

## **Growing Your Business with the Right Strategic Sales Partner: A Case Study**

By: Richard Spoon, CEO

### **Introduction/Business Situation**

For Orchids Paper Products, a leader in the private-label tissue industry, H-E-B was *the* key account they needed to expand their presence in Texas. Yet, this large regional grocery chain – actually, one of the largest independent food retailers in the country with over 300 stores in Texas and Mexico and 56,000 employees – had eluded them for years.

### **Orchids Papers Responds: A New Strategic Partnership is Formed**

Just over a year ago, a new leadership team was brought into Orchids Paper with the goal of growing the business. One of the main target growth markets for this Oklahoma-based company was Texas. But management also acknowledged that Orchids Paper's expertise lay in manufacturing, not sales – which was why they retained ArchPoint Sales based in San Antonio, Texas, as their broker in the Lone Star State. ArchPoint's key focus was ensuring Orchids product lines met the specifications required by H-E-B.

Within weeks after hiring ArchPoint Sales, Orchids Paper was in H-E-B's door with a contract to supply the private-label paper towel business sold under the Hill Country Fare label. "ArchPoint Sales is a long-term strategic partner of Orchids Paper and was instrumental in our extraordinary growth over the past year," notes Dan Daniels, Orchids Vice President of Sales & Marketing. "They know what makes customers tick and had the right mix of market expertise and strong relationships in the Texas food industry to make things happen quickly."

### **The Classic Domino Effect**

Daniels went on to explain that once the H-E-B account was secured, Orchids Paper's overall credibility in Texas soared. H-E-B is well known for its demanding product safety and quality standards as well as the depth of the audits it conducts on its suppliers and their manufacturing facilities. Subsequently, other retailers became more receptive to doing business with Orchids Paper, knowing that it had passed H-E-B's scrutiny. And it wasn't only new accounts that opened up; the volume of business with existing customers mushroomed soon thereafter as well.

"Markets within a 500-mile radius of a manufacturing facility are the 'sweet spot' for a paper company because paper goods, although light in weight, are bulky in size. Shipping costs, therefore, tend to be high," explains Tim Bramble, President of ArchPoint Sales. "Texas was strategically important to Orchids Paper for this logistical reason, as well as its strong underlying consumer base. Since it started doing business with H-E-B, Orchids Paper's overall volume in Texas has grown by 350 percent."

According to Daniels, ArchPoint Sales continued to prove their grasp of the Texas market and the competition by producing well-timed, custom solutions for the paper manufacturer and customers alike. After H-E-B, they tackled the Houston market, doubling Orchids Paper's business in this market within five months. Distribution outlets were also opened in Dallas and West Texas where Orchids Paper had previously been absent. And after the Dallas Cowboys' licensed their name for consumer products, ArchPoint Sales secured the Tackle Towels account for Orchids Paper, a product line sold throughout the state.

In addition, ArchPoint Sales recognizes the need to develop customized approaches for unique situations. For example, Grocers Supply Co. is a wholesaler that provides product to more than 650 grocery stores, 1,200 convenience stores and 200 schools in Texas. Orchids Paper was already a supplier but they knew the business was not reaching its true potential. Undeterred by the complex nature of the account, ArchPoint Sales proactively reached out to each of Grocers Supply's customers to promote Orchids Paper's products – and increased sales with Grocers Supply by 70 percent.

As Daniels explains, ArchPoint Sales provides a full range of services and is the day-to-day “face” Orchids Paper's customers see. As a practice, they provide innovative, value-added solutions to the traditional food broker model and manage the phases of the sales process from planning through execution for its manufacturing partners. This allows them to access national and global markets alike. Their competencies extend far beyond the typical local market representation that Orchids Paper had previously experienced and include support in the areas of consumer marketing, packaging, global sourcing, freight and logistics, and customer service if a company needs it.

“ArchPoint Sales never takes ‘no’ for an answer. We ran into closed doors at H-E-B time and time again before they came on board. They do a great job of representing the manufacturing side of a business while still keeping the customer's needs in mind. Their emphasis on customer relationships and the trust they are able to build with both parties is why we plan to continue working with them as we expand into other markets,” concludes Daniels.

### **Key Insights to Success When Considering Your Go-to-Market Strategy**

1. *Don't underestimate the value of relationships* – when the customer trust level is high, the invitation to bring an alternative solution is available.
2. *Stay close to customers* – knowing what's going on at your customer is critical to ensure you are in a position to respond when opportunities arise.
3. *Be a student of the industry and your products* – be an expert with deep product knowledge in a category so customers come to you for ideas and solutions.
4. *Know your competitors* – understand your competitor's products and service offerings so you can clearly differentiate your value proposition.
5. *The right strategic partner is critical* – know your strengths as well as your partner's to understand how they align to meet your business interests.

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