

**"Sales professionals: Ignore this book at your own peril."**

—GERHARD GSCHWANDTNER, CEO and Publisher, *Selling Power*

the

social media

SALES

revolution

The New Rules for Finding Customers,  
Building Relationships, and Closing More  
Sales Through Online Networking

**LANDY CHASE**

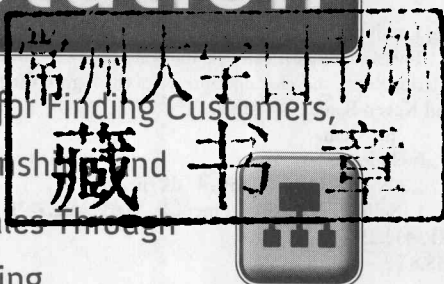
AUTHOR OF *COMPETITIVE SELLING*

**AND KEVIN KNEBL**



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*To my three wonderful children, who in their respective ways remind me daily of the success that their mother and I had in being parents. Nothing that I accomplish in my life will ever give me greater satisfaction; each of them is a treasure that this world is fortunate to have received.*

—Landy Chase

*To my beautiful wife, Karin, and our three amazing children, Anja, Tristan, and Calais, whose patience and encouragement I greatly appreciate while I travel and pursue my passion. I couldn't have a more supportive family, and I love them with all my heart.*

—Kevin Knebl

## PREFACE

It is seven thirty in the morning—in this case, a Friday morning—and Thomas, a business-to-business (B2B) sales professional for a technology company, is making final preparations for his weekly marketing effort. Like most high-achieving salespeople, Thomas is a creature of habit. Thus, Thomas always does his marketing work on Friday mornings. And, since Thomas is a salesperson, his “marketing work” this morning is, as it has always been, a telephone-prospecting session.

Thomas is the quintessential selling machine. He has a work ethic that is without peer. Colleagues admirably refer to him as “Thomas the Sales Engine,” a play on the fictional anthropomorphic steam locomotive in the Railway Series books. He is a planner, and he is disciplined. He comes into the office at the same time each day. He does the same activities at the same time each and every week. His goal today, as it has been every



Friday morning for hundreds of past Friday mornings, is to set four appointments.

Thomas is also well educated. He has attended numerous training seminars on effective prospecting techniques during his career. (In fact, in years past, he has attended traditional prospecting workshops given by both of the authors of this book.) He has also read extensively on the subject. Like most top sales pros, he is always looking for an edge—and, historically, he has always found what he is looking for.

Thomas's education and skill level are reflected in everything that he says on the telephone. By traditional standards, Thomas is as good at this type of work as anyone in the selling profession. He has all of the key attributes that make an outstanding cold caller successful. He is motivated. He is focused. He is articulate without being canned or slick. His approach with gatekeepers is polite and polished. His pitch to decision makers is also highly refined and spot-on in its effectiveness.

He is so good, in fact, that if he can just get a qualified decision maker on the telephone for 15 or 20 seconds, he can persuade many of them to grant him an appointment before the call is concluded.

Unfortunately for Thomas, therein lies the problem.

You see, over the past few years, Thomas has seen an alarming drop in the number of appointments that he is able to set each week. In fact, as recently as three years ago, Thomas didn't need to make 50 calls every Friday morning. He made just 25, because he almost always reached his four-appointment goal with this level of effort. Then, about three years ago, over the space of just a few months, he saw a sudden and significant drop in appointment results.

What concerned Thomas the most at the time was the fact that this drop was not the result of a change in his tried-and-true telephone techniques. Yet, without anything changing on his end, his success rate had taken a significant turn for the worse.

Unfortunately, Thomas reacted to this problem the way most salespeople would, and still do. Instead of examining the reasons behind the productivity drop, he simply did more of what he had always done successfully. He didn't work smarter; he worked harder—much harder. In this case, he doubled his calling effort without changing his fundamental skill set. He began making 50 calls every Friday morning, not 25. To his credit, he did make one significant technological adjustment: he acquired a contact-management software program and began managing his prospects on his laptop.

Three years ago, these adjustments paid the requisite dividends. Three years ago, he got back to his four-appointment goal each week, maintained his sales productivity and income level, and reinforced in his mind the idea that hard work will overcome any selling obstacle. Three years ago, Thomas's strategy worked.

Now Thomas has a bigger problem. The productivity issue has reared its ugly head again. This time around, however, it is not going to be defeated with old-fashioned hard work.

Thomas's strength, his trump card, has always been his ability to acquire new accounts through a consistent outbound marketing effort. But now, even Thomas's 50-call-a-week regimen isn't meeting his needs. In fact, he is having enormous difficulty in getting more than one prospect appointment a week, despite all his work. To complicate matters, Thomas cannot, as he did previously, increase the number of calls he makes, as there is no time for that in his schedule.

For Thomas, like many other salespeople, the economic downturn has hit him where it hurts—right in his wallet. Through no fault of his own, he has lost nearly 20 percent of his customers, and most of the remaining 80 percent are buying less than they did in the “good old days.” As we noted, Thomas is no longer able to replace the lost business through appointments generated from his weekly prospecting effort, and as a result, he is really feeling the heat.

