

I Feel Your Pain, Mr. Property Owner

Service providers need to provide their MDU customers with a power statement that addresses their unique pain points.

By Bryan J. Rader / *UpStream Network*

A recent book on business development suggested that every sales organization must have a strong “power statement.” This is a one- to two-sentence intro or pitch about why a prospective customer should select the company.

Most salespeople walk into potential customers’ conference rooms with PowerPoint presentations and webinar-style overheads. They jump into how big their organization is, how much experience the team has, and how cool the headquarters office looks on a page of the company brochure.

Over the years, I have sat through a lot of these exhausting meetings. Stories abound about how a company launched its business or how many awards it won. At least some meetings provide food!

Now that I am back on the other side of the table giving these presentations, I’ve been able to take a better view of what makes these meetings most effective.

BUILDING A HEADLINE-GRABBER

Mike Weinberg, a national sales guru, says it is all in the power statement: stop pitching your experience, your engineering skills or your 40-seat call center.

His view is that a sales organization must focus on building a “headline-grabber” specifically geared to a client’s needs, not an old-school arsenal of bios and management company profiles. He wants sales organizations to focus on customers’ “pain points” in delivering the message.

After all, if a company isn’t focused on solving a potential client’s problems, why is it even in the room to pitch for the business?

UNDERSTANDING PAIN POINTS

Broadband providers spend so much time talking about speeds, length of agreements and rate increases. But none of these get to the heart of clients’ pain points.

So, what are pain points?

I asked my team this question the other day. I said, “Describe to me the pain points you see or experience every day when talking to potential property owners about bulk internet. What issues do they face today?”

There were some of the usual comments about poor performance from the local cable provider. “Explain it to me,” I said. “Well, they say residents struggle to access Netflix on their iPads when they sit out on the balcony.” Hmm, good pain point. What else?

“They can’t stand opening their monthly bill,” another person suggested. Yes, that’s a good one, but what is the pain? Extra fees, surprise fees, junk fees and more fees. And it seems to change every month. Great pain point!

Anything else? “The property manager doesn’t know whom to call when something’s not right, if they miss an appointment for a new move-in, if there’s an exposed wire on the property or if there’s a slow-service issue.” More good ones! We are getting good at diagnosing our customers’ pains.

I then asked a few large property owners about *their* pain points. The answers went further. “We need a solution that supports all these new mobile devices. We need Wi-Fi coverage for the entire community and our common areas. We need ways to engage our residents with more smart-home apps – and a network to support them.” And “we need better cell phone service inside our building!”

This is great! These are excellent pain points, and they are all part of the presentation about how to elevate the quality of service offered to residents. I’m sure you’ve created your own list of pain points, too.

This all leads to a real power statement for the broadband industry to build the right message for future customers to solve these challenges in their businesses. I suggest tailoring power statements to the specific types of customers, too – high-end, affordable housing and more.

I strongly encourage broadband providers to create their own power statements to overcome the pain points of their MDU customers. I’m sure providers can “feel their pain” of sitting through otherwise senseless PowerPoint slides with résumés and office-building photos. ❖

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