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**How Does Your Company Define Salesmanship?**

*By Michael J. Webb*

Almost every executive I’ve talked to in the last seven years has acknowledged that their sales and marketing operations are a mess. They struggle to find enough prospects, yet many of their brochures have little content people want to read, and their websites are not optimized for search engines (or anything else, for that matter). Salespeople work their hearts out trying to find sales opportunities, and once found, too many prospects continue to stall, or look for lower prices.

When a sales department is not making its numbers, it is natural to assume there must be something wrong in the sales department.

Yet that assumption deserves to be challenged.

Actually, there are lots of unchallenged assumptions in the way most companies go to market. Most compa-

nies haven’t even considered what should happen when prospects hit the “submit” button on their websites. They leave the marketing up to the marketing department, and the selling up to the sales department (who likely have received some sales training). Unfortunately, at best, the whole organization is oriented to sell the way customers bought 10 or 15 years ago.

Obviously, the Internet and search engines have a huge impact on businesses. Some people believe corporations struggle with sales and marketing these days because business executives don’t understand and are fearful of the new world of fully integrated (Internet) selling and marketing.

In truth, the problem goes deeper than that. The problem goes to how you define “salesmanship” in the first place.



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