



SALES STRATEGIES
SCALE UP YOUR START UP



Aurora Commerce - <http://www.auroracommerce.com/>

Case Study: Background

Aurora began as a web design Company in 2007. By 2015 it had developed a highly featured SaaS eCommerce platform. It provided; web design, platform development and back end integrations (e.g. payment gateways, ERP systems etc.) with ongoing support and development services.

Aurora acquired a spectrum of customers - some big (JD Sports, Quiz Clothing, Atlantic Shopping), some small. Each on differing contract terms. From 2013 to 2015 Aurora withdrew (sometimes abruptly) web design and support services for its customers. In parallel it had tried to build Systems Integrator (SI) partner and design agency relationships to fill those gaps - with limited success. Despite a competitive product new sales growth was static - with no new logo business wins for over three years. The Directors realised they needed outside help to fulfil the sales potential of the product.

Sales Strategies (SS) was engaged to carry out a Strategic Review of Aurora’s marketing and sales functions. Following submission of the review SS was engaged to implement the key recommendations.

High Level Scope of Strategic Sales Review:

- **People:** team, key contacts, hiring plan
- **Business Plan:** pipeline (existing and new business mix), status, gap, immediate focus?
- **Proposition/s:** why buy anything, why buy your product/service, why buy now?
- **Organisation:** marketing, existing and new business focus, territories
- **Processes:** optimal sales process (iterate and refine), forecasting, pricing, contracting, compensation
- **External Relationships:** key customers, partners, channels etc.

Key Challenges and Recommendations:

Key Challenges	Key Recommendations
Stagnant account growth	Evaluate profitability of all customers and either raise fees or exit
Wide ranging variable and inflexible contract terms	Re-engineer, standardise and renew key customers on a new, long term (3 to 5 year) SaaS contract - with built in growth based on customer’s website trading volumes
Unclear proposition in a competitive market	Develop a new competitive ‘go to market’ proposition in a crowded market dominated by a few big players; Demandware, Magento, Hybris, IBM
Weak SI relationship network	Build strategic partner SI relationships - critical to future success
Tired and weak marketing	Re-launch website and other collateral
Weak lead generation	Re-structure lead generation process and build new pipeline

Achievements:

- Key customers renewed on new SaaS contracts delivering 30%+ year on year growth for the next 3 to 5 years
- Signed largest contract in company history ~ £600k
- Revamped and tested ‘go to market’ proposition and developed sales and marketing collateral to support
- Services offering and resource planning completely revamped - moved to 6 month contracts versus ad hoc
- Partners identified and developed and initial pipeline building under way
- Active participation in several major deals - got to last three, beating two major competitors
- **Break even on SS investment: 9 months. Conservative RoI over 5 years: ~ £2,000,000+ = x 8**