

By partnering with Realtime Results, and leveraging the Open Door Sales Solution platform, Suddenlink was able to accomplish rapid and effective growth in its direct sales force.

Situation Overview

Suddenlink Cable, a top-10 cable and broadband provider in the United States wanted to aggressively expand their door-to-door sales efforts. Through the use of the Realtime Results' Open Door Sales Solution, the company quickly and successfully grew its door-to-door sales activities expanding from 20 to more than 160 reps in less than six months.

"In the communications industry, door-to-door has been a very effective but expensive residential sales channel. It only made sense to leverage emerging technologies to make the process more efficient, cost effective, and easier on our customers and agents," explains Suddenlink Chief Marketing and Sales Officer Jerry Dow. "Using the Open Door Solution, our

sales reps now spend more time selling and less time processing paper work. As a result, they have been able to knock on 37 percent more doors in a day, while back-office call times have been shortened by as much as 40 percent.

The Open Door Sales Solution is a turn-key sales management system for managing field sales activities using software on mobile devices married with Web-based back-office tools. The system is designed specifically for door-to-door sales teams and other types of geographically dispersed sales teams. It's a mobile sales force automation tool that feeds into an efficient order management system.

The Client & The Challenge

Suddenlink, LLC, an MSO with operations and systems across multiple regions, believed there was an untapped opportunity to grow sales using more aggressive door-to-door sales activities. In the past, Suddenlink operated pockets of door-to-door sales activities, but the company never pursued a company-wide door-to-door sales effort. The company avoided a broad expansion of the sales tactic for several reasons:

- The challenge of capturing hard, measurable results on a day-to-day basis.
- The challenge of providing a unified backoffice team to support the effort.
- The desire to ensure that the maximum numbers of high-value customers being added.



The Solution

Suddenlink leverages key Open Door features such as online lead management tools, dedicated back-office support and the use of software deployed on mobile devices.

Electronic Lead Management

Suddenlink's new sales process starts with the online lead management tool. Suddenlink sales managers distribute leads electronically to the mobile phones of their sales reps in the field. The tool allows sales managers to view the leads that have been assigned and see the status of leads as they are updated in real time. The tool also allows sales managers to track the time sales reps have worked, and to track the sales rep daily activity through GPS tracking on the phones and visually through an online map. The GPS functionality serves as a valuable tool for mapping sales activities, territories and fraud prevention. As a result, sales managers can easily identify the portions of a region that have been worked and know in advance when new leads will be required.

The lead management functionality also gives a sales rep the power to effectively manage how an assigned set of leads gets worked. The sales rep can group leads by street, by status or other criteria to maximize time spent in the field knocking doors. The rep is no longer dependent on alphabetical street listings that bear no relation to how neighborhoods are organized.

The mobile tool also enforces Suddenlink's business processes by requiring a set number of attempts be made at each address before a lead is abandoned as non-productive. The sales rep can set a return appointment reminder for a lead, and when the time comes the reminder will appear on his mobile device ensuring he returns as requested to re-knock a door or to complete a potential sale. As a result, the sales rep and the sales manager know exactly how many times a door has been knocked. This ensures that Suddenlink gets the optimum value out of each lead.

Streamlining Order Management

In the field, a sales rep's activity is directed by the mobile portion of the Open Door software. They receive leads, and as they knock doors, they update the status of each lead and capture competitive data when speaking to potential customers. When a sale is made, the rep uses the mobile phone to capture all sales data which is then transmitted electronically to the dedicated Realtime Results back-office team. Because sales reps do not have to call-in orders, wait on hold or face other order processing delays, they can more quickly move down the street to continue pursuing new sales.

Once the order is submitted, the back-office rep processes the order and places an outbound confirmation call to each new customer. When they complete the process, the sales rep receives instant notification through the phone of the status of the sale. If for some reason, the sales rep needs to circle back to the home, they also receive this direction through the phone. This process also allows Suddenlink to manage this sales channel with less back office personnel saving significant costs in its processing of these orders.



Reporting and Compensation

One of the strengths of the Open Door process is that all lead, activity and order information is captured electronically. This allows for detailed reporting and tighter management of the entire process. As a result, Suddenlink management has daily, in-depth reporting of all door-to-door sales activities across all regions and systems. Additionally, each sales rep has online access that allows them to view the status of all their orders.

The Results

Working together, Suddenlink and Realtime Results have created a successful program in a short time frame.

Key results include:

- 1** With the process and managerial control offered by Open Door, Suddenlink rapidly and effectively grew its direct sales force.
 - Expanded teams from fewer than 20 reps to over 160 in less than 6 months.
 - Added (13) systems across three states.
- 2** Suddenlink has seen significant improvements in sales performance and cost efficiency:
 - Sales reps are knocking on 37 percent more doors per day
 - Back-office call times have been shortened by as much as 40 percent. A significant cost savings.
- 3** Suddenlink used the data provided to compare regions using the Open Door solution to ones that were not. In regions not using the solution they found:
 - A higher rate of household and product churn.
 - A higher cost of customer acquisition.
 - Lower rep productivity.
- 4** Suddenlink uses the system to easily identify the source of all orders submitted and whether sales come from an assigned lead or from a rep working “off turf.”
 - Suddenlink management found that off-turf sales churn at a higher rate. By instituting new policies that discourage off-turf sales activities, the overall quality of sales has risen.
- 5** With a glance at the Open Door portal, Suddenlink sales managers can monitor and manage activity within a territory.
 - By knowing in advance where and when new leads will be required, Suddenlink has reduced lead management costs.
 - Suddenlink has increased the productive use of leads and a decreased the number of leads that are burned through.
- 6** Open Door reports give Suddenlink management ready access to key statistics such as the performance of individual sales rep and door-to-door sales vendors. The detailed data has encouraged healthy competition among regions and raised Suddenlink’s ability to measure performance against its peers.
 - The Open Door reporting portal is web based so all regions use the same reports and Suddenlink knows sales teams are measured on comparable terms.
 - Realtime Results integrated Suddenlink’s internal Door-to-Door budget data into its reporting to give management daily comparisons of planned to actual performance on metrics including RGUs per rep, new customer relationships added, and FTEs in the field.



Contact Us To Learn How to Power Up Your Door-to-Door Sales Staff:

Tom Brockhaus

Vice President of Business Development & Client Services

Ph: 888-770-7158

Email: tbrockhaus@realtimeresults.net

www.RealtimeResults.com