

Breakout Session 2B: Making Small, High-Tech Companies Look BIG: How emerging companies can successfully advance their business objectives through Integrated Marketing Communications:

Overview: Start-up, small, or emerging B2B companies must find creative ways to effectively reach business audiences and decision makers with their message. This session will offer practical insights on how small, growing companies can successfully build a cost-effective, integrated marketing communications program with tactics that create more brand awareness, increased sales lead, and help generate revenues.

Case: Performance Technologies: makes computer components for other companies

1. Definition of a small company: between 15-200 employees; new to 5 years; or established company
2. B2B: customer is an organizations, business, or government agency; deals with needs vs wants
3. Small Company: less financial resources; messaging must be targeted directly to buyers; may have a one person department who manages all PR, branding, advertising, events; less bureaucratic; newly formed technology; may not be able to have extensive focus groups; need to quickly find early-adopter customers

**Students: get a cross experience and expose yourself to different areas like sales and marketing

Getting Started - Strategic and Tactical Measures

1. Know your buyers (decision-makers), influences (users), and sales cycle: know how your technology is used to relieve business pain; use a 2-tiered approach (target both the executive DMS and I/Us in your marketing and PR efforts; momentum builds over time (long sales cycles averaging 6 months to a year or longer); create value-based messaging/content for your technology and company; use plain English (don't get caught up in jargon)
2. WIIFM (what's in it for me?): educate your engineers; focus on the benefits of the technology; be able to differentiate your messaging from the competitions
3. Ready? Fire! Aim...: create buzz immediately and then continue to make improvements; know your budget; prioritize budget allocations to weakest points first; go to trade shows and strive for customer testimonials; you will never spend your way to success with advertising; find a third party to share your message; create relationships with editors; find or create speaking opportunities at trade shows; cross-promote with pre-show press releases and newsletters; anticipate for mistakes and opportunities with extra money

Get your company noticed

1. Find customer champions: those who know the value of your product
2. Be the Big Cheese!: find an industry association you can "own"
3. Discover your buried treasure: untold stories of projects never publicized
4. Go camera hunter: get media attention, ask reporters what they want and give them a story if you have one
5. Re-gifting-Marketing style: using a previously created marketing tool over again in a new way that generates marketing traffic for another audience
6. O.P.M. (other people's marketing budgets): seek out business partnerships where there is mutual opportunities to advance both company's
7. Own a Mid-Size/Regional Event: become a premier-level sponsor
8. Selective Media: identify, research, and find a few industry journals where you can build a solid working business relationship with both the salesperson and the editor that is sustainable over years

Lessons Learned

1. You don't need to be an engineer...but you MUST be a bridge builder
2. Know your sales team
3. Get published
4. Take the time to ramp up
5. Be honest and ethical
6. Value your vendors
7. Keep swinging the bat
8. It's up to you to create the winning culture you want