

Success Story: Dawson Metal Company Partners with Athena SWC to Build Active Sales Cycle Support Infrastructure and Increase Profits



Client Profile

Dawson Metal Company (Dawson), headquartered in Jamestown, NY, is a metal fabrication manufacturer that engineers close tolerance, custom metal fabrications and assemblies. It has served an electronics, power generation, medical, marine, rail car, transportation and retail customer base for over 70 years.

Business Situation

Dawson Metal, an ISO certified company, has a record of providing the highest possible quality for the most difficult and demanding fabrications and finishes. Its unique approach to engineering involves collaborative interaction with customers to create solutions that meet their product expectations. This in-house engineering capability and support is ongoing and focuses on improving both process and quality to keep costs competitive for its customers.

Ninety percent of Dawson's business came from three core customers, representing potential risk to the stability of their annual sales revenue. They also had difficulty establishing an effective profile for evaluating new prospects. As a result, prospecting was inefficient and new account growth was slow.

Dawson's RFQ and active sales cycle process lacked structure regarding roles and responsibilities (for both internal sales engineers and manufacturing reps) which led to poor prospect qualification, inconsistent follow-up and an increasingly inefficient upfront sales and new prospect onboarding process. Dawson sought a partner who could help it develop a new account target profile, improve sales and engineering resource productivity, as well as assist with the increasing sales pipeline flow.



Our relationship with Athena has developed into a partnership that has challenged us in the right ways, to position ourselves both in our approach to how we do things and making sure we are not losing opportunities."

– Brian Gross, Principle

Diving In to the Issues

Dawson Metal Company (Dawson) made the decision to partner with Athena SWC when it realized that it needed a dedicated effort to diversify its client base with highly qualified new accounts. The company also needed to improve its continuous sales appointment coordination to keep opportunities visible and moving through the

pipeline. Athena SWC worked closely with the team at Dawson to diagnose the issues that elongated their sales cycles and provided a powerful infrastructure to develop a sustainable (front-end) sales process that could generate and manage new business development opportunities and relationships. The process would also increase sales rep productivity (both internal sales engineers

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and outside manufacturing representatives relationships) by providing more “qualified sales face-time,” and by creating greater market awareness.

RAMPing Up the Support

Athena’s synchronized Relationship Acquisition and Management Process (RAMP) provided the capabilities and enabling technologies to execute this essential new business development process. Athena’s focus on in-depth prospect qualification and development, continual contact, and market intelligence gathering allowed Dawson to reduce their reliance on external sales reps and manufacturing reps for prospecting new business. It also provided the marketing/sales support and ongoing relationship building efforts required to grow the desired market segments that would achieve a strong rate of return.

Athena worked closely with Dawson’s team and leveraged their experience in similar markets to provide objective feedback

throughout the prospect building process. Athena used this information in building targeted prospect lists and engaged those prospects through several mediums (direct mail pieces, email campaigns, newsletters, etc.), presenting a compelling, coherent message regarding Dawson Metal Company’s value and capabilities.

Managing the Pipeline

To manage the new sales leads that were generated from the marketing activities, Athena developed and provided sales appointment coordination services to assist both the sales reps and manufacturing reps with follow-up reporting to management of each active sales cycle opportunity and the monthly accountability review of each lead. Athena also manages the active sales cycle opportunity reporting, which includes the probability of winning and quantifying potential revenue of each lead opportunity and a ‘Last Touch Aging Report’ that tracks the time since the last two-way interaction with a new prospect (phone call, meeting, etc.) occurred.

The Results



Introduced \$600,000
into Dawsons active sales pipeline



Closed \$419,000
in new account sales



Improved Productivity
with improved sales team management,
quote turn around, and engineering focus



Improved Opportunity Flow
and resolution through the sales pipeline

Throughout the engagement, Athena has been able to gather valuable market intelligence that provided competitive information and aided Dawson in filling their pipeline with qualified opportunities. The response from the market has been positive and resulted in the closure of one of their largest opportunities in recent years and an increase to their top and bottom line. The process also increased the sales pipeline value to over \$600,000 in new account relationship opportunities.