

Product Marketing Forensics, LLC

Your market is talking. Are you listening?

Primavera Blazes a Trail from Prospect Pain to Project Management Solutions

Precision-strike messaging paves the way to substantial revenue growth

Project management—the universal challenge. Around the globe, commercial industries and government agencies are confronting the complexities of assigning key resources to top priority projects...making it easy for people to collaborate on projects...and delivering improved results. Helping them achieve those goals is Primavera Systems, Inc.—the world’s leading project, resource, and portfolio management software company.

The company has built a 23-year record of success by way of continual innovation—based on a deep understanding of the business processes and unique project, resource, and portfolio management success factors needed by various industries. As the company grew and diversified, the marketing team recognized the need to sharpen its messaging to better connect and converse with highly targeted prospects. The results have been staggering: significant improvements in lead generation and strong revenue growth resulting from the ability to penetrate higher in an organization and sell more effectively.

Eliminating Marketing-Speak

According to Michael Shomberg, Vice President of Marketing, Primavera’s sales and marketing teams fell into a common trap. “Our marketing programs were based on the latest jargon and industry trends. Sometimes that landed with prospects, but often it didn’t. We had difficulty talking about prospect pains in language that resonated with them. Worse yet, once we got in to see a prospect, we couldn’t clearly articulate how we could help them. Instead, we would demo everything and let the prospects find themselves in our software. Simply put, we were having trouble connecting with our prospects—which impacted sales efficiency and our ability to target at the level we wanted.”

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Marialena Dragan, Director, Marketing Communications, agrees, “Our product is an industry leader; it is the best out there. But two years ago, we were being out-messaged by the competition rather than out-performed by their products. The root of the problem was that we couldn’t agree on what pain we really solved for which people in an organization. Consequently, when it came time to do a product launch or a press release or a marketing campaign, we spent weeks on end trying to determine our message. Obviously, the impact of that churn was time to market and less effective campaigns. We needed to bring in outside help to become market-driven in our messaging.”

Best-Practices Methodology, Real-World Advice

In the software industry, one of the most widely acclaimed frameworks for product marketing comes from Pragmatic Marketing®. And many of Primavera's marketing team had been through their training. Consequently, Shomberg's first step in shoring up his team's processes was a refresher course.

"Training is great," he says. "But for maximum effectiveness, we knew we needed expert implementation help to take the Pragmatic Marketing Framework and make it practical for our situation. We needed hands-on guidance to adopt those tools and techniques to our company and campaigns. That's where Jim Foxworthy comes in. As one of Pragmatic's instructors, he is intimate with the best practices from their training. As a consultant who helps companies implement those best practices, he knows how to apply them to solve our real-world challenges."

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Dragan echoes the sentiment, "Jim helped Primavera develop a market-driven process that works for our organization. Theory is important, but the value Jim brought was in helping us adapt that theory to our unique processes and people and business environment."

A No-Nonsense Approach to Affinity Mapping

To begin the transformation toward a market-driven approach, Jim first guided Primavera's corporate leaders and marketing team through a strategic business exercise called "affinity mapping," which helps companies tightly define their target markets, identify the personas for each target audience, and associate the core pains their products can uniquely solve.

Jim was the perfect person to facilitate the affinity mapping process. "He brings a no-nonsense approach to the table," says Shomberg. "If we tried to 'fluff up' our messaging, he stopped us in our tracks. He helped us make our problem statements visceral—not watered down with marketing-speak. Once we did that, he challenged us to get actual customers and prospects involved to validate our thinking. Jim is emphatic that you have to *know* the customer; you must have spoken to each persona to make the pains and the language real."

Dragan emphasizes, "Jim not only navigated us through the maze of defining problem statements and personas, he deftly facilitated our challenging group dynamics. Jim has a remarkable way of working with an array of strong personalities and marshalling our best collective thinking into a collaborative process."

Talking to Executives Leads to New Revenues

"The real benefit of this positioning effort was in finding a clear path between our prospects' pain and our solutions," Shomberg explains. "We are now able to articulate the executive's pains, the project manager's pains, and the resource manager's pains, so we can engage effectively and connect with different audiences."

He adds, "For the first time, our messaging gives the sales force enough information to have an actual conversation with a prospect. Instead of showing someone everything we do, we can target our solution to the pain of that particular person. Now we have role-based messaging that is simple, concise, and compelling."

That's particularly important to Primavera because their sales reps are trying to meet with executive-level decision makers. "We have to be able to convince executives in a very short period of time that we can solve their problems," says Shomberg. "Our salespeople were comfortable talking to the level where seeing all the details is critical. Now we've given them the tools, the language—and, most importantly, the confidence—to talk to a higher level within our target industries. As a result, we have seen substantial additional revenue in the first year. And we anticipate further revenue growth going forward."

Rolling Out Role-Based Messaging

One of the most successful factors in the strategic positioning process has been the company-wide adoption of market-driven methodologies and messaging. "We have taken the role-based messaging and rolled it into our sales tools, website, collateral, and marketing campaigns," says Dragan. "Across the board, it has helped us in PR, in sales force effectiveness, and in lead generation. In fact, year to date, we've already doubled the number of qualified leads generated versus where we were last year—with a smaller team of lead development reps. That's huge. And it's because we're highly focused. We can tightly target an account list and pinpoint exactly who we're calling within those accounts and how we should talk to them."

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Shomberg concludes, "Now when we get in front of a pre-qualified prospect, we can go in with a laser strike for a presentation—one that is dead-on what they are looking for. As a result, we are having a conversation about problems and solutions, not doing a sales pitch. That's what this methodology does—it allows us to have effective conversations." ❖

About Jim Foxworthy



With more than 30 years in high-tech, Jim Foxworthy has sat in nearly every chair in every department within a software vendor. Home, though, has always been product management. An instructor for Pragmatic Marketing, Jim is president of Product Marketing Forensics LLC, a consulting firm that assists clients with the implementation of product management best practices.

You can learn more about Product Marketing Forensics LLC at <http://www.marketingforensics.com>. You can also contact Jim at jimfoxworthy@marketingforensics.com or call him at 703.914.9625.