
HADLEY ASSOCIATES

I N C O R P O R A T E D

STRATEGIC MARKETING CONSULTANTS

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“Providing Market Understanding to Facilitate Change”

SUMMARY OF SELECTED ASSIGNMENTS

PRODUCT/MARKET MANAGEMENT

BRAND PERCEPTIONS

A well-known automotive parts company acquired a competitor and needed to understand the perceptions of each business and the implications of the acquisition from the market's viewpoint. Hadley Associates completed in-depth interviews with mass merchandisers, distributors and automotive parts suppliers. During the assignment, several unrelated problems were uncovered and solved that paid for the study. The client followed Hadley Associates' advice by integrating one division and creating independent entity with the second unit.

CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

A premier wood window manufacturer received a poor “Customer Service Vendor Evaluation” from a \$50.0mm distributor customer. They were “at risk” if they did not understand the ratings and address the situation. Hadley Associates facilitated a focus group with seven distributor branch managers while the client observed. Within four hours, twenty ratings were defined, understood and short-term solutions developed by both the customer and the supplier. Without the focus group, the client would not have been able to turnaround a damaging situation into a positive one, including identifying three major cost reduction opportunities.

CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIPS

A leading vinyl products manufacturer selling through distribution wanted to better understand the relationship between its distributors and end-users; Hadley Associates developed a process that benchmarked results with a highly regarded international study; one Midwest city was selected for the research; ninety percent of the market was profiled on the twenty-five relationship factors in quantitative and qualitative terms. Client reprioritized its programs based on product and relationship factors; several startling findings included level of resistance to new products, limited knowledge on existing products and only 10-to-15 minutes to communicate information to end-users at any point-of-time.

PRODUCT MANAGEMENT

A strong regional packaged meat processor hired new management to grow their business. Hadley Associates was retained to address the product strategy and operating controls. Market perception studies revealed that retail consumers had different perceptions of different types of hot dogs. As a result, a product polarization strategy was developed and implemented for super-premium franks (all beef), featured franks (newspaper-oriented) and value franks (chicken). Sales grew 15% in a market growing 3% annually, margins improved and existing products were not negatively impacted.

NEW PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT

A \$50.0mm marine products manufacturer was stymied with 85% market share in its primary product category; the company needed customer-driven new product ideas. Hadley Associates developed a work plan to interview thirty OEM customers in five unique markets with one-on-one discussions with design engineers, production supervisors, quality assurance and materials management. Results led to twenty-three product suggestions and seven non-product value-added programs; the client transitioned the “voice-of-the-customer” results into an inter-functional business development strategy; within one month, five suggestions were implemented.

ASSESSING GROWTH POTENTIAL

A specialty building products company wanted an independent assessment of a new product in the early stages of commercialization, including estimated demand for the current year and five-to-ten years out, with market assumptions; thirty-five OEM customers, distributors and end-users were interviewed, some were existing customers and others prospects. The client was so overwhelmed with the depth of the market feedback that it decided to share the results with the industry through personal presentations and trade journal articles; after three years, the industry continue to expand at the 30% rate per year as the researched predicted.

DEFINING PRODUCT SPECIFICATIONS

A metal products manufacturer needed to define specific product specifications and performance levels for a shipbuilding market segment it did not understand; working with Engineering and Product Development, thirty-five attributes were identified to be rated in importance and cost trade-off sensitivity, along with qualitative end-user explanations. Hadley Associates uncovered unsatisfied customer needs that could be satisfied with a new process currently under development, besides providing product formulation requirements, packaging formats and customer support requirements.

VALUE-ADDED POSITIONING

A major production cabinet manufacturer wanted quantitative and qualitative feedback from the top twenty-five production new homebuilders in three geographic markets, including competitive brand positioning and benchmarking; Hadley Associates completed over eighty personal interviews with “installed sales” buyers and influencers. The results led to a number of very specific product, packaging and customer service improvements, in addition to knowing where to leverage the company’s strengths against three major competitors in each of the three selected geographic markets.

PRODUCT PACKAGING

A specialty animal feed manufacturer had excellent sales to zoos, breeders and parks, but was not positioned in the retail pet market. Hadley Associates was retained to develop a sales and marketing plan to double sales in five years. Hadley Associates was then retained to implement the plan for a period of three years. The client's goal was achieved in three years by repackaging the product, adding distribution and aggressively merchandising the brand name product lines. This product development program also allowed entry into the private label business, including developing new products for a national firm under a R&D consulting agreement. Hadley Associates was responsible for program implementation until a product manager was hired.

