition and messaging that serves as a foundation for better commercial conversations across our organisation”* he adds.

SCA Packaging worked with Huthwaite International to develop a successful behaviour change initiative focused on solutions selling. As a result, the company is creating real competitive edge for its flexible design and manufacturing capability, at the same time minimising margin erosion by establishing tangible value for its products and services.

Bespoke training programmes

Having successfully implemented Huthwaite's behaviour-based methodology in the Nordic region, SCA Packaging was confident that this would allow them to deliver the more customer-oriented approach required.

From day one Huthwaite focused on a highly collaborative approach. *"We involved senior sales people in the early pilot programmes in each region,"* confirms Huthwaite account manager, Paul Loxley. *"This had two important benefits. First, we were able to take full advantage of their local experience in refining our approach. Second, with their commitment upfront, they proved valuable advocates in supporting each improvement initiative as it was rolled out."*

In supporting the launch of the initial training programme for the Central Europe and Nordic region sales teams, at the outset

Huthwaite created a series of top team onboarding events involving both head office and regional management. Designed to develop an appropriate sales strategy, these were embraced by senior management and importantly secured company-wide commitment.

As part of this, it was agreed that there was a need to build closer customer relationships as the basis of a more value-based sales approach. From this, Huthwaite was then able to develop a series of tailored skills improvement programmes, designed holistically to meet the broader aims of the business. These have since been rolled out to more than 350 sales staff across SCA Packaging in Europe.

"Both companies recognised the importance of achieving a similar level of buy-in by individual sales staff," confirms Loxley. As a result, each programme began with an introductory session to SCA Packaging's sales and marketing transformation drive,

in order for teams to understand how the training met the company's broader strategic objectives.

"Equally, we did not look at the technology in a 'one size fits all' approach but targeted each programme on the skills required by individuals," says Loxley.

"A key focus for SCA Packaging was to get the most from each skill set in order to take the earliest possible advantage of an improving economy, by providing the right people with exactly the right tools for their jobs."

As a result, for those who needed to work on selling skills to build value for SCA Packaging's innovation and service offering, the training focused on SPIN® Selling. For others looking to better penetrate and develop existing clients, the emphasis was on major account management: and the negotiation skills programme targeted those who, for example, needed support in protecting against margin erosion during the negotiation process.





“Ensuring we involved people right from the start has paid off,” believes McAneny, “as senior sales staff have shown a high level of enthusiasm in adapting to this new approach.”

To support this, sales managers and general managers attended SPIN® Coaching training programmes, including virtual mentoring sessions and a supporting blog site, to enable them to deliver on-going reinforcement and make sure the skills learned were maintained when staff returned to the workplace.

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Measuring performance improvement

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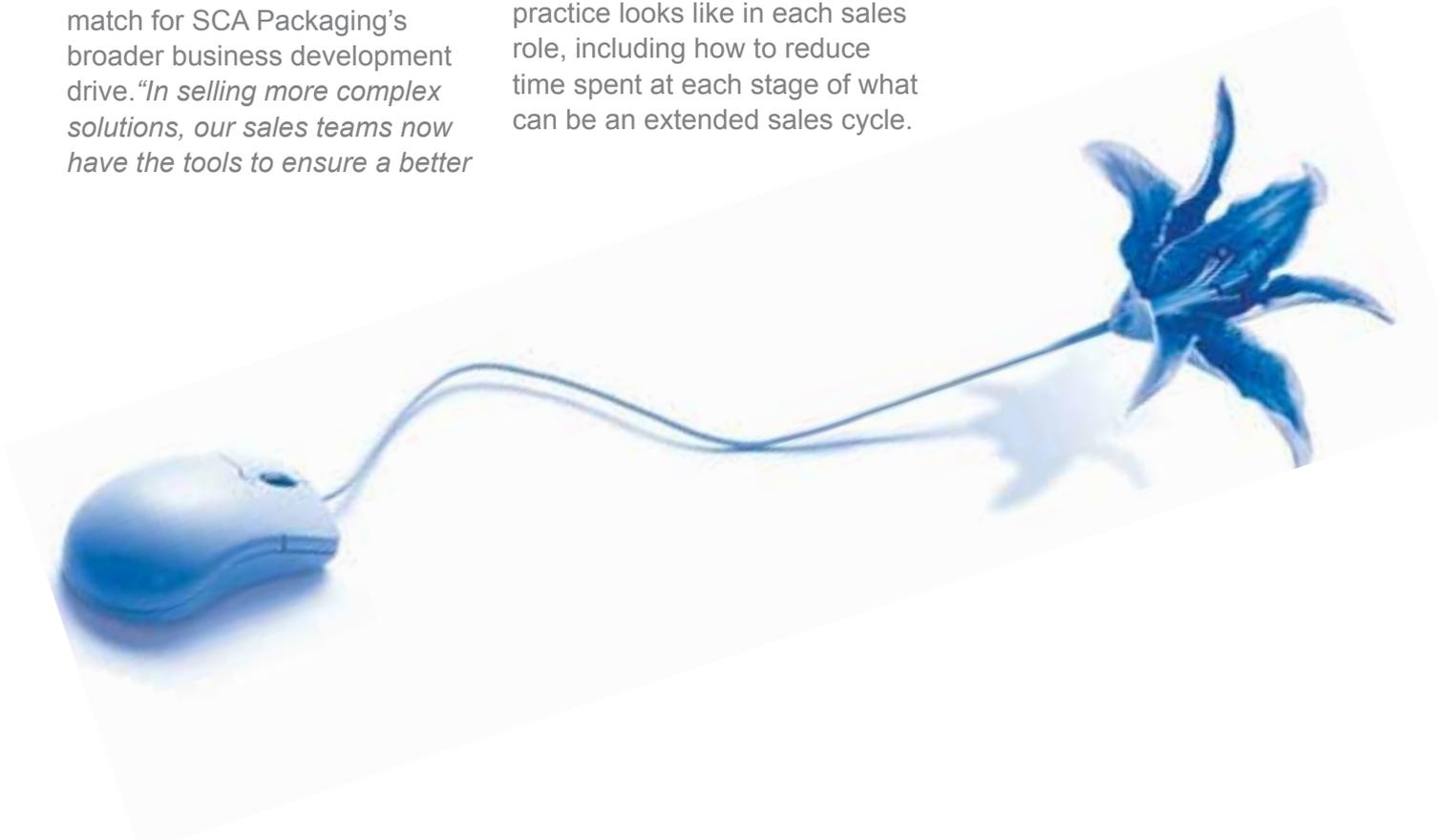
understanding of each customer, their markets and their needs,” he says.

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SCA Packaging and Huthwaite are currently working on new initiatives to measure performance improvement. These include ‘competency profiles’, which identify what best practice looks like in each sales role, including how to reduce time spent at each stage of what can be an extended sales cycle.

Creating very specific tailored training programmes has not been easy and has pushed the boundaries for both Huthwaite and SCA. *“The fact that the outcome has been so positive is without doubt due to our close working partnership,”* confirms McAneny. *“Throughout, both companies have been willing to listen and try new things in order to meet our objectives.”*

“Our experience with Huthwaite shows that businesses need to be innovative throughout the whole of their operation if they are to respond fast and effectively to the changing demands of their customers.”





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