

Are Your Products Easy for Dealers to Sell?

Even if your product is the best on the market, this question could make or break you.

If you sell equipment, machinery, industrial components, specialized vehicles or any other type of product with a wide range of features and options, you already have a lot of complexity in your product line. You don't need it in your dealer network.

There's no question that product quality, brand awareness, reputation and price competitiveness are key factors in why end-customers and channel partners choose your products. However, "the way you do business" is becoming an increasingly important differentiating factor as well.

Dealers are under constant pressure to take on new suppliers, and if your dealer network is a good one, there will be many who want to steal it. Therefore, maintaining a good relationship with your dealers is crucial. One way to do so is by ensuring that your products are as easy as possible for your dealers to sell. Being the easiest to do business with goes a long way toward ensuring that you are their "go-to" supplier. Not to mention that providing a quick, efficient buying experience ensures a happy customer, as well.

"No doubt (dealers will) gravitate toward the OEM showing them the most support when deciding which product to promote."

– Peter Ostrow, Aberdeen Group¹

Seven Must-Ask Questions about Your Dealer Network



Research² shows that B2B buyers have nearly identical expectations for their buying experiences compared to B2C buyers, including:

- Faster delivery times
- Visibility of inventory
- A flawless customer experience

It's critical to ensure that your products are as easy as possible for your dealers to sell. These seven questions will help you evaluate and improve the experience your dealers are providing.

1. Can your dealers quickly provide accurate, up-to-date information on your products?

Decisions today are made by buyers who are able to execute dynamic, real-time searches and then make decisions based on what is presented. If your dealers are not able to immediately provide the information buyers are looking for, you are opening the door to market erosion.

2. Are your dealers able to deliver everything required for the buyer to make a decision on the spot?

Buyers know what they want and you know what you have the capacity to provide. It's the space in between that defines the ultimate success of the buying experience. Does your CPQ solution allow your dealers to configure, price and quote your products quickly and easily with 100 percent accuracy?

3. Once the specifics of an order are decided upon, can your dealers provide visual confirmation of the product?

When making buying decisions, 67 percent of buyers consider images very important, carrying more weight than product descriptions.³ Giving your dealers the ability to visually confirm an order is something every manufacturer of highly engineered products will benefit from.

4. Can your dealers deliver price quotes quickly, regardless of the order's complexity?

Pricing can be a real challenge for manufacturers of highly engineered products. Can your dealers quickly and easily provide a price even when the buyer makes special requests? Inaccuracy of pricing data can result in uncompetitive quotes, bad decisions or lost margins.

5. Are you providing the right kind of quoting tool to become the supplier of choice for your dealers?

Do dealers view you as their "go-to" supplier? When you consider the volume of business that is impacted by "preference decisions" made by dealers, ensuring that you are the easiest to do business with could have major ramifications on your bottom line.

6. Can your dealers accommodate the kind of business pressures buyers are under today?

Being timely and accurate are not just courtesies considerations for customers—they equate to big dollars in their overall operations. You become part of their calculations once they select you as the supplier who best fits their needs. It's in your best interest to ensure that your dealers can handle the intricacies involved with timeliness, accuracy and error avoidance.

7. Do you know where your dealers actually do most of their selling?

Mobile is revolutionizing manufacturing.⁴ Whereas it used to be enough for product information to be available through desktop or laptop computer screens, dealers today are meeting customers where they live—right on the shop floor. Therefore, mobile considerations must be part of the entire production and delivery cycle. Are you equipping dealers with mobile applications that can close the deal at the point of sale—wherever that may be?

Take a look at how dealers are currently selling your products. Applied properly, these questions have the potential to increase your profitability and lower the risk that is inherent in selling through a dealer network.



More Information

Manufacturers and Dealers: The Best Channels Start with CPQ

www.cincom.com/TheBestChannels

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