



# PR1ME INSIGHT + FOCUS

Vol. 1, 2010

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*... designed for telecom directors and their managers in product, market, sales and channel management.*

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#### Telecom Marketing 2010

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Newport Beach, CA

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## BMMA Provides Broadband Insight

BY ELLIS D HILL

During the first quarter, the [BMMA](#) (Broadband Multimedia Marketing Association) conducted two events providing insight into Telco broadband marketing. In January we held our annual leadership conference call, which has become known to the membership as a source of personal insight from executives representing the service provider community and leading vendors in the industry. And in March, our Annual Meeting, held in Newport Beach, allowed members to cover a variety of broadband marketing issues in depth.

### January Leadership Call

During the January call, again this year we had excellent speakers providing diverse personal points of view on the industry: Glenn Couper - Executive Director - Broadband Roadmap and Development; Sanjay Patel, CTO - Wireline Networks Product Division, Alcatel-Lucent; AT&T; Joe

Mosher, VP- Marketing, Bell Aliant; and Howie Singer, SVP & CTO, Warner Music.

Glenn Couper spoke to broadband challenges that AT&T is facing. They have looked closely at the impact of technology change on customers. Customer experience is important to AT&T Glenn explained. They are auditing their entire customer experience, looking at it end to end to make sure they have the right metrics in place. Glenn discussed the unique issues associated with maintaining two distinct networks (PSTN and IP) when technology and consumer preferences are making one of them increasingly obsolete. Glenn's team is also focusing more on broadband issues raised in the regulatory arena including the national broadband stimulus plan and the FCC's net neutrality proceeding.

*(Continued on page 4)*

## Supervisor Study

BY ANNA GIBSON

Recently Research First conducted a study that benchmarked the role of the 1<sup>st</sup> line supervisor. This study was commissioned by RFC's Sales Executive Group. Six U.S. Telcos participated in the study and key data points were compared. The purpose of the study was to collect the following information: What is the optimum span of support? How much time is spent on the floor? What administrative work is off-loaded to other administrative positions? What specific functions are provided by the first line supervisor (sales motivation, compensation, force management, observation, record management,

coaching and development, and training)?

Key elements were collected: reporting structure; span of support; role of the 1<sup>st</sup> line supervisor; and other supporting positions.

All of the participating companies have a goal of decreasing the distractions from the supervisor's time on the floor. Primary distractions are meetings and administrative functions. Some companies view escalations as a distraction where others view it as an opportunity for the supervi-

*(Continued on page 5)*

# Consultative selling—How's that working for you?

By Bob Bridges

Pardon the Dr. Phil punch line but let's face it: nobody goes to college to be a salesperson and few actively seek a position in sales except by default. Yet over 60% of all college graduates will find themselves in a customer-facing job. The discipline is long overdue for a radical change in how the buyer and seller interact and how the selling cycle is executed. Over the last couple of decades buyers have become more knowledgeable and demanding of the selling effort and businesses have expanded channels that touch the customer. It's time that the discipline of selling elevates itself to address growing skepticism and negative perceptions.

What if your president or executive staff only focused on talking and meeting with your prospects/customers? Do you think the customer experience would be more positive and memorable if the customer talks to a member of upper management? If you're thinking 'yes', why is that? Barring individual competencies, it's because of the personal investment people make in their job. And, it's pretty clear that the higher people ascend within an organization, the more 'investment' they have in their careers, yet the more removed they become from the customer.

So, how do we increase the personal investment in your sales force? They are the ambassadors of your company who speak to your customers every day. First we have to look at the low expectations of the rep/customer interface. These low expectations come from all sides of the transaction: the company, the rep, and the customer

## The Company:

Many companies consider the rep position to be entry level and removed from the visibility and attention commensurate with the importance of their customer-facing duties. Top management demands more of this channel, but doesn't understand the reps' personal investments needed to gain the desired results. For every acquisition sale there may be 5-6 post sale calls into a call center where the customer experience is very different than the pre-sale engagement and often detrimental to sustaining and growing a loyal customer. Many companies fail to understand that

customer engagement skills (service and sales) are behavior based, not knowledge based. Most training programs are created, designed, and delivered from content that treats 'soft' skills as an academic discipline. They fail to understand that behaviors are driven by beliefs, and to change or enhance beliefs, training must be credible, relevant, and reinforced in a safe, endorsing, practice environment.

