

Ideal Bathrooms shifts from unwieldy and costly paper-based sales intelligence to integrated sales and customer intelligence on mobile phones

Ideal Bathrooms Transforms its Sales and Customer Account Visibility in Just One Week, with sales-i

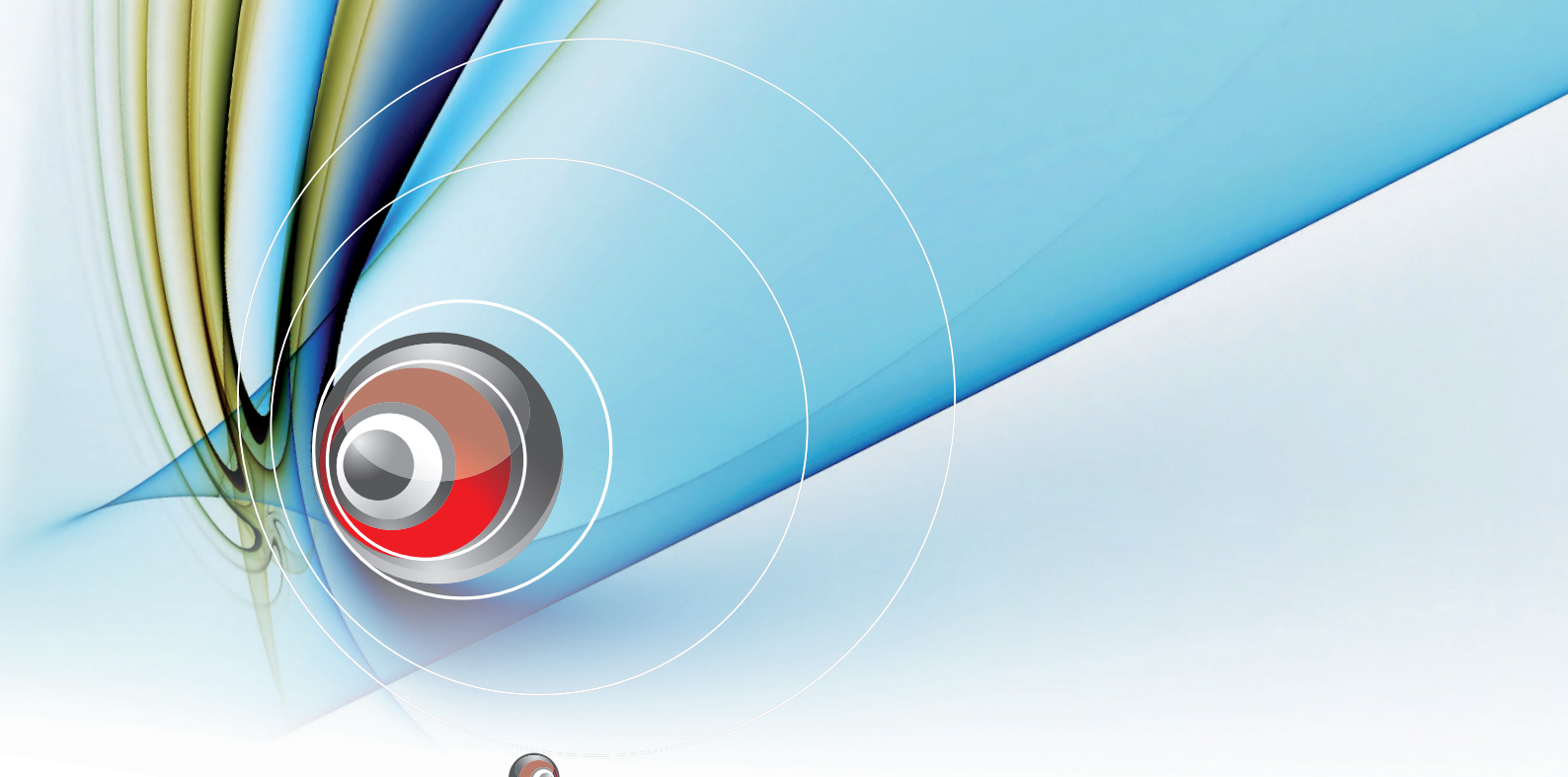
Ideal Bathrooms boasts a large portfolio of customers, approximately 4,000 trading accounts. So with 8 area managers keeping tabs on 500 accounts in their territory, it's no wonder that the paper-based sales/customer account system was becoming costly, unwieldy and ineffective. Rob St Barbe, Ideal Bathroom's sales director explains, "We were delivering top line information on customer accounts to our sales people in paper packs monthly, so you can imagine the quantity of paper being generated, posted and handled. Wading through that much information to unearth sales opportunities or changes in buying behaviour was simply impossible and the information was out of date by the time the sales people received it." Rob continues "Tracking customer contact was also very difficult and different regions reported that contact in different ways."

