

# Enhance your route to market

The fieldmarketing services provided by Xcelerate can help companies be more productive at a lower cost.



**I**n the current economic climate, organisations need to be more responsive, efficient, and flexible than ever before to survive. Servicing a geography such as Ireland requires the maximum use of scarce and costly resources, with the option to add and reduce personnel where and when necessary. Traditionally, organisations that require field-based personnel recruited an in-house team, either for sales or sales support services such as merchandising, and put management structures in place to control these additional resources.

It is widely believed from previous analysis that in-house sales personnel could spend less than 10% of their time selling, with over half of their day spent travelling and/or at internal meetings.

Xcelerate Marketing Services is a company that provides outsourced sales and merchandising services to companies across a diverse and varying range of industries covering areas such as FMCG, pharmacy, wholesale, financial services and many others.

Set up in 2006 to service the growing requirement from clients for access to additional and flexible resources, Xcelerate can assist in the deployment of outsourced sales and/or merchandising teams across the 32 counties.

Joe Gavin, CEO and founder, explains that the cost savings and operational efficiencies are immediately visible to many companies. The traditional in-house teams are no longer the only viable option, and in several instances, clients use a combination of both outsourced and in-house resources to maximise the opportunities and the availability of personnel.

Gavin has operated in the field of sales,

marketing, distribution and support services for over 30 years, beginning his career as a trainee manager with a major grocery multiple. From sales rep/merchandiser during the late 1970s, Gavin has built up a wealth of experience, which has covered a wide range of retail and sales related disciplines working for companies such as Quinnsworth, Avonmore, Kerry Foods and others.

In recent times, as managing director of the largest fieldmarketing company in Ireland, Gavin has assisted clients in their sales support functions. His area of expertise is assisting clients in the identification of sales support strategies and re-structuring opportunities that deliver efficiencies in field-based operations. Contract sales and merchandising is one of the key drivers of on-shelf availability and is considered to give the fastest and most measurable return on investment.

The term "fieldmarketing", which is widely used within the industry, is still relatively unknown in the wider business community. And more often than not, potential clients are not aware of the opportunities that fieldmarketing can provide.

## Fieldmarketing services cover the outsourced functions of:

- Sales
- Stock and order
- Merchandising
- Auditing
- Planogramme compliance
- POS placement
- Sampling and demonstrations
- Data capture

## Some of the reasons that organisations outsource are:

- Cost considerations
- Time savings and efficiencies
- The need to concentrate on the company's core functions
- Part of an ongoing continual assessment of outsourcing
- To bring in skills and knowledge that are lacking in-house
- To replace a poor internal service
- Company relocation prompting outsourcing
- Loss of existing staff
- Growth of company make certain functions unmanageable in-house
- Other similar businesses seem to outsource successfully



Clients can avail of outsourced services from Xcelerate on a tactical basis (short term) or on a contract basis (longer term). Typically, organisations outsource a small project that cannot be carried out in-house and having successfully completed the activity, with the benefits assessed, additional activity is approved.

Xcelerate is at the forefront of the deployment of new technology to facilitate data capture, offering clients the added option of viewing the activity carried out in the field on the company website. The fieldmarketing industry generates substantial quantities of paper from field-based activities and Xcelerate is aggressively pursuing a green agenda by allowing all information to be captured electronically, creating the capability to view and manipulate the data via the internet. Employees take information from their activity and enter it onto the Xcelerate website. They also take photographs and allocate these to each call with relevant comments and activity details.

Clients access the Xcelerate website via secure login details and can view calls carried out on their behalf. Clients can have various levels of access for different purposes as well as specific questions tabled on the day for each call to gather ad-hoc information. Data can be exported to standard MS Excel or Word packages so there is no requirement to purchase additional software.

In addition, retailers can also access the Xcelerate website to view calls carried out in their stores. In the same way, retailers can view photographs, read comments and reports and use the information to take corrective action where necessary.

## It is widely believed that fieldmarketing provides for:

- Increased time in call
- Appropriate frequency and time of call
- Greater number of calls covered in a geographic region
- Faster reaction to sudden demands for increased resources
- Higher on-shelf availability
- Less sick leave

It is believed that top performing brands are field-oriented and results-oriented, and in the majority of cases outsource to specialist experts who deliver maximum impact at the appropriate time and location.

For more information, log on to [www.xcelerate.ie](http://www.xcelerate.ie) ■