

# CONFERENCE & EVENTS INDUSTRY WIN MORE SALES



*Common concerns for companies within the events industry are, how do we win more business and how do we find and communicate our Unique Selling Points? This really comes to a head during quiet times when there are fewer events taking place with many companies fighting for the same business.*

*Clifford Thomas, Managing Director at the Business Development Consultancy (BDC, [www.b-d-c.co.uk](http://www.b-d-c.co.uk)) provides tips on how to 'stand out' and win more sales.*

Managing the sales order-book within the events industry can be a difficult task, particularly with seasonal peaks and troughs in workload. Many of the events companies that BDC have worked with suggest how difficult it is to get sales right even in good times, never mind the troughs.

Events managers, caterers or AV and technical services suppliers are mostly small to medium sized enterprises (SMEs) with senior management who know what sales they want, but sometimes struggle to manage the sales process effectively.

Marketing, communication material, sales messages or sales people's motivation may all contribute to poor proposal conversion, even assuming the company was in the running to begin with.



## **Another key problem is time.**

Companies are sometimes so busy focusing on fulfilling the next event it is difficult to focus on what needs to happen thereafter.



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**Closing the SME sales gap** These problems can all lead to what we describe as the 'SME sales gap', something that can be closed with careful planning and focused actions. BDC have worked with a number of companies in the events industry, helping them to focus attention on winning more sales for the future growth of their business.

Here are a few tips on how to do it

**Planning:** Specify exactly what the company is looking to achieve, setting clear objectives that show where the company is going and how its performance will be measured.

**Define:** A sales and marketing strategy that will achieve your goals. This will make use of various communication tools such as design and print, web or telemarketing and does not have to be expensive, just targeted – remember, you need to get yourself in front of people.

**Communicate the Benefits:** Don't tell your prospects what it is you do, tell them what it is you can do for them. Getting the message right is critical for success. The events industry is full of many companies selling the same thing in the same way. Making your service tangible and different, to stand out from the crowd will help win more sales.

**Don't stop:** Plan the resource and implement the various marketing activities laid out in the plan. Keep the momentum up especially at busy times.

**Satisfy:** Make past and present business work for the future. If previous customers were happy, make sure they are thinking of you every single event. Keep the relationship fresh, ask questions and make sure your prices are competitive.

It is quite common for companies to overlook sales and marketing and so having a plan and schedule is critical because by the time it is quiet, it is already too late.

Chamberlain Dunn, Richmond (Surrey) based Events Company explains

"..... We were doing the kind of stop/go marketing that many SMEs find themselves doing: a burst of marketing activity followed by a period of feverish delivery followed by another burst and so on.

Working with BDC has helped to bring strategy, focus and consistency to our marketing effort so that our business networks are systematically developed and energetically worked." make sure your prices are competitive.

The services offered by BDC help companies win more business, essentially providing a skilled sales department that can be utilised flexibly as and when you need it.



**Clifford Thomas Managing Director BDC**

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