



Michael A. Brown's

Business To Business By Phone[®]

Summertime 2004 Bonus Edition

YOUR ANNUAL GOOD EATS ADVISORY!

Bring your appetites and enjoy ...

Georgia Brown's, Washington, DC. Superb southern cooking and gracious service. Amazing deserts! After dinner, take a walk past the White House, about four blocks away.

Chesterfield's, Utica, NY. Now *that's* Italian! From the antipasto to the tiramisu and everything in between ... some of the best you'll find anywhere.

The Station Grill, St. Louis. Topnotch dining in the beautifully restored, historic Union Station. Check out the wonderful train display right outside, too.

Dakota's, Dallas. A terrific oasis in the culinary desert that is downtown Big D. Elevate down from street level past the waterfall and feast on superb beef and seafood, especially the best-ever grilled swordfish!

Arthur's Landing, on the Hudson River. Ride the NY Waterway ferry and prepare for a meal that can't be beat! The lamb chops were perfect. And the view across to the Manhattan skyline ... spectacular!

Giordano's. Chicago. Hey! You want pizza? This is the place. Windy City deep dish ... the best!

SPECIAL PREPARATIONS BEFORE CALLING SENIOR EXECUTIVES

Generic calling to high-level prospects will fail. Instead, carefully customize your C-level communication. Research a relevant event in their business life ... recent past, present, or pending ... on which to build your dialogue. Examples: mergers, acquisitions, sales decline or growth, new places, people, processes, technologies. Write three targeted questions about the operational, financial, and strategic implications. Write "you get \ because of" responses to the most likely answers to the questions; no "elevator pitches!" Then, rehearse!

CELEBRATING EIGHTEEN YEARS!

I opened the business doors on June 20, 1986. And I am one fortunate, happy guy to have "y'all" as clients! Your business, your good will, your hospitality, and your good humor make each project and each day a delight. Thanks and best wishes!

WHAT DOES "ACCOUNT MANAGEMENT" REALLY MEAN?

It means paying close attention to, and then acting on, what's happening within the account and beyond the account that will affect the account and its business with your company. So if it really is that straightforward, why this article?

It's because some otherwise astute sales folks think the mere fact of having an account assigned to them means they are managing the account. They may make a call when there is a new campaign or product intro, but that is promotional marketing, not account management. And "just touching base" from time to time does not constitute account management either.

Genuine, successful account management requires the ongoing performance of at least these verbs: monitor, listen, advise, respond, market, sell, provide excellent service, recommend, anticipate, adjust, locate and apply resources, and negotiate.

Best Advice: If you are a sales manager, write and communicate the account management charter for your unit, with emphasis on the right verbs. If you are a sales rep, make sure you and your management are aligned re your account management charter. Then go do it. Guidance and training right here: **800 373-3966**.

JUST WHAT WE NEED! ANOTHER MARKETING ACRONYM

It's CEM: Customer Experience Management, meaning, so the web site gushes, the methods and



Michael A. Brown's

Business To Business By Phone[®]

Summertime 2004 Bonus Edition

technology (especially the latter, of course) through which customers interact with a business.

Such things used to be known as "answering the phone," "courtesy," "customer service," and "good business." But those words and phrases are passé to the people who market contact center technology and who therefore invent acronyms.

Hey, wait a minute! Maybe CEM is nothing more than the latest morphing of CRM. Nah ... marketers wouldn't do such a thing, would they?

THOUGHT WHILE FLYING

Elevator pitches are like elevator music: recognizable, undistinguished, quickly forgotten.

NO BLASTING ZONE

If your company is doing or considering marketing via "e-mail blasts," *stop!* The very concept of an "e-mail blast" is inherently flawed. E-mail never was, is not now, and never will be a mass marketing medium. Woe to the marketer who "blasts" what ought to be carefully-targeted messages. "Blasts" = spam ... the antithesis of unique, relevant messages that get opened, read, and acted on.

The exception: volume e-mail announcements and notifications to present customers, such as for product recalls, are perfectly legitimate and may advance your marketing efforts as well.

FOUR OPTIONS FOR MARKETING AND SALES TRAINING

Each has dramatic cost, performance, and results implications. Here's how to choose ...

No training. Cheap ... but very expensive. Yet some individual managers, and some entire companies, believe that because they "only hire pros,"

training is not necessary. (Let us be thankful that doctors, air traffic controllers, the military, and our favorite sports teams believe otherwise.) We all know the performance and revenue effects of no training. Here's another downside: nowadays, the no training approach invites lawsuits by terminated employees who claim the reason for deficient performance is they were not trained.

Casual. Typically, casual training means on-the-cheap, on-the-job with other reps. This often results in poor practices and bad habits being sustained and spread. Casual also means the manager who trains "when I have time." The worst sort of casual is when training is optional, which translates to "take all the training you want but do it on your own time and pay for it yourself."

Half-hearted. This may be the most common: companies provide training content and materials but there is no practice or reinforcement. And many times, topical product training is the only training ... skills training is not included. The other form of half-hearted is where reps attend a half-day public seminar, then hit the phones, and are expected to "blow the sales doors off" immediately.

Genuine. Management endorses, enforces, and participates in an ongoing, structured process. Not only do the reps get training and materials, but also practice time, support, and continuity. Genuine training generates "motivation by inclusion," builds the reps' confidence, and enables them to earn more by marketing better or selling more. Also, with genuine training, reps usually stay with you longer, enhancing stability and reducing costly turnover.

Want really good training ... basic, refresher, or advanced? Call me! **800 373-3966** or e-mail. michael@michaelabrown.net

A GEM FROM GEORGE CARLIN

"Last night I played a blank tape at full volume. The mime next door went nuts."