

Edison Group – Competitive Solutions for Partner Teams

Edison Introduction

Edison Group is a custom consultancy, prepared to answer specific challenges in sales, marketing, and development. In today's rapidly changing environment, our custom approach is especially effective.

- As a content provider, we deliver competitive analysis, product and solution analysis, product testing, business value and Total Cost of Ownership (TCO) studies, customer and partner research, customer case studies, partner program support, white papers, sales enablement tools, market analysis, and related marketing content.
- As a content distributor, we use social media channels to target appropriate audiences with actionable messaging that drives intended audiences to pre-determined landing pages.

We work with technology executives to help them educate customers, to understand why customers want a product or solution, and to quantify why theirs is the best and obvious choice.

The objective of both of these activities is to enhance revenues.

How We Help Sales Teams

We help partner teams who are:

- Concerned they don't have the tools and training their partners need in order to sell more of their products.
- Frustrated their partner program might be inferior to their competitors' partner programs.
- Worried they don't understand their partners' concerns, business challenges, and what they think about the company, its products, and its program offerings.
- Uncomfortable with the lack of knowledge about how their partners make money.

Edison works closely with channel and partner teams to help them meet their goals by arming them with knowledge and tools to:

- Better understand their partner's problems and goals.
- Improve and enhance their partner programs
- Provide the incentive and tools required to address both partner and customer needs.
- Encourage partners to sell more.

Goals of Competitive Solutions

1. Strategize positioning, differentiate products, clarify value proposition, develop messaging, and plan promotions.
2. Enable the sales force to win by providing them strategies, tactics, and resources.
3. Answer specific competitive questions and challenges raised during sales process.
4. Re-invigorate the competitive spirit by creating a drumbeat of relevant competitive information, news, and topics.

Working with Edison Group

Because all of our work is customized, we go through a discovery process during initial project discussions. When you are faced with competitive challenges, the most efficient method of working with Edison and starting this discovery process is for you to send us a summary of your needs that briefly describes:

1. Your goals and what you are looking to accomplish.
2. The type of research and methodology you have in mind.
3. What results and deliverable you want to have developed.
4. A project timeline and budget range that all your requirements need to fit within.

From this, Edison creates a project understanding document that describes the various aspects of the project scope. We then work with you to enhance and refine the scope until it accurately describes your needs and expectations for the project. Once we have a mutual understanding, we create a proposal that includes project timeline and cost.

Research Methods

Edison can incorporate a variety of primary and secondary research methodologies, including but not limited to, interviews or surveys with appropriate vendor personnel, outside analysts, customers, and sales representatives; examination of existing Edison research data, hands-on product testing and benchmarking; review of many sources of publicly available information, product documentation and demos, online resources, client-provided materials, and trade press resources.

Analysis Methods

Depending on the sales tool and what is appropriate and necessary, Edison will review and analyze research data and information, and will develop competitive analysis, analyst insight, recommendations to sales, response to competitive news and events, and actionable sales strategies.

Deliverable Descriptions

Customer/Partner Needs Analysis

Through interviews, surveys, and other research, the needs analysis helps you better understand your customers and partners, their problems, concerns, and product needs. This can help you find untapped opportunities, plan your product roadmap, improve your marketing strategy, enhance your partner program, and increase market share.

Competitive Partner Program Analysis

This is a competitive assessment between the various aspects of a company's partner program compared to your competitors' partner programs. It evaluates the sales and marketing tools, licensing, training, support, events, community, investments, and benefits of the partner programs and compares them in the form of a competitive matrix.

Internal Report - Recommendations for Improving Partner Program

This report can be the result of an individual partner program analysis or a competitive partner program analysis. Topics can include key program elements, competitive comparison of programs, strengths and weaknesses of each, and recommendations for improvement and enhancement.

Internal Report - Marketing Content to Use With/By Partners

This report includes strategic information and marketing content that channel partner teams can use in promoting their partner program and in creating sales tools for recruiting partners. Topics can include value propositions, strategies, and tactics for partner account teams. The content can be repurposed by partners to use in their own marketing and sales efforts.

Customer Case Studies

Brief customer case studies on competitor tear-outs, including the business challenge, client's solution, the results, and technical implementation. Case studies can be published via WebEx recordings, anonymously via social networking channels, or via traditional media outlets.

Partner-Focused Battlecard

The partner-focused battlecard is a sanitized version of the sales battlecard, so that while intended to be used internally only by the channel partners, there would be no damage if it reached the competitors. It is a succinct guide on how to sell the product line and might include product overviews, top features and benefits, feature comparison, client strengths, competitor weaknesses, etc.

Competitive White Paper

The white paper is a public report that offers an objective third-party perspective, provides evidence that validates claims, educates customers as to the strengths and benefits of the product and what it can do for them, and promotes to the entire industry that the company and solution is the better choice. This report offers key information prospective clients need to make product selection decisions.

Sales Presentation

Augmenting and following the topics of the competitive sales guide, Edison can create a slide presentation with presenter notes for internal sales training. A customer facing version of the slide presentation can show the advantages of the client's solution and can be used as a leave-behind with customers.

TCO Study

The TCO study provides an objective review of the business value, including all credible and meaningful financial impacts, of deploying and implementing your solution rather than your competitor's solution. This report provides a framework that clearly communicates the total cost of ownership, helps your sales force articulate your solution's value proposition, and reduces your sales cycle.

Retainer Based: Compete Flash

A compete flash is a short email, sent daily or weekly to the sales force or partners, that addresses a specific competitive issue, usually from a competitor's press release, an industry news item, or a customer's question. Edison analyzes the topic, performs any research required, and provides commentary and recommendations, if appropriate.

TCO Calculator

The TCO calculator is an essential tool used to calculate the total direct and indirect costs, not only the cost of purchase, but other aspects in the further use and maintenance of the technology. It interactively demonstrates to IT decision makers your solution's financial benefits, showing a clear and compellingly business value of your solution that is meaningful and believable to prospects.

Partner Handbook

The Partner Handbook provides your partners with a consolidated collection of market, product and technology information gathered from other Edison deliverables and other sources. The Handbook is presented in a concise referenceable format and usable for an entire product line(s). The Partner Handbook can include training materials on your technologies, sales guides, competitive guides, glossaries of terms and much more.