



INTELEMARK

TOP 5 THINGS TO CONSIDER WHEN SELLING TO HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS

Healthcare is one of the most rapidly changing industries today and it takes specialized knowledge and expertise to sell to this dynamic marketplace. After many combined decades of dealing directly with the healthcare industry, Intelmark has gained an insider's view on the best way to connect with and sell to healthcare providers. Sharing that understanding and commitment is the foundation of this essential executive report.

The following are five key areas you need to manage effectively in order to reach your target audience in the healthcare industry.



Providing good patient care and avoiding harm
in the most efficient and
cost-effective manner possible.

KEY #1: Shift to Value-Based Solutions



When you offer solutions instead of products, you announce your value. A new study by ZS Associates, sales and marketing experts, states, “medical products companies that implement a value-based selling approach have larger deal sizes, greater customer retention and greater growth in top-line revenue than companies that don’t use value-based selling.”

You’re not selling a product or service—you’re selling a preferred solution. Preferred solutions are meant to deliver benefits for payers, providers and patients, or a combination of all three. By developing solutions for each stakeholder, you increase your chances of demonstrating value and selling your solution.

Consider why those in the healthcare industry need your solution. Does it make medical imaging clearer and easier to analyze, which could lead to quicker and more accurate patient diagnoses? If you can articulate to the healthcare provider the benefit to them and the patients they serve, then you position your company as a trusted partner. This can then change the entire conversation.

Healthcare providers are essentially risk-averse, meaning they need proven solutions with little or no risk to both patient care and the bottom line. So when introducing new products or technologies to the healthcare industry, the role of your sales people needs to shift. They are no longer order-takers and relationship builders; rather, each sales person needs to become educators and trusted business advisors. They bear the responsibility for understanding the perceived risks that healthcare organizations struggle with and developing strategies to mitigate those risks. You can do this through sharing industry research, providing your prospects with case studies, and more importantly, keeping the project on track and on budget.

KEY #2: Align Your Solution to the Healthcare Provider's Top Challenges

Aside from the obvious goal of top patient care and avoiding risk, there are three challenges that healthcare providers are facing today, according to a report by HealthLeaders Media. **Those challenges are:**



1

Data and analytics.

Very few healthcare providers can claim that they've mastered evaluating the data and analytics that are critical to their organization's performance. And since there is no standardized set of metrics used across payers, it's increasingly complex to make sense of the data provided. The data that tracks provider performance and patient status also needs to be precise to have confidence in its validity and reliability. Survey respondents claimed a high utilization of data used for patient care, but few reported confidence in their financial, business, and healthcare IT related data and analytics.

2

Physician alignment.

Physicians' goals must be in alignment with those of the healthcare system they're tied to, whether that's a hospital or a large health organization. Most CEOs of healthcare organizations are concerned that their physicians might be working in opposition to the goals of the health system. This will adversely affect operations and the bottom line. For most, physician alignment means financial alignment. According to 63% of respondents to a recent survey by HealthLeaders Media, "improve system margin" is ranked in the top three initiatives of healthcare organizations.

3

Health insurance.

With the advent of the Affordable Care Act, most healthcare organizations are concerned about the amount of time and resources being spent collecting high deductibles from patients using the exchanges to purchase their insurance. The self-pay portion of healthcare providers' bills are much higher as a result of the ACA.



“ Your sales force needs to know how to tie your solution to one of their critical challenges. ”

There is a good reason why these challenges persist – they’re extremely complicated and there are many factors involved. Your solution may not completely solve their biggest critical business challenges. However, you do need to ensure that your solution ties directly to alleviating some of their many business pains.

If your campaign is designed to sell to C-level executives in the healthcare industry, your sales team needs to be comfortable in demonstrating their understanding of these critical business issues and how your solution can help. Even if you normally present or pitch to a physician or technician instead of the C-suite, your sales force needs to know how to tie your solution to one of their critical challenges. World-class sales teams are ready to have these high-level conversations around the healthcare industry’s mission-critical challenges, no matter who they are pitching.

KEY #3: Understand Their Longer Sales Cycle

Whether you sell medical devices, supplies or some type of healthcare information technology, you must have an understanding of the buying process that most healthcare organizations use. With shrinking budgets, most purchases go through lengthy scrutiny and a difficult decision process.

Here is a breakdown of the process a healthcare organization uses when purchasing:



Strategic planning.

Healthcare providers want to know that their purchases are aligned with their strategic goals to ensure that they're acquiring the right solution, not just a solution. The right solution must address a specific need or mission-critical issue directly tied to a need.



Assessment.

Providers like to consider all options and, most importantly, ask the question "should a product evaluation even take place?" Details are important in this phase of the buying cycle. A prospect will pull together teams to perform departmental analyses to determine the needs, what options are available, what effect this purchase will have on operations and what the financial impact will be.



