



Ad Sies

Sales Life

from **SolutionsforSales**

Our regular feature 'Sales Life' invites senior salespeople to give their views on key sales issues.

This quarter we talk to Ad Sies, Sales Manager and Product Manager for Crown van Gelder. The company produces and sells high-quality, specialised industry products in the paper sector.

What is your job title and what do you do?

I am the Sales Manager for UK & Nordic region, as well as Product Manager Digital for Crown Van Gelder paper mill in Velsen, Holland. We sell our products to printers via merchants, and to label coaters and converters. As a Product Manager I define, initiate and stimulate creation of new products and markets for digital print.

How long have you been in your present role?

I have been Sales manager since January 1, 2002 when I joined the mill. Product management is a new role I adopted 2 years ago. As Product Manager Digital I operate Europe-wide and increasingly outside Europe.

What is the best piece of sales advice you've ever been given?

You must always spend quality time with your customer.

Describe a memorable deal

My most memorable deal is winning digital business in Italy. In this instance good sales and product management, clever logistics and a good agent all came together and brought high volume profitable new business.

What is the most important thing to learn about your industry?

The paper value chain is under threat of digitalization and consolidation of end markets. Value chain cooperation is key to creating new roles for paper, as well as introducing new added value concepts and services.

Who in your industry do you most admire?

I most admire the visionaries that are early adopters of new digital print concepts.

What is the best time of day for a meeting?

It has got to be 9 a.m.

Where do you get your best ideas?

In the market, during interventions with customers, sales partners, OEMs and other stakeholders in business development.

Which do you think is most important when winning new business; technical expertise or sales skills?

In our business the key to winning new business is mobilizing cross-functional teams. The emphasis between technical expertise and sales skills shifts during the sales process. During the first stage, the Ideation stage, emphasis lies on commercial activity. In the Confirm stage both the market and the technology must be proven, so technology and sales team up. The Develop stage is more technology oriented. The final Execute stage, rolling out a new product, has a more commercial emphasis. In my industry both sales skills and technical expertise are required to be successful.

Ad Sies will be leaving Crown van Gelder on the 15th August 2008 and taking on a new role with Kodak GCG (Graphic Communications Group) as Digital Printing Business Development Manager EAMER (Europe, Africa, Middle-East Region).