

## Success Story: Port Erie Plastics Grows Pipeline and Closes New Business Implementing Athena's Holistic Front-End Sales Process



### Client Profile

Port Erie Plastics, headquartered in Erie PA, offers complete custom plastic injection molding solutions. From start to finish, they provide manufacturing, tooling, assembly, printing, decorating, warehousing, distribution and shipping.

### Business Situation

Port Erie Plastics (Port Erie) has been an industry leader for over 60 years with an extremely loyal customer base. Historically, Port Erie has had a smaller group of larger customers that represent a good portion of their overall annual sales revenue. Port Erie relied heavily on reaching their prospects by "word of mouth" and through referrals. As a result of this current reality, Port Erie's management team believed it was critical to increase diversification of their client portfolio through the acquisition of new relationships. In addition, Port Erie understood that they lacked the internal sales resources and marketing infrastructure in order to execute this type of new business development effort effectively. They did not want to fragment existing sales resources, nor was it realistic to believe that the current sales resources could execute this type of activity in a focused and dedicated manner needed to produce the desired results.

Port Erie's sales cycles were long and complex, they required a structured process to continually stay in front of prospects and nurture relationships until they were ready to enter an active sales cycle. Their overall focus was to find a solution that would fill the pipeline with new qualified opportunities, compress sales cycle times and increase sales productivity.



*"Partnering with Athena SWC enabled us to apply a division of labor concept and methodology into our sales process. As a result, we improved sales productivity and compressed sales cycles significantly. We expect to continue our relationship with Athena in the future."*

*– Jon Connole Sales and Marketing Manager*

### A Targeted and Focused Approach

Port Erie Plastics worked with Athena SWC, a business improvement consulting firm, to leverage Athena's front-end marketing and sales support process infrastructure model. Athena's ability to create a division of labor concept between sales and marketing allowed Port Erie sales resource to focus on the active process of selling, while the infrastructure (people, process and tools) supported the front end marketing and

business develop efforts with a targeted and focused approach to keep the pipeline filled with new qualified relationships.

In addition to the quality of leads, the model allowed Port Erie with speed to market leveraging marketing automation tools that provided the ability to track and monitor prospect activity through the entire campaign, assisting sales by moving opportunities quickly through the sales cycle to close. Port Erie selected Athena as their partner for business development growth needs based

*Continued on page 2*

upon their unique approach to marketing and sales support, as well as providing a proven process model that had been successfully implemented within similar contract plastic manufacturing environments.

### Reaching Decision Makers

Before going to market, Athena needed to collaborate with Port Erie to determine the prospects that were going to be targeted. Through a segmentation and profiling process, Athena developed a highly focused, validated, custom-built prospect list which concentrated on their core business, plastic manufacturers for consumer and building construction products. Once the list was developed, Athena worked on creating a captivating message and value proposition statements for these specific target markets that told Port Erie Plastics' story and repackaged their sales offer by including an on-time delivery guarantee to qualified prospects.

Port Erie's message was utilized by Athena's outsourced model by leveraging direct mail, informational packet and email marketing campaigns. The information was delivered to decision makers and key influencers within each company and quickly followed up over the phone to qualify and convert prospects. Before call execution began, a highly qualified prospect who received the direct mail packet reached out to Port Erie Plastics to set up an initial on-site meeting for quoting. Through the process, Athena gathered market intelligence specific to the needs in the market for Port Erie Plastics' capabilities, as well as educated many new prospects unfamiliar with Port Erie's holistic, single source plastic manufacturing solutions.

### A Positive Response

The response from the market continued to be extremely positive, leading to the acquisition of two new customers within only four months of the programs inception, including many new future interest opportunities in their active sales pipeline.

## The Results



### Obtained two new customers

in just four months time period – production on a mold for one company is already underway



### Generated interest in marketplace

for Port Erie Plastic's value proposition by targeting prospects through multiple marketing mediums and prospect touch points



### Provided an outsourced process model and infrastructure

for speed to market and ability to scale regarding any future long term sales growth initiatives



### Provided technology tools to track, monitor and keep visibility

of hit rate metrics and return on investment estimates

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