DISTRIBUTION NETWORK ASSESSMENT

A wire manufacturer needed a market reality check. It had acquired a specialty producer and wanted an assessment after one year. The client also needed a review of two other business units in the same channel. Hadley Associates completed twenty-five field interviews. Research revealed the new division was doing much better than previously thought, but still needed to focus and resolve conflicts. The core product was in serious trouble because of inferior quality, poor service and erratic management practices. The client developed a strategic business plan to address all of the concerns.

ALTERNATIVE CHANNELS

A premium pet food manufacturer wanted three different channel-of-distribution scenarios developed for the pet industry covering the next five years. Hadley Associates interviewed mass retailers, grocery store chains, pet superstores, pet supply distributors, pet food manufacturers and trade associations/magazines. Each were read "what if" statements and asked to comment. The scenarios were used for a strategic planning retreat where senior managers role-played the company's response to possible change in business conditions; the exercise helped management to prepare for a restructuring strategy two years later because of a channel of distribution shift.

COMPETITIVE ANALYSIS

A welding industry supplier wanted to understand the strategies, key programs and timetables of a competitor. Hadley Associates developed a work plan to interview multi-line welding distributors, industry suppliers, direct users and financial analysts for the company's background. Hadley Associates developed a competitive profile based on the data and confirmed the results with the competitor itself. This allowed the client to develop defensive programs and begin pre-emptive strikes, including an aggressive distributor development program and advertising campaign.

INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

A shrimp feed mill servicing Central America needed assistance in growing presence in this important market. Hadley Associates assisted the client address several important issues until an area-marketing manager was hired. Hadley Associates accomplished the following: negotiated franchises in Guatemala and Panama, developed turnaround sales program with

several large farms, introduced a multi-grade product strategy, managed technical representatives and introduced new packaging.

OPERATIONS/MANUFACTURING MANAGEMENT

FACILITATING CHANGE

An electrical component manufacturer felt it was not proactive enough, but did not know what was missing. Hadley Associates facilitated a strategic business planning process at the senior, operating and product management levels. The end result was restructuring the business to be more outwardly focused on the customer, streamlining decision-making, managing by metrics and outsourcing non-core activities. The company today is more efficient and focused; as part of the exercise, a new business unit was identified, researched and established by Hadley Associates that now represent 20% of the company's revenue.

INDUSTRIAL SALES PROSPECTING

A supplier to aerospace, power generation and specialty manufacturers had expanded capacity and needed to identify new long-term contract business opportunities; Hadley Associates developed the criteria for the prospects and then identified, qualified and introduced prospects to the client; leads were given to internal sales engineers to be developed; the assignment was a tremendous success, resulting in initial relationships with 25 solid prospects and another 27 secondary ones; new business is surpassing the intended target; the issue now to maintaining and developing the new customers and prospects.

INTERIM OPERATING MANAGEMENT

An aluminum casting business unit was the lowest margin operation of a multi-product line company. Hadley Associates was retained to develop business strategies to correct the situation and manage the transition. During this period, outsourcing was increased, new fixtures added, machine hours realigned, cost reduction introduced, unit prices increased and a new manager hired. After eighteen months, sales grew 27% and gross margins increased for 17.0% to 23.5%.

MANUFACTURING TURNAROUND

Two \$20.0mm automotive component suppliers were acquired and the client was faced with the challenge of updating antiquated business strategies and operations. Hadley Associates was given the assignment to stabilize the unprofitable operations, seek professional manufacturing personnel and manage the transition. In six months, a \$4.0mm loss was at breakeven, a V.P. - Operations hired and lean manufacturing strategies introduced. Today the product lines have been rationalized and controls reestablished.

INSTALLING OPERATING METRICS

An aerospace composite fabricator wanted to relocate to a new facility, grow volume and improve profitability, but needed guidance. Hadley Associates assisted the company to write a business to reach their goals and implemented operating metrics to ensure ongoing success. Within six

months the company had metrics on new contacts, quote/win rates by work center, quoted and LTA labor hours by week for the next eight week; capacity utilization by work center; profitability by work center and expected cash flow; after two years, sales grew 25%, new plant financing was approved and pretax profitability hovers at 18%.

COACHING MANAGERS

Hadley Associates developed a strategic plan to form a holding company of three independent businesses in the electronic composition industry that served book and journal publishers, as well as Internet providers. Management requested personal coaching in several specific areas to change their vision of the future. This was done off-and-on over twelve months. In four years, the original entity grew from \$7.0mm to \$60.0mm through a process of acquisitions and proactive management.

MANAGEMENT SUPPORT

A food processor was successfully focused with school lunch programs and selected retail distribution, but faced inconsistent profitability, limited processing space and growing pains; Hadley Associates assisted management to develop and implement an operationally-driven business plan, building on the client's distribution and product quality; after one year, sales were up 10.5%. profits 94.6% and absolute margins up 10.2%; this was accomplished through coaching and developing the operational skill-sets of management.