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Sales Support — No.3

Increasing specification of commodity products

CLIENT: GTE Sylvania Canada Limited

PRODUCT/SERVICE: Energy Savings Lamps (light bulbs of all types and fluorescent tubes)

SITUATION:

GTE Sylvania and their competitors utilized distributors to promote product sales. There was little differentiation in established products between lamp manufacturers. Lamps were a commodity and price cutting and low profits were the order of the day.

Sylvania was first to market with a new line of energy saving lamps. This unique window of opportunity was expected to be short-lived before GE and other major competitors caught up.

OBJECTIVE:

To make consulting engineers aware of the cost saving benefits of Sylvania energy saving lamps and to encourage them to write project specifications that no competitive lamp manufacturer could match.

STRATEGY:

Stimulate joint sales calls by Sylvania and distributor sales personnel on consulting engineers to promote the new products.

Through this process, provide distributor sales people with an in-depth knowledge of the new products and the ability to sell them effectively on their own.

TACTICS:

A contest for consulting engineers, distributor and Sylvania sales personnel. To enter the contest all three parties had to complete the ballot, which included a skill-testing question relating to the new energy saving lamps. Prizes were drawn at random and the winners received trips (London theatre show tours and Las Vegas weekends) that they took together.

RESULTS:

Within six months, more sales calls were made to lighting consultants than in the previous three years. In addition, more joint Sylvania/distributor calls were made, to anyone, than in the previous two years.

Sales of the new energy saving lamps exceeded forecasts.