Rob had had previous exposure to sales intelligence technology some 7 years earlier and came into contact with sales-i at a recent NMBS conference. "The technology had moved on so much and was available on mobile devices and offered integrated CRM and sales intelligence and was available on-demand with no need for infrastructure or support investment in-house. I knew it was a 'no brainer' to introduce sales-i to my sales force and remove paper forever," Rob adds.

However even Rob didn't expect the transformation to be so immediate. Sales people were given sales-i on Blackberries and within days were receiving on demand leakage, gaps and revenue-driven alerts direct to their phones enabling them to respond immediately and close deals. One of Rob's newest recruits, a 60+ year old sales veteran, has been amongst the fastest to embrace the technology and thanks to sales-i on his Blackberry, has already exceeded his sales target by 120%!

"sales-i has paid for itself already, not just in increased sales and on-the-button customer account visibility, but also because we no longer print, post and handle paper. Our customers are benefitting directly too. We now have HUGE visibility of what our customers are buying or not buying and whether certain lines are profitable for them or not so we can sit with them with real-time information and discuss how we can work together to improve sales."





“We now have a weekly conference call and each account manager cites their ‘highlight of the week’ typically a significant new spend or increase in product line spend, all made possible because of sales-i. There is a real buzz about sales-i in the team and I have the confidence and knowledge that sales visits are now much more productive for us and our customers.”

Rob St Barbe, Ideal Bathroom’s sales director

sales-i is also flagging up when new accounts are set up and orders placed, so the sales team can thank them for their first order and check that terms and delivery are working as they should, all of which is directly improving customer service and keeping Ideal Bathrooms close and in tune with its customers.

Rob can cite a number of key spin-off benefits that sales-i is delivering to the business in such a short time including: -

Credit Limit/Outstanding balance – the sales team is now equipped with information on the current payment history of each key account so they can see if the account has exceeded its credit limit, has outstanding balances etc. In the first week of using sales-i over £25,000 of 100+ day outstanding debts were cleared.

Prospect Spotting – Ideal Bathrooms has 50 drivers in the field who are offered a bonus for identifying possible new accounts, or prospect spotting. This is now tracked automatically and entered into sales-i as a prospect and the driver is given a bonus for generating leads.

Spend Breakdown – sales-i is giving sales people not only spend by customer figures, but breakdown on items ordered. This has highlighted to Ideal Bathrooms that individual order value is low, so the customer is ordering lots of little things. The sales team is now responding to redress this and increase order value.

Targeted Marketing Campaigns – Rob and the team now specifically categorise customer accounts by showroom level, size, type etc and run bespoke, relevant and targeted marketing campaigns to those groups.

Adding Real Customer Value and Spotting the Competition – Ideal Bathrooms generate specific display products for their customers’ showrooms and now using sales-i has immense visibility of whether it is working. The account manager, armed with accurate, real time information can tell how many products have been sold and whether the display is working and generating business for the customer. Working closely with the customer to make the display work for them keeps competitors, who simply cannot offer this service, out in the cold.

Sales team buy in – sales-i alerts identify new account spend, top 25 accounts and whether spend is up or down and also alert sales people as to how they are performing against targets, including incentives from manufacturers. This visibility acts as a real sales incentive to the sales force. Furthermore, as the field based sales people use sales-i to prepare for calls, this enables them to make maximum use of the meeting time to upsell, cross sell. They then log the call and outcome directly into sales-i’s CRM. Ideal Bathroom has a full historic account pattern of sales visits and outcome and sales intelligence, meaning there is little need to query sales people about their account activity while at the same time protecting the information if a sales person should leave.