

## **Top IT Sales Myths 2002**

As the saying goes, it is easier to digest facts than myths and the same is true of correction too. In this backdrop, I felt it would be of immense benefit to many a sales professional to highlight some myths circulating as facts for what they are – Myths. Here is my compendium of the top ones for this year, so far.

### **Myth One - Dropping prices will increase long-term sales.**

Time and time again every technology business segment that has followed a commodity based pricing scheme has failed. Selling down and by price is a short-term sales model that cannot sustain financial integrity. Repeat buyers buy value; single sales customers buy price.

### **Myth Two - Networking is better than cold calling for lead generation.**

Another myth propitiated by those who do not want to cold call. IT sales reps who will not cold call are half-cycle salespeople. Yes, networking can create leads, but the quantity and the time cycle consistently will never match you cold calling 50 executives each day. Networking is a long-term, minimum volume lead generation opportunity for IT salespeople. Cold calling is the IT sales pipeline of success.

### **Myth Three - Clients buy technology.**

Clients never buy technology. IT account managers who sell technology usually sell less. Clients buy pain management. Technology is just an enabler to repair the pain.

Myth Four - Because you were successful before 2001, you should be successful today.

Many IT firms succeeded through the 90's not because of their sales skills, but because the 90's represented the greatest buying experience since the invention of the computer. The 90's were an inbound sales model, where existing customers and new prospects called you to help them spend their technology budgets on web enablement, Windows application development or legacy transformation due to Y2K issues. In 2002 and beyond, success in technology sales is and will be based on an outbound sales model. Many IT firms this year will fail because their management are relying on old sales models that will not work and are not prepared to make a decision to change their business around.

**Myth Five - Marketing department responsibilities should be focused on brochures, web site communication and trade show management:** PR is not revenue, marketing is not revenue and advertising is not revenue. **Revenue is revenue.** The marketing department's primary business responsibility should be creating qualified sales leads for the sales team.

**Myth Six -** The more strategic partners you have, the more IT sales leads you will generate. Strategic partnerships and alliance management is a full time job. It is definitely quality over quantity that counts. Most IT and professional firms have many strategic relationships that are worthless. Like any investment of time and money, alliances need to be quantified with an assigned quota for revenue generation and minimum expectations of lead generation volume to warrant the relationship. Partnerships must have an annual ROI or their time and effort is worthless.

Got the hint. Break the shackles. And have a successful selling ahead in 2002.