## The Rep:

Many job seekers perceive a sales job as unappealing due to their own experiences as a prospect/customer. They default to this employment option as a stop gap move rather than consider it a staging area to elevate their employability. In addition, many young adults filling sales positions are ill equipped to succeed by virtue of their generational dependency on personal electronics that have removed them from honing interpersonal communication skills. Yet most customer satisfaction surveys simply state that it is the quality of the rep/customer interaction that is the greatest determinant to the customer experience. It is that quality dialogue with customers that creates successful reps, and successful reps create loyal customers.

With so much riding on the conversation between rep and customer, and so little devoted to enhancing the communication skills of the rep, it's little wonder that the performance distribution of practically any sales force is heavily skewed to those few who have a gift for customer engagement. Often marginal reps or new hires are forced to shadow top reps to elevate their performance.

And for many this grows their frustration and they churn out because they lack the abilities. Sadly, many have the ability but lack a way of learning new behaviors due to poorly designed training programs or lack of their manager's commitment or ability to coach and reinforce new behaviors.

## The Customer:

Customers offer up a number of dilemmas.

- They can't wait to get off the phone, but they want their time on the phone to be

a good experience.

- They hate to be sold, but respond well to a selling process that yields value.
- They have a low opinion of salespeople, but applaud them if they get a deal.
- They can be angry, but accommodating if a genuine effort is made to address the source of their anger.

Understanding today's customer is critical. Most people don't like the selling process. They don't believe that sales people act in their best interest. People don't offer up their needs or share points of pain with salespeople. So rapport and trust are increasingly difficult to start the selling process.

A much better approach is to build intrigue.

## Tips to consider:

- Don't make your introduction the focus. Lead with a statement that suggests your successes may apply to them.
- Never start a conversation with..."Tell me about your business"
- Don't survey the customer to find opportunities. It's all about asking the right question (s) and drilling down on those.
- Understand the salesperson's role in the eyes of the buyer.
- People decide objectively but buy emotionally. Understand the emotional drivers that complicate and complete the sale. When interest turns to intent, don't ask for the business, go to the next steps.

Most importantly, selling (and servicing) is a behavior-based activity and beliefs drive behaviors. Don't ask your reps to act in a way in which they would not want to be treated. This is a simple, yet profound cornerstone to a new sales methodology, one which reps will adopt and the average performer can realize sales success.

**Bob Bridges, RFC Director Training**  
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## 4Q'09 Major Provider Broadband In Service

Broadband Service Provider	2009		
	4Q In Service	4Q Gain	4Q % Gain
<b>Major Telco</b>			
AT&T	17,254,000	171,000	1.0%
Verizon	9,220,000	46,000	0.5%
Qwest	2,974,000	23,000	0.8%
CenturyLink	2,236,000	47,000	2.1%
Windstream	1,132,100	27,500	2.5%
Frontier	635,947	14,616	2.4%
FairPoint*	295,000	-	0.0%
Cincinnati Bell	244,000	2,000	0.8%
TDS Telecom	208,300	6,200	3.1%
Consolidated Communications	100,122	2,372	2.3%
SureWest	98,500	800	0.8%
Iowa Telecom*	97,000	2,500	2.6%
<b>Total US</b>	<b>34,494,969</b>	<b>342,988</b>	<b>1.0%</b>
Bell Canada	2,057,000	(27,000)	-1.3%
TELUS	1,128,000	11,000	1.0%
Bell Aliant	809,866	12,184	1.5%
SaskTel *	185,000	2,000	1.1%
MTS Allstream	181,913	1,367	0.8%
<b>Total Canada</b>	<b>4,361,779</b>	<b>(449)</b>	<b>0.0%</b>
<b>Total Telco</b>	<b>38,856,748</b>	<b>342,539</b>	<b>0.9%</b>
<b>Major Cable</b>			
Comcast	15,930,000	246,000	1.6%
Time Warner	9,289,000	122,000	1.3%
Cox *	4,236,677	32,313	0.8%
Charter	3,062,300	52,200	1.7%
Cablevision	2,568,000	46,000	1.8%
Bright House *	1,327,769	20,910	1.6%
Mediacom	778,000	13,000	1.7%
Insight	501,500	8,100	1.6%
<b>Total US</b>	<b>37,693,246</b>	<b>540,523</b>	<b>1.5%</b>
Shaw	1,744,577	66,242	3.9%
Rogers	1,619,000	22,000	1.4%
Videotron	1,171,000	26,000	2.6%
Cogeco	532,558	17,506	3.4%
<b>Total Canada</b>	<b>5,067,135</b>	<b>131,748</b>	<b>2.7%</b>
<b>Total Cable</b>	<b>42,760,381</b>	<b>672,271</b>	<b>1.6%</b>

Sources: Company reports, Cable DataCom News and RFC research.

