

A high-contrast, blue-toned photograph showing the silhouettes of five business professionals (three men and two women) standing in a row in front of large windows. The light from the windows creates a strong backlighting effect, making the figures appear as dark shapes against a bright background. The overall mood is professional and corporate.

5 REASONS

Why National Account Teams Are Important

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The Association of National Account Executives recently assembled a roundtable of experts to discuss five key reasons why national accounts teams are important for healthcare manufacturers.



1 Negotiating Access

Sales reps face barriers throughout the healthcare industry – whether it's due to the nature of the gatekeepers or an issue of geography, there are plenty of challenges that make it more difficult for regional sales reps to get their foot in the door. National accounts teams can better facilitate the process of building relationships with decision-makers at a high level in these healthcare organizations, as well as secure greater accessibility for organizations that don't share the same geographic proximity of their customers.

Many sales reps can't get access to the right decision-makers in the care continuum. With a national accounts team that has the time and runway to build deeper relationships with those contacts, it makes setting up a meeting much easier and more convenient. In a post-pandemic market, there are many supply chain teams that continue to operate off-site, which greatly reduces the accessibility to a lot of these larger organizations. The days of a quick pop-in or a courtesy call are largely gone.

2 Communication and Coordination

Communication is key – without an optimized communication procedure, there are plenty of ways for communication mishaps to occur at every touchpoint. The last thing you want is to have sales opportunities slip through the cracks because of a misunderstood contractual agreement or lack of communication with supply chain.

It's also important to have someone coordinating sales resources for your organization. When you put a designated

person who is responsible for deploying resources across an array of accounts and customer segments, it allows you to more effectively allocate resources how and where they are needed most.

By overseeing the deployment of sales resources, national accounts teams can ensure that high-priority accounts are adequately supported while also maximizing the productivity of the sales force. They often work closely with the sales teams to prioritize efforts, allocate the appropriate resources, and ensure that sales are aligned with the organization's broader objectives.

3 Finding the Balance

There is a delicate balance to meeting the financial and operational needs of your customers, while also ensuring that your company operates with positive margins. A national accounts team can help your organization find mutually beneficial solutions for both sides of the coin.

A national accounts executive works closely with providers and supply chain to understand nuanced and dynamic challenges that healthcare is currently navigating. Those conversations will reveal the needs of your customers, which then gives you the opportunity to develop an action plan to address those needs and build a strong partnership.

4 Implementing a Segmentation Strategy

Plenty of sales reps are chasing a white whale – whether that's leading IDNs like Cleveland Clinic, HCA Healthcare, or Mayo Clinic. Ambition can be a powerful tool, but it's important to remember that healthcare organizations operate across an entire spectrum of needs versus purchasing power. If your company can't meet the needs of Cleveland Clinic, then you need to find someone who you can work with. This can be done by using a segmentation strategy.

A national accounts team can implement a targeted segmentation strategy, which identifies the right accounts they should be chasing and tailoring their pitch accordingly. By segmenting these accounts based on the size, location, and purchasing power, manufacturers can deliver a customized and effective solution to their customers.

A segmentation strategy can also allow you to develop more precise marketing, pricing and sales strategies based on the needs of any segment that you're working with. Leveraging segmentation allows manufacturers to maximize their resources and prioritize the customers that have the most value.

5 Crafting a Unique Value Proposition

One of the most important parts of making a sale is the pitch – with all the competition in healthcare manufacturing, how does your company stand out from the rest of the crowd? A national accounts team is responsible for crafting and communicating a compelling value proposition to your customer base.

National account executives do this through an open line of communication to understand the challenges that their healthcare customers are facing. Sales is all about solving problems, and a national account executive is going to be much more successful when they are working to provide a unique solution for each account. A one-size-fits-all wouldn't be a great fit in this environment because each healthcare organization and IDN is going to have a different set of challenges.

With the right national accounts team in place, your company can craft a strong and unique value proposition that helps build your credibility and gives you an edge in an oversaturated market.

ANAE would like to thank the following stakeholders for sharing their insights:

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