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Sales force management systems are information systems used in CRM marketing and management that help automate some sales and sales force management functions. They are often combined with a marketing information system, in which case they are often called customer relationship management (CRM) systems.

Sales force management systems are essentially the same thing as sales force automation system (SFA).

A SFA, typically a part of a companyâ€™s customer relationship management system, is a system that automatically records all the stages in a sales process. SFA includes a contact management system which tracks all contact that has been made with a given customer, the purpose of the contact, and any follow up that may be needed. This ensures that sales efforts are not duplicated, reducing the risk of irritating customers. SFA also includes a sales lead tracking system, which lists potential customers through paid phone lists, or customers of related products. Other elements of an SFA system can include sales forecasting, order management and product knowledge. More developed SFA systems have features where customers can actually model the product to meet their needs through online product building systems. This is becoming more and more popular in the automobile industry, where patrons can customize various features such as color and interior features such as leather vs. upholstered seats.

An integral part of any SFA system is company wide integration among different departments. If SFA systems arenâ€™t adopted and properly integrated to all departments, there might be a lack of communication which could result in different departments contacting the same customer for the same purpose. In order to mitigate this risk, SFA must be fully integrated in all departments that deal with customer service management.

Making a dynamic sales force links strategy and operational actions that can take place within a department. the SFA relies on objectives, plans, budget, and control indicators under specific conditions. In order to perform the objectives correctly specific procedures must be implemented

Identifiable sales force management processes

â€¢ Setting targets and objectives based on inputs (usually via a command center)

â€¢ Assigning actors responsible for achieving objectives

â€¢ Control processes for ensuring objectives are being achieved within

o a given time frame

o a given constrained context (customers and/or markets)

â€¢ System management to handle uncertain environments

The process usually starts from specific sales targets. The command center analyzes the inputs and outputs established from a modeled control process and the sales force. The control process enables the sales force to establish performance standards, measuring actual performance, comparing measured performance against established standards and taking corrective action. The

sales managers adjust their actions based on the overall process.

Aside from the control process, the following metrics are implemented:

â€¢ Time managementâ€” Accurately measures the tasks and the fraction of time needed for each task.

â€¢ Call managementâ€” Plan for customer interaction accounts for the fraction of command center reps that comply with the process and have successful calls.

â€¢ Opportunity managementâ€” If the process is followed correctly then a sales opportunity exists. The fraction of command center reps that use the tools, comply with the objective are all measured.

â€¢ Account managementâ€” For multiple opportunities with a customer the account is measured by the tools, process, and objectives.

â€¢ Territory managementâ€” For monitoring the account, the territory is measured by the number of account reps and perspective versus active customers.

â€¢ Sales force managementâ€” Process includes training, IT systems, control, coaching, and is shared across several people and departments. .

Five major activities are involved in staffing a sales force. They must be divided into related steps. The first step is plan the recruiting and selection process. The responsibilities associated with this step are generally assigned to top sales executives, the field sales manager or the human resources manager. The company wants to determine the number and type of people needed, which involves analyzing the market and the job and preparing a written job description. The qualifications of the job must be established to fill the job. Second, the recruiting phase includes identifying sources of recruits that are consisted with the type of person desired, selecting the source to be used and contacting the recruits. You need to weigh out the options and evaluate its potential effectiveness versus its costs. Third, select the most qualified applicants. The selection phase has three steps, in the planning phase there may be qualifications specified and in the first step it is necessary to design a system for measuring the recruits against the standards from the planning phase. Then the system must be put into effect with the new applicants and then making the actual selection is the final step. Fourth activity is to hire those people who have been selected, just because one makes an offer doesnâ€™t mean that a job is done. One must convince a recruit that the job offers everything that they need and want to get them to join a company or at least highly consider it. The fifth activity is for them to assimilate the new hires into the company. This is done by placing them under direction of an employee in the firm and possibly giving them a mentor to help them feel comfortable working in the firm and going through the training programs.

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