\*Estimates as of 3/31/10.

## BMMA

(Continued from page 1)

Sanjay Patel (Alcatel-Lucent) discussed several methods that service providers can use to evolve to an architecture that would enable 100 Mbps download and 20 Mbps upload speeds in an FTTN network. In a step-wise fashion, service providers can improve the capacity and coverage of their existing copper infrastructure in the short term using tactical implementations that are currently available, including bonding and by deploying fiber closer to the customer premises (small remote DSLAMs), resulting in increased capacity and coverage to get to an intermediate point of 50/10 Mbps ubiquitously. Additional enhancements – including adding spectrum and vectoring – result in further improvements that can increase the speed of the proposed architecture up to 100/20 Mbps.

Joe Mosher (Bell Aliant) suggested that with broadband penetration nearing saturation, it has become necessary for service providers to go aggressively after the whole home. Regarding wireless vs. wired service options, ISPS must continue to look at what is best for the customer. Some companies are positioning wireless as all the customer needs. Bell Aliant partners with Bell Canada to provide wireless service, selling it as an option for consumers and businesses in bundles. With regard to technology, they are looking at how to get more bandwidth for HDTV and whole home solutions, as well as higher upload speeds. Joe responded to a question concerning internet congestion, commenting that his company has off loaded 40% of the traffic using cache servers and he believes they can hit up to 60% cost effectively.

Howie Singer (Warner Music) shared his view of what is critical to broadband entertainment. The Connected Media Experience ([www.connectedmediaexperience.org](http://www.connectedmediaexperience.org)) is an effort to establish a standard for a digital bundle that provides a unifying interface that will reside on the PC and other devices. Everything suggests that customers will value that product. This standards body is open and other companies are invited to join the group. Regarding streaming video, they are seeing ISPs, mobile providers, and like companies provide access models where music is bundled with a data plan, devices, etc. TDC a broadband provider in



The new BMMA 2010 Board of Directors in Newport Beach, CA: (left to right) Ellis Hill (RFC); Michael Gondar, Actiontec; Al Hewett, Bell Canada; Greg Owens, Alcatel-Lucent; Shane Kaatz, TDS Telecom; Brett Cousins, SaskTel; John Walsh, Bell Aliant; Eric Wolbach, AT&T.

Denmark is a particularly successful example where there is no separate charge for the music service, which has resulted in increased loyalty and decreased churn. An issue for consumers has been the content they buy in one place may not be useable on a different device. This will become easier as efforts to enable DRM interoperability introduce services into the market.

### Annual Meeting

The BMMA Annual Meeting included an update on our industry benchmarking report, roundtable discussions on current hot topics related to broadband services sales and marketing in addition to the presentation of Best in Class Awards and election of our 2010 Board of Directors.

The meeting was kicked off by a welcome from co-chairs, Eric Wolbach (AT&T) and Brian Farley (MTS Allstream) who reviewed the association goals and actions over the past year.

Brian Farley (MTS Allstream) and Greg Owens (Alcatel-Lucent) each received certificates of appreciation for service to the BMMA that went “above and beyond”.

The Best in Class awards were then presented by John Walsh (Bell Aliant), committee chair, to the following companies: Hostopia (for their SNAP mass email migration technology), Bell Canada

(for their Usage-Based Billing Awareness Campaign), Occam Networks (for their Broadband Stimulus Plan Microsite) and GVTC (for their FTTH 40Mbps launch campaign). Each company presented on its program and attendees had the opportunity for Q&A. We congratulate these companies for their contributions and thank them for sharing their successful programs with the membership.

