



# EXPERT ARTICLE

## The Sales and Marketing Myth

By Trevor Holmes, ENACT Business Architects

A couple of months ago I sat listening to a business owner explain to me that his staff did not need sales training because once the client came into their hotel, the sale had already been made..... that his staff were there simply to “service” the client and to provide them with what they wanted. **THIS IS THE SALES AND MARKETING MYTH!**

Too many people confuse the role and objectives of marketing your products/services, with the process of selling your products/services through a clearly defined sales system. From the outset, lets define what the objective of marketing is: *Marketing is a process aimed at creating an interest in your product or service with the outcome being for potential customers to inquire further.* In the case of a hotel, this outcome will be one of a number of different initiatives where the prospective client:

- Calls to make a booking to dine
- Inquires about holding a function in your hotel
- Visits your premises with the “intent” of purchasing (i.e. bar, gaming, bottleshop, nightclub, accommodation)

But do not be fooled into thinking that the sale has already been made. Just because they have called or even walked into your business does not mean that the sale is complete. In all circumstances, the above outcomes have simply presented an “opportunity” created by your marketing activities. At this point the sales cycle begins. The sales cycle is a clearly defined process that needs to be followed in order to achieve our ultimate goal; that is to make a sale and to maximise the sales opportunity. Within each area of your business, the sales cycle may be different so therefore it is imperative that you are able to identify the process, document it and then inform your staff through training initiatives. The result of this is a consistent approach to performing the sales cycle, therefore ensuring that all clients receive the same service when they do inquire about your products and services.

The other important aspect of identifying each step in the sales cycle is that it becomes a measurable process. This results in you having the ability to see what your conversion rates are and therefore enabling you to identify what you are doing well and what may be improved in order to achieve higher conversion rates. Your staff also receives a better understanding of the process that needs to be implemented for them to perform their jobs well.

You see we are not all born sales gurus! In fact very few of us are. Yet there is not an individual in your business who is not a sales person. We all have a responsibility to know the sales system that our business operates under. So, as managers of our businesses, we have a responsibility to make sure our people can maximise each sales opportunity by “training” them. And the only way to train them is to first identify the process in a step by step system that clearly outlines the “how to” within the sales cycle. BUT, never forget that marketing and sales are two very distinct processes with very different objectives. By accepting this you will be well on the way to improving your sales opportunities.