Thomas has had several uncomfortable meetings with his sales manager in recent months. All of them have focused on one topic: his continued drop in sales performance. Each time, his manager, predictably, encourages him to work harder. The manager is a good leader, but he cannot provide what Thomas desperately needs, which is a solution to the revenue problem. Thomas is at the end of his rope. He is stressed, and he is frustrated. He knows that he has to do *something*, but for the first time in his career, he does not know what that “something” can be.

Thomas is out of ideas, but he is not stupid, he is not passive, and he is not a quitter. He does something that he has not done in a very long time: he examines his marketing methods, his assumptions about what works in sales, and what is different about the marketplace. He opens up his mind. He takes a step back from the day-to-day struggle that his career has been of late, and he looks at what has changed in his world. He examines the steps in his weekly prospecting effort, and once he does that, it does not take him long to identify the root cause of the problem.

Thomas realizes that buyers are no longer reachable on their telephones, because the telephone is no longer their primary communication tool. Instead, they are doing most of their communicating on the Internet. He realizes that his marketing



## PREFACE

efforts are going to have to adapt to this fundamental and irreversible change. He also realizes that social media offer him a huge opportunity to communicate with his customers and prospects in ways that he has never done before. It is at this point that Thomas makes the decision to purchase this book.

Your authors are here to help you—and we are exceptionally qualified to do so. You should know that we both enjoyed successful careers as salespeople. Independent of each other, we both developed and grew successful businesses that focused for years on training sales teams to generate new revenue, before we became involved in social media. Today, we are both prominent in this new field, and this work is the product of our own experience, of proven and replicable methods that both of us employ on a daily basis. We have collaborated to deliver to you the ultimate sales professional's user guide—the one road map that you need to generate offline revenue from online marketing. Yes, everything we share here is field-tested—and it works! So turn the page. Join us now, and join *The Social Media Sales Revolution*.

Landy Chase  
Kevin Knebl

# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

## Landy Chase

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# GAME CHANGERS

## The Six Rules of the Social Media Sales Revolution

**B**efore we get into the details of the Social Media Sales Revolution, let's turn the clock back a little and take a look at how we got here.

### Landy's Story

In 1985, Landy started his first job as a business-to-business (B2B) salesperson. The company that hired him was a bootstrap start-up with a small amount of capital. However, it was an opportunity in outside sales, which was beneficial for a young person with no sales experience. Landy was a good fit for the company, and vice versa. He jumped at the opportunity, partly because the company was willing to give him a chance, even without a proven track record, and partly because it was introducing a new idea that it seemed to him would change the business world forever.

Believe it or not, back in those days people at work actually received incoming messages from outside callers on slips of paper! It worked like this: the office secretary would take the call (that's right—this was before the term *executive assistant* came into favor), write down the caller's information on a small preprinted slip, and place the message from the caller in the recipient's in-box slot on the secretary's desk. There was an individual slot for each employee for this purpose. The recipient would then come to the secretary's desk, check his or her slot, retrieve any messages taken by the secretary, read them, and return phone calls. It was just like going out to your mailbox at home and checking for mail, only it happened at the office.

This company's new service was called *recorded message retrieval*, and it eliminated the need for written messages. When a client signed up for this service, he would forward her phone number to the company. A bank of telephone operators at computer terminals took the clients' incoming calls. While the operator was handling the call, the conversation between the operator and the caller was recorded! When the client wanted to check her messages, she would call into her mailbox and listen, as a third party, to the recorded conversations that had taken place between the operator and the callers. This was 1985, though, so it seemed like amazing technology.

Landy hit the streets hard, presenting this exciting new service to business owners around Dallas, Texas. Nobody had ever seen anything like it—and Landy's enthusiasm for the service was contagious. Within six months, he was, at the ripe old age of 23, the company's number two salesperson in the United States. Then, one Friday afternoon, the company announced that it had

run out of funding, and Landy, having been previously tipped off about the firm's dire financial straits, accepted a better job with a publicly held company in the office-products business the following Monday morning.

You know the technology, of course; you use it every day. It is called voice mail.

There have been many other changes in business communication over the past 25 years, and these, in turn, have been driven mostly by new technology. For example, when Landy was selling "recorded message retrieval" in 1985, salespeople did not use personal computers. (He bought his first PC, a desktop IBM XT, in 1987. It came with a dot-matrix printer.) We did not have laser printers. We did not have cell phones or PDAs. We usually did not have fax machines. Over the years, as each of these products arrived, the technology came in the form of easily manageable gadgets that one could learn to use without difficulty. Then came the Internet.

## **The Ultimate Game Changer**

The Internet is the greatest communication tool of all time. For B2B sales people, it is also the ultimate game changer. Past technological changes have all been improvements like voice mail, which were easily adaptable to the existing landscape, whereas the Internet is not. Over the past 15 years, it has completely taken over the way in which people get and exchange information. Over the past five, it has completely taken over the way in which people socialize with one another.

And now—right now, as this book is being written—social networking is taking over B2B communication. Like it or not,