

EDS: Where Problems & Challenges Become Opportunities

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The marketing benefits of EDS for component manufacturers



Communications

During the course of a year, there are many marketing and sales questions a component manufacturer must consider and answer in order to sustain growth or at least meet fiscal year objectives, but rarely has the time to address. EDS is probably the best venue to address these types of questions:

We need to generate more qualified leads for sales reps and distributors, but how?

We should better support sales reps from a corporate marketing standpoint but what should we be doing?

Our main competitor often jointly advertises with distributor partners, online and in print. How can we do more of that?

Other companies in our industry are quoted in magazine and website articles all the time—why aren't we?

We really don't know any of the editors at the major magazines that serve our customers. How can we change what they know about us?

There are a lot of information portals and channels out there. How do I know which ones will reach my target group?

The plan that we put in place at the beginning of the year doesn't seem to be working. How should we change it?

Our marketing budget has been trimmed—how do I best spend what's left to reach key decision-makers?

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How many times have these questions come up in conversations in your management meetings? Believe it or not, all these questions could be answered in less than a week, in just one place. You're already planning to attend EDS, but do you know how to maximize your experience to make the most of the marketing benefits and opportunities that are available?

In addition to meetings you've scheduled with distributors, sales reps and other sales channel partners, just a bit more planning will allow you to gain insight and gather information about how to better market your products, technology and services in today's electronics industry.

Who's attending?

First, are all the relevant team members taking part in your EDS meetings? In your company, marketing may be a direct or indirect concern for several departments, including sales, distribution management, marketing, communications. These areas of personnel can and should attend EDS because they can benefit from meeting to discuss objectives and best practices with a variety of industry personnel. Although some companies practice this approach at EDS, very few do it thoroughly. While sales and marketing management team members are meeting with distribution personnel to discuss the 40,000-foot view, it can be very advantageous to include public relations and communications representatives to ensure that all parts of your sales and marketing objectives and program elements are working together to meet clearly defined goals that are understood by all.

Are you meeting with editors and media representatives at EDS?

If I were a manufacturer, I would definitely take advantage of meetings with the media at EDS. The editors are there, eager to learn about the new technologies and products manufacturers are presenting in their sales meetings. There is no other event that will allow you to meet with this focused group of editors, in one place, during the course of a few days. Face-to-face meetings with editors practically guarantee press coverage for your company in the coming months and are opportunities that should not be missed.

Additionally, meeting with media representatives, not just the editorial staff but the ad space representatives and publishers as well, is an opportunity to share your sales and marketing objectives and learn about various vehicles and packages, many you were unaware of before now, that might help you reach those goals.

Do you engage in quarterly marketing?

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In today's market, no sales or marketing plan can be "fixed." Too many variables affect how well we are performing to plan. No matter where you are in your fiscal year calendar, EDS is an ideal venue to review a plan already in place or one that you plan to launch effective July 1. Every company can better utilize meetings at EDS to communicate product, marketing and communications plans since each sales channel arm is available on-site to discuss. A marketing plan should be fluid, able to take a new shape when there are unexpected market changes or industry ripples, and your team should plan to review it on a quarterly basis (at least) to ensure that all resources are still available and that they are being allocated in a way that maximizes performance and meets expectations. May is the perfect time to review how the plan has worked for the first two calendar year quarters to better plan for the second half.

If these benefits are not enough to convince you to make a marketing focus part of your plans for EDS, then remember one last thing: at EDS you can meet the people you already know, who know the people you don't, that can help you do things better. You can meet the right people for the first time through your personal business network, and they can help you do things better and accomplish your goals much faster than you ever expected. That's the one guaranteed benefit of EDS above all others.

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