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Guerilla Sales: 3 Key Account Research Steps Your Competitor is Not Doing

By Silvia Quintanilla

So, your hard work in prospecting has paid off and you've landed an appointment with a big, publicly traded company.

To prepare, you've scanned through the latest press releases and the annual report, but you want to go one level deeper to make sure you stand well ahead any competitors.

Your extra effort will be well worth it. If you close this account, it could mean becoming the next sales superstar at your company!

That's why we wrote this article. By following these three non-conventional steps, you're going to show your prospect that you've done your homework and you merit their business.

Step 1: Study the Latest Investor Presentations

Public companies are required to present to shareholders and analysts at least every quarter. Many do it more than once a quarter.

These presentations are usually available to the general public for free. To access them, simply go to the company's website and click on the Investors tab (or equivalent). Presentations to investors can be found on the "Presentations" tab (or similar).

Read one or two of their latest presentations (usually in PDF format). While these presentations highlight financial information, they will also be great resources for information on strategies and goals.

See an example of McKesson Corporation's recent investor presentation by clicking here (PDF document).

Step 2: Read the Company's Latest Earnings Call Transcript

Second, read the company's latest one (or two) earnings call transcripts. These written transcripts can be a BIG eye-opener.

That's because during the call, CEO's typically share their latest strategies as well as their biggest challenges and pains. This information can be like digging up gold for a savvy salesperson, so make sure you do this step. It can pay off in a huge way.

Earnings call transcripts can be found for free at Seeking Alpha. Simply type the company name in the search box on the top right. As an example, here is the last earnings call transcript for McKesson's Q4 2011 Results.

Step 3: Read The wikinvest Profile

Lastly, you can read the company profile on wikivest. This is a gem of a website that provides you with a good snapshot of a company's basic information, strategies and challenges – for free! Simply type the company name in the search box on the upper left.

As an example, take a look at the wikinvest profile for McKesson Corp.

Conclusion:

These steps may take a little bit more work on your part, but it can pay off exponentially. Think about it: just one intelligent question on your part can make the difference between getting blown off and taking the opportunity to the next level.

The extra digging will also put you head and shoulders above any competitor going after the same deal (who did zero or minimal research).

Thanks for reading and we wish you happy hunting!

About Silvia Quintanilla

Silvia Quintanilla is President and Chief Sales Detective of Industry Gems, a custom sales intelligence company dedicated to helping salespeople win large deals with Fortune 1000 and Global 500 companies. Learn more about us at www.industrygems.com.

If you sell solutions to the Fortune 1000, Silvia invites you to sign up for our Sales Gems Triggered Events newsletter at www.industrygems.com (subscription box on top left hand corner). In each report, we highlight the best "door opening" news that can help you get your foot in the door at a big account.