The membership held its election for the 2010 Board of Directors. We congratulate the following individuals: Eric Wolbach, AT&T (co-chair); John Walsh, Bell Aliant (co-chair); Al Hewett, Bell Canada (treasurer); Brett Cousins, SaskTel (secretary); Michael Gondar, Actiontec (member at large); Greg Owens, Alcatel-Lucent (member at large); Shane Kaatz, TDS Telecom (member at large).

The roundtable discussions focused on two key areas: mobile broadband and customer service issues. The BMMA will form a committee in 2010 to address mobile broadband issues. It will also explore customer service issues in more depth during monthly hot topic calls and at the Fall Workshop this September (to be hosted by TDS Telecom in Madison, WI).

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# Supervisor Study

*(Continued from page 1)*  
 sor to stay close to the customer and identify coaching and training needs.

Some general observations from the study include the following:

- Companies wish to maximize the time of supervisors on the floor.
- Most are moving toward a more holistic view of the job.

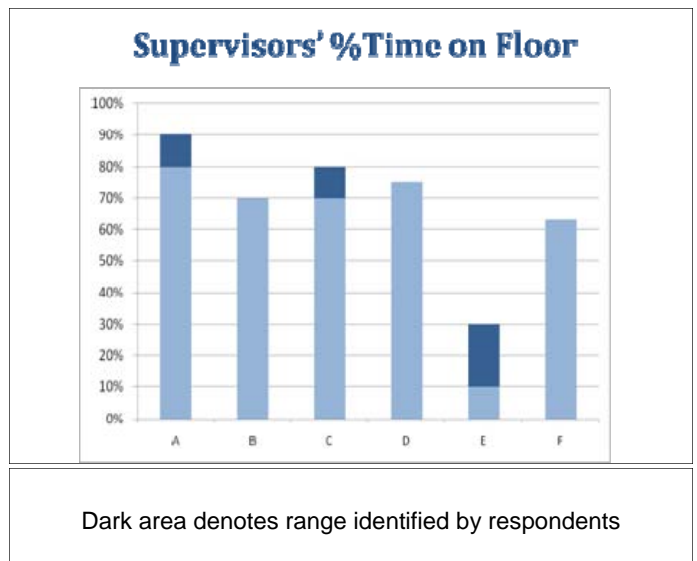
- All companies have moved to flatter organizations.
- In order to maximize the effectiveness of the first-line supervisory position, spans may need to change.

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Learn more about this and other industry studies at RFC's Sales & Operations Seminar to be held April 28-30 in Newport Beach, California.

Reporting Structure					
A	B	C	D	E	F
VP	VP	VP	VP	VP	VP
GM	Director – Call Center	Director	GM		Director
Manager (6:1)	Sr. Ops Mgr (5:1)	Manager (7:1)	Director (8-10:1)	Center Mgr (9:1)	Staff Mgr (6:1)
Coach/Manager (15:1)	Team Leader (16:1)	Supervisor (15:1)	Coach-Tm Leader (15:1)	Sales Supervisor (14:1)	Supervisor (14:1)
Rep	Consultant	Rep	Rep	Rep	Rep

All but one company have 3 levels between the rep and the VP



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# Telecom Marketing 2010 Moves to June

By Ellis D. Hill

As a result of client input, Research First has changed the format of the Telecom Marketing 2010 workshop back to our seminar format to include industry leader presentations. It will now also cover both residential and SMB services. To plan for these changes, we have moved the seminar to June 1- 4 at the same property, the Hyatt Newport Beach, CA.

Residential and SMB marketing share many common issues that we will capture in combined sessions. In addition we are planning breakout sessions for these two segments to address those characteristics that are unique to each.

Telecom Marketing 2010 will include best marketing practices presentations from many of you for both residential and SMB services.

The agenda will include:

- Market overview
- Strategic product marketing – HSI, TV, mobile, local/LD
- Bundling strategies
- Service rollouts and updates
- Best promotions practices and sales strategies
- Customer acquisition & retention
- Competition and winbacks
- New service and revenue opportunities
- Roundtable discussion and lots of networking opportunities.

We welcome your topic recommendations as the agenda is being finalized. If you have a particular need or hot topic you wish to have covered, please contact me.

Our detailed agenda will be released in mid-April.

*Ellis Hill, RFC President, founded RFC in 1987 after 12 years at BellSouth.*

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