

CASE STUDY

How AAP is fulfilling its mission to expand the reach of its content and improve children's health around the world.

Product

Representation in Europe including Sales and Customer Services

Client Profile

Not-for-profit society publisher based in the USA. Committed to advancing children's health around the world

Business Need

To grow their business in Europe and fulfill their mission to improve children's health; to serve customers in their own language and time zone

Solution and Benefits

To outsource sales, marketing and customer service to Accucoms, giving the client a far greater reach into new markets and providing a more timely and effective service for their customers.

In their own words

"We feel that our Accucoms staff are very much part of our team. They know exactly what they are doing and we can completely trust them to represent our company and our products. They started delivering results as soon as the contract was signed. I don't think you can expect more than that" Kerry O'Rourke, Senior Managing Editor.

The Challenge

The American Academy of Pediatrics is committed to the "attainment of optimal physical, mental, and social health and well-being for all infants, children, adolescents, and young adults."

The publishing arm of the AAP shares this mission, and one of its main business objectives is to increase the number of international journal subscriptions. The challenge for AAP was to work out how to fulfill this objective with only one office in the USA and virtually no sales, marketing or customer service presence anywhere else in the world. AAP recognized that to significantly grow subscriptions in other regions it was important for customers to have access to local language support within their own working day. They also recognized that because hospital and medical school organization is quite different in Europe and other parts of the world, trying to reach customers, categorize institutions and generally understand the way they worked could well be a barrier to the sale. On the time and money side, it would be practically impossible for AAP to attend all the events and customer meetings they would need to in Europe to increase exposure to their publications and meet with potential and current customers.

The Solution

Initially, AAP focused on growing its business in Europe. Staff realized they had two options: to open up a European sales office, or to outsource the sales, marketing and customer service functions. Opening up a new office was not an option for them given the costs and management time involved so they decided to outsource and started looking for a suitable partner.

From the start, Accucoms was a serious contender. "Accucoms had carried out a calling campaign on our behalf when we had made a change to our subscription model," says Kerry O'Rourke, Senior Managing Editor, AAP. "We were really impressed – they did a fantastic job, were extremely professional and proved that they really understood the business." Coupled with the personal input of the senior management team including Pinar, Egon and Steve, AAP really felt that they would be in safe hands. "Everyone within the company is knowledgeable about the business," said Allison Durocher, Licensing Manager for Scholarly Journals, "and that gave us lots of confidence in their ability to represent AAP in these new markets."

AAP signed an agreement with Accucoms to represent them in Europe in January 2007 and so began the process of outsourcing this crucial part of the business.



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FOR PUBLISHERS

Services Offered

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in Europe, North America
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Management

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Upgrading & Up-selling
Campaigns

Market Mapping/Sizing

Market Research

Gap Analysis

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The Service



Accucoms serves as the point of contact for customer service issues in Europe. The company is also responsible for generating new leads, organizing free trials, representing AAP at industry events, delivering quotes, negotiating with consortia and working with other agents and distributors in the region. Accucoms has multi-lingual capability and sales managers representing them in Northern and Southern Europe.

Accucoms sales and account managers speak to AAP on a daily basis about quotations and price negotiations with monthly telephone meetings plus a monthly and quarterly report. Stefania Scala, Accucoms sales manager for Southern Europe says that "AAP are extremely receptive to our feedback about the market and will ask our advice with regards to pricing and other issues. It really is a two-way process".

Results

In terms of customer service, Allison said, "All the reports we have had from customers so far have been extremely positive. They have been pleased they could speak to someone in their own language and timeframe and their issues have been resolved quickly."

From a sales point of view, AAP are pleasantly surprised at the number of new leads that appear in the pipeline every month. "There has been a huge leap in the number of consortia deals on the table and more trials have been set up for European customers than ever before," said Kerry. "We recognize that the sales cycle is fairly long," commented Allison "so we are pleased with the number of new sales we have had and the number of new opportunities we have been involved in". From the very beginning, Accucoms was proactive in talking to existing customers about future needs and arranging quotes to upgrade to a site or multisite license, or to talk to them about a package of all AAP's content. Agnes Banks, Sales Manager for Northern Europe said, "We are fortunate to have very detailed data from AAP and a quick evaluation shows that the results are looking very promising".

The future for this relationship looks very positive indeed.

A Final Word

"The biggest benefit of outsourcing our sales and customer service," says Kerry, "is that we have more exposure for our publications than we could have possibly achieved on our own. Accucoms can speak to more people and attend more meetings than we possibly could. Additionally, we have people on the ground who understand the market, which speeds the whole sales process up. The biggest risk in outsourcing is that another company is representing you and your publications – you have to trust them to do it well. However, if you choose the right partner, as we have done, the risks involved are significantly lessened,"