

# Sales Tips

Every vertical has its own quirks, its own idiosyncrasies. The more you understand what makes each business special, the better you can sell to it. Use this guide, in conjunction with the product sell sheet also provided, to better understand the challenges and opportunities in the contractor industry. You'll be better able to offer solutions that make a difference while helping customers manage more efficiently and market more effectively.

## Industry Insight

- Uses technology, including tablets and video, to communicate with government agencies (permits), clients, subcontractors and architects
- May have website(s) dedicated to projects completed and in progress; commercial and/or residential
- Businesses are built on relationships
- May shut down in the winter, depending upon location
- Convenience is critical, prefer a single-source approach
- Trust, responsiveness and reliability are key to building the relationship
- Offer customized solutions with capability-specific versions to promote the different aspects of the business
- Logoed apparel identifies them on job sites and helps maintain their image
- May have city/county contracts

## How This Market Grows

- New home or commercial construction or remodeling
- Advertising – needs to be quick and easy
- Owner Owned-Operated often provides a market and opportunity advantage
- Word-of-mouth business – focus on referrals

### *Larger Construction Companies*

- Affiliation with architect and design/decor firms
- Residential and/or commercial
- Seek large scale contracts with cities, etc.

## MARKET INCLUDES

- General Building
- Electrical
- Landscaping
- Plumbing/Heating/AC
- Carpeting and Flooring
- Roofing and Sheet Metal

### Related Markets:

- Engineers & Architects, Equipment Rentals, Nurseries and Garden Supplies, Equipment Rentals, Painting, Paper Hanging & Decorators, Excavating, Masonry

## DEPARTMENTS

- Manager/Principle/Owner
- Landscape Maintenance
- Construction Installation
- Irrigation, Installation and Maintenance
- Snow Removal
- Equipment Maintenance
- Billing
- Marketing
- Purchasing

## Peak Buying Periods

- Spring and summer
- Activity increases after a natural disaster, e.g., tornado, earthquake, hurricane, etc.

## Probing Questions

- Is your focus on residential or commercial accounts?
- Are you affiliated with any architect/design firms in town?
- What type of projects are you working on today?
- What marketing activities do you have underway today or within the next 60 days?
- How do you promote your involvement with that project?
- Do you have any projects that are close to completion? If so, how will you market your success?
- Have you changed your service offering in the last few years? If so, what was changed?
- How do you prepare your estimates for new jobs, e.g., informal, via email, formal proposal?
- How do you present bids/proposals to potential customers, e.g., presentation folders, etc.?
- How do you organize a job to ensure completion?
- How do you follow up with current customers to ensure satisfaction?
- How do you promote your services to new and existing customers?
- How do you stay connected to your customers in the off-season?
- How do you thank your customers?
- Do you offer a special “Thank You” to customers that provide you with a referral?
- Does your team wear logoed apparel to identify themselves in the field?
- What type of work orders do you use? Do you use the same work orders for subcontractors?
- Who maintains your equipment?
- How do you handle payroll and taxes? Who handles payables/payroll?

## DEPARTMENTS (continued)

### *Larger Landscaping Companies*

- Supervisor
- Office Manager
- Horticulturalist/Gardener
- Landscape Architect
- Holiday Lighting Installation

## MARKET IMAGE

- Professional
- Reputation, trust, reliability and safe working environment
- Prefer self-promotion and word-of-mouth referrals
- Let's their quality of work speak for itself
- High integrity
- Community involvement through improvement projects, e.g., Habitat for Humanity, historical restorations, community centers, etc.

# SALES TIPS

## Sales Approach

- Present yourself as a professional solutions provider – be prepared and get to the point
- Understand what they are trying to convey to the public, e.g., full service, custom, etc.; match your approach to their business
- Gatekeeper is often the dispatcher – you may work directly with the business owner
- If an “owner-built” business – be especially sensitive to helping maintain their image
- Understand the scope and variety of the services offered
- Use images of previous projects in all marketing materials, digital and print

## BUSINESS CONSIDERATIONS

- Health and safety
- Payroll
- Job costs
- Payables
- Subcontracting
- Competition for jobs
- Competition for branding and marketing
- Seasonality

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