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Sales Support — No.4

Generating qualified inquiries to stimulate sales efforts

CLIENT: ASCOLECTRIC Limited

PRODUCT/SERVICE: Linear Drives (also known as Rodless Cylinders)

SITUATION:

ASCO was the established market leader with the broadest line of solenoid valves in Canada. The sales force job was largely to satisfy the needs of major OEMs and take orders from Authorized Distributors.

ASCO developed a new product – Rodless Cylinders – used to move heavy objects on the production line. There were a number of companies established in the marketplace. The ASCO offering had a unique advantage of being a self-sealing to keep out contamination even in very dirty and dusty environments. In addition, the product was more robust than competitors and therefore did not deflect or twist.

As an engineered product, the Rodless Cylinder represented a major challenge for the ASCO sales force. ASCO sales people were not accustomed to the amount of time required to sell such an expensive high involvement product.

OBJECTIVE:

To generate sales of the rodless cylinders by qualifying prospects about to purchase.

STRATEGY:

Widely promote the new product and solicit buying intentions from every inquirer. Grade (from A to D) the quality of the lead and send qualified leads daily to ASCO for direct sales follow-up.

TACTICS:

Promote the new product through dominant publication advertising, and extensive publicity program, direct mail and trade shows. Qualify every sales lead by telephone to determine each inquirer's requirements and position on the buying cycle (i.e. immediate, 3-6 months, 7-12 months, or gathering information for a later decision).

RESULTS:

Prior to the qualification process, ASCO sales personnel had not sold one rodless cylinder. Within four months of launching the qualification process, **65 of the qualified leads had purchased rodless cylinders.**

