



5 Not-to-be Missed Opportunities for Growing Customer Revenues



How to Drive Growth in The IT Market

Growing revenue is a top priority for most B2B IT solutions providers. New customer acquisition is one way of accomplishing this, but we all know that winning new accounts in today's hyper competitive IT market is really hard. So what else can drive this growth? The simple answer is: taking better care of existing customers. I know it sounds obvious, but the reality is, very few IT solutions providers have client management resources that are focused on growing existing relationships and do a good job with installed base selling.

In our work with IT resellers we see a consistent set of characteristics among those who are successful and are capable of growing revenue. Here is a brief summary of what we believe to be the 'success DNA' of solution providers who have successfully grown their revenue through installed base selling.

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1. Focus on Quality of Service

IT is not a hit and run business. The days of shipping a product and going dark until the next time the customer needs something are gone. Even – or especially – for small to mid-sized IT solution providers, it's important to put some energy towards building a technical team that is highly focused, trained and certified and able to solve problems. The quality of the service resources you provide to your customers will drive the ongoing relationship, so hiring resources on the cheap or economizing on training and certifications is not a long-term strategy: eventually, it always backfires. Investing in competent technical resources, and paying good market rates is a winning formula for installed base selling.

2. Understand the Business Scenario

Whether you are selling a server as a transactional product or a SaaS application, it is very important to understand your customers' overall business, their IT pain points and the usage pattern of their current solutions. The goal for installed base selling is not to sell something at any cost: it is to understand customers' business goals so that you can recommend a set of solutions that will truly help them. Many IT solution providers claim they are trusted advisors, but to advise wisely you need to know your client well.

3. Understand the Competition

We are all tempted to say that we are better than the competition, but the reality is that, for the most part, our competitors are just as smart as us. Very rarely in today's market is there a market niche for which there is only one provider. Therefore, it's crucial to maintain a broad perspective – understanding how your competition might want to help your customers, focusing constantly on service expansion and quality improvement, and not placing all your dependence on relationship-based engagement is vital for installed base selling.

4. Solve for Today but Build for Tomorrow

While it's a given that you need to make sure you deliver what your client asks for, be analytical: think through whether they are asking for the right solution or product, and what else they might need to achieve the expected result, or better. For example, the simple addition of a maintenance contract – especially for hardware – is the most common missed opportunity. IT providers sometimes think that if they sell a maintenance contract, the client may go directly with the technology vendor in case of faults or breakdowns. On the contrary. End customers buy maintenance contracts to protect their investment, but when repairs are required, it's an opportunity for the service provider to re-engage with the client and for further installed base selling.

5. Build Domain Expertise

Many times we hear from IT providers that they are a general service provider – “We sell all things to all people” – especially in SMB segment. But, can you really be great at everything? Are you at risk of mediocrity by not specializing? The complexity and variety of IT solutions and software, and the relevant certifications, make it unlikely that one provider can be a universal expert unless they are a huge organization like CDW. So, why make it tough on yourself by being overly generic? A streamlined, focus on a particular segment or client type, such as legal, accounting, retail or education is becoming prevalent in most markets for good reason: it allows a provider to focus and build expertise and expand locally and, ultimately, regionally. Once you have built domain expertise, it is easy to underscore your market knowledge by running special events like ‘lunch and learns’ or webinars, or tele-prospecting for your installed base selling. Achieving domain expertise allows you to build your reputation, establish confidence with your customers, and win referrals that will expand your business.

Resellers who focus on understanding their customers, do a great job in a specific segment and differentiate themselves based on quality and expertise will be able to grow their accounts not just by word of mouth and reputation, but also through true social selling.

ZINFI's Partner Marketing Management (PMM) Platform includes customer survey tools, allowing resellers to undertake a formal survey of their installed base selling effort. For information on other tactics for social selling, please refer to our blog article, [7 Social Selling Tools You Need To Be a Super Salesperson](#). This article covers Social Marketing, Social Selling, Email Marketing, CRM, and other necessary tools for being successful in installed base selling.



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