



Sales and Marketing Best Practices: Q&A with Lauren Ford, Square 9

Marketing Communications Manager at Square 9, Lauren Ford, participated in a Channel Chat online exclusive for the February Issue of [The Imaging Channel](#), "Best Practices in Sales & Marketing." From effective marketing tools to a solutions-led sales approach, Ford provides insight of the success-driven marketing techniques of Square 9.

1. Do you find a vertical marketing approach to be an effective tool in this channel?

While many dealer organizations look to implement a vertical marketing strategy, we encourage our channel to start horizontally. Why? Because there are very few circumstances where key buying drivers differ across vertical markets, especially when approaching challenges at the departmental level. Regardless of industry, much of the focus, challenges and goals remain the same, making a horizontal approach the most effective means to "getting your foot in the door." It is important to align strategically to the buyer and their industry, but before taking a vertical go-to-market approach, we encourage dealers to lead horizontally. Every company has bills to pay and employees to manage. Start by focusing on business applications including AP automation, AR management, HR onboarding, contract collaboration and compliance.

2. What do you find is the most effective marketing media to reach your end customer?

2017 presents a shift in our marketing approach towards the end user communities. We've been heavily focused on marketing within our Reseller community, ensuring they are equipped with the tools to be successful at selling. This includes successful advertising in industry publications and sponsoring OEM conferences; however this year, we are attending more tradeshow events geared toward technology by industry and departmental applications to help spearhead brand recognition throughout the mid-to enterprise level business markets.

Our number one marketing source is our website, which was recently revamped with a new look and updated end-user language. As a high-value lead generation tool, the new website can be leveraged by the Reseller to direct potential customers to for additional information. Added initiatives include new AdWords and PPC programs to generate leads for our Resellers, tied to an inbound marketing approach with a full-scale campaign leading end users to resources they need to get the most out of their investment.

Due to our non-direct selling nature, we also consider our dealer channel as an end user base. It is essential that our marketing team ensures the Resellers are aware of our supporting resources and where to access them. Because of this, we have recently introduced a new email marketing campaign, titled The Reseller Success Program. This campaign provides our dealer channel with the sales tools and marketing collateral that leads to successful solutions sales, which includes easy access into our Reseller Portal, cobranded banner stands, videos, blogs and brochures, event support, content creation and more.

3. **Can a traditional copier salesperson transition to a solutions-led sales approach or do you need different people for different roles?**

Absolutely! In fact, it's important for traditional copier reps to adapt to new industry challenges to stay successful. If you aren't offering a full range of hardware and software solutions, someone else will. We provide our equipment-based dealers the opportunity to turn multifunctional printers and production scanners into high-value capture portals, to further automate the flow of business information. By taking a prospect's existing paper-based workflow challenges and providing a solution that incorporates MFP touch-panel integration, the possibilities of automation are suddenly more tangible and effective. Furthermore, through professional services, traditional OEDs can take over the entire account from initial sale to installation and future software add-ons. The more technical knowledge you have, the less you have to rely on the developer, which encourages professional services sales and support that are Reseller-driven.

Given the direction of this industry, transitioning to a solutions sales approach can lead to significant business growth. By offering a versatile suite of software and hardware, not only will opportunities arise for business to expand, but individual commissions as well.

To read the original article, please visit <http://www.theimagingchannel.com/11-blogs/1525-sales-and-marketing-best-practices-q-a-with-lauren-ford-square-9>.



Marketing Communications Manager **Lauren Ford** is the dynamic voice behind Square 9 Softworks. Delivering highly effective messaging across reseller channels, end user communities and outside agencies, Ford develops, drives and executes communication plans that effectively support Square 9's overall marketing goals and objectives. To learn more visit www.square-9.com.