Research vendors.

This stage doesn't target the product being purchased as much as it does the vendors who sell a respective solution. Evaluators will be looking at a vendor's operational performance, history in the marketplace, longevity, and their ability to work within the healthcare industry, in order to find the best vendor.

Once these three stages have been addressed, the healthcare provider makes a decision to acquire and then utilize or implement a solution. The key to successfully navigating this process is to demonstrate how such a solution helps the healthcare organization or its patients, or both.

KEY #4: Understand How Regulations and Privacy Guidelines Affect Healthcare Providers' Decisions

Compliance with federal regulations, standards and safeguards is of primary importance to the healthcare industry. Federal agencies are intensifying their regulatory efforts and the fines and penalties for non-compliance are steep.

The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) details privacy standards and the protection of patients' medical records and other private health information by anyone involved in the healthcare industry. In addition, the Health Information Technology for Economic and Clinical Health (HITECH) Act governs the meaningful use of health information technology.

If your product or service accesses or uses electronic protected health information (ePHI), you most likely understand the need for compliance with HIPAA and HITECH security regulations. For instance, a data breach has immense financial consequences and the damage to a healthcare provider's reputation can force its closure.

HIPAA and HITECH are always forefront of mind during deliberations on products and services. Healthcare providers want to know the impact of their technology-related acquisitions on their ePHI and their infrastructure. The risk associated with doing business under HIPAA falls directly on the shoulders of the healthcare providers (called covered entities) and their business partners.

If your solution involves producing, saving, accessing, transferring or receiving ePHI, you are accountable under HIPAA regulations and you must be mindful of your own compliance.

For example, if you sell breathing machines for patients suffering from sleep apnea, most of these machines record pertinent health information about the patient during sleep. That information is stored on a portable media device, which can be analyzed by physicians or technicians to ensure the patient is receiving benefit from the machine. This electronic patient information must be safeguarded under HIPAA regulations.

It's not a matter of "if" but of "when" a healthcare organization will be audited by the Department of Health and Human Services to ensure compliance with HIPAA security rules. Make sure that you're completely compliant if you deal with ePHI in any form. This will position you as a viable business partner with whom any healthcare provider will be comfortable partnering.

KEY #5: Deliver a Strategic, Personalized Message



“ You’ll gain better results because you’re delivering a targeted message to more qualified buyers. ”

When decisions about your solution can impact lives, the message you use needs to be carefully crafted. You must differentiate your brand and present your unique selling proposition that’s tied to your target’s patient care objectives and their quality of care.

Focus your message on how your solution can help attract and retain new patients, educate patients, or introduce new products and services that enhance patient care. When you can help a healthcare provider connect better with their patients, you’ll become a trusted partner rather than a sales person.

Successful campaigns deliver personalized marketing messages that target your contact or contacts within the healthcare organization. If your contact is an imaging technician, you should articulate how your solutions will help provide faster and better imaging services that result in better diagnoses. If, on the other hand, your contact is the CFO, you would tie your solution to revenue goals and return on investment.

Personalized messages let you deliver the right message to the right buyer using the right media at the right time. You’ll gain better results because you’re delivering a targeted message to more qualified buyers.

Conclusion

As easy as it is to build a one-size-fits-all approach, that simply doesn't fit with this dynamic industry. Each healthcare organization wants to do the right thing for patients, physicians, employees, and be mindful of the relevant government regulations, but all of them can be a lengthy and difficult process.

However, if you can incorporate each of the above 5 key areas when devising your sales campaign, you'll experience greater success when engaging with the ever-changing healthcare industry. As healthcare providers compete for market share and consumer loyalty, you'll position your solution and your team as the trusted business partners who have the right answers.

The Intelemark Difference

From years of experience, Intelemark can deliver your value proposition about technology, medical devices, medical equipment, human resources, staffing, purchasing, hardware, and language services, to name a few.

Over a number of decades, we've reached out to hospitals, outpatient clinics, surgical centers, imaging centers, physician practices, and even group purchasing organizations. We understand what it takes to make that human connection you need to sell your solution.

Contact Intelemark today to understand how a customized campaign to the healthcare marketplace can drive outstanding results for your company. We are called **The Business Connection Company** for a very good reason.



About Intelemark

Based in Phoenix, Arizona, Intelemark designs highly customized B2B demand generation campaigns to connect businesses with prospects and customers. Services include all aspects of sales pipeline development, including:

- Qualified appointment setting
- Sales lead generation
- Lead qualification
- Database cleanup
- VAR communication
- Tradeshow support
- Sales intelligence
- Direct response follow-up
- Market research

...and Emergency telemarketing

To perform at the highest levels and deliver the best results, Intelemark pays careful attention to each client's brand.

The company has partnered with many of the world's most prominent businesses and has earned a reputation as "The Business Connection Company." For more information, visit www.Intelemark.com.



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