

## Revamping a go-to-market approach: A case study

### Introduction/Business Situation

Since its start in 2002, Chamilia has become an international leader in the customized jewelry category. Chamilia's growing collection of handcrafted beads to create bracelets, bangles and necklaces, along with a successful Disney partnership has Chamilia fast becoming an "it" brand. The Minneapolis-based company is privately held and distributes globally. Chamilia is sold through chain and independent jewelry retailers and boutiques throughout the United States, Europe, Canada, the Caribbean and Australia.

### Rethinking the sales approach

When Claudio Garcia took the reins of North American Sales and Marketing at Chamilia in early 2010, he recognized the company's rapid growth called for a new perspective on the way the company handled sales. ArchPoint COO Jesse Edelman took on the project in April 2010 and initiated a complete re-engineering of Chamilia's go-to-market approach—including the strategy, the structure and the overall interaction with customers ("what we do and what we say"). Edelman worked with Chamilia to change the value proposition the company used for positioning with customers and organized a new sales structure to support the accelerated growth of the company.

"It was a new transition on my part entering Chamilia," Garcia said. "The engagement was a series of small projects that together represented critical support and assistance for the overall sales transformation. With Jesse's insights, there were *aha moments* for each step of the way." In creating the new sales structure, Edelman and the ArchPoint team worked with Chamilia executives to:

- Establish a new customer management framework
- Define the roles and responsibilities required to support the new structure
- Screen the candidates
- Train the new sales team
- Redefine the target customer profile
- Update the Chamilia customer value proposition
- Create a process to prospect the market (where people shop, who are the "right retailers)—emphasize the impact of thinking styles of the customer that lead to closing

### Changes at the street level

Garcia credits the changes that ArchPoint supported with allowing the company to be more effective at the street level. Alesha Herbert, one of Chamilia's new account executives, met Edelman during her interview process.

"Talking to Jesse and understanding what he was helping to create solidified my decision to take the job," she said, adding that Edelman's portion of Chamilia's sales training reinforced her decision tenfold. "I had high expectations for sales training. I've done sales training at Xerox, Pitney-Bowes and the Sandler Institute. Jesse's was different. He spent time on the concepts of the Herrmann Brain Dominance Instrument® (HBDI®) discussing the four different thinking styles found in the brain, then helped identify the thinking style preferences for specific decision makers.

"The way he explained it was something I had never heard or seen before." Herbert says she uses pieces of Edelman's training in her day-to-day work efforts. "He gave us specific benefit statements for the way different people think—what those people need. I have that sheet and keep it in my car and review it before I go in on calls. If I listen to what people are saying, I can figure their hot buttons much faster and easier because of Jesse's

training.”

### **‘Helping them make money’**

Because Chamilia grew so quickly, ArchPoint worked with the company to identify their new ideal client profile and re-engineer their approach to prospecting. Prior to ArchPoint’s engagement, Chamilia sales outlets did not follow a specific profile—from gift shops or educational supply stores to premier jewelry accounts. Chamilia also re-engaged with their existing customers and hired the right sales people to build relationships with their target market.

“Moving forward, we’re focusing on jewelry stores—specifically looking at, ‘Who are the premier jewelers in town?’” Herbert said. “The 40 accounts I took over, no one had touched them or seen them since they started selling Chamilia. The benefit to the company is that I’m able to get out there and build relationships.”

The company’s refocusing its energy on what makes the most sense is creating real results for account executives like Herbert. In November when the company announced Valentine’s Day events, two stores participated. After two more months in the field, she had upped that number to 21 for Mother’s Day events.

“Previously, they may have gotten a call from inside sales, but now we’re doing some business planning. We’re teaching them how to better merchandise. We’re not dictating requirements, but we’re helping them make money,” she said.

### **‘An amazing win’**

Herbert gives Edelman the lion’s share of the credit for the success of Chamilia’s new sales strategy.

“The sales model we have today is a product of his work,” she said. “Even though I’ve been doing sales for a long time, I want to learn. I would love for our account executives to be able to hop on the phone with Jesse a couple of times a year—maybe just a 30-minute brainstorming call on creative sales techniques.”

After spending a day in the field with one of the new account executives experiencing the processes he had helped to create and implement, Edelman was pleased with the way the engagement played out.

“For us, this is an amazing win. What we did, what we put in place worked—and it worked well,” he said.

“We’re getting feedback that the changes add to our customers viewing us as a very professional and progressive organization relative to the industry,” Garcia said. “ArchPoint brought experience, benchmarking, strategic thinking and implementation to our game.”

### **Key insights to creating a successful go-to-market strategy**

1. **Don’t let growth stand in the way of change.** Too often, we wait until we’re not growing to effect change. When he started at Chamilia, Claudio Garcia recognized that, while the existing infrastructure had delivered consistently strong results, sustaining that success would require a significantly different customer management strategy.
2. **Put the customer at the forefront and let everything build from there.** When we treat the customer as a mechanism to support our brand or sell our product to consumers, we tend to ignore their needs and miss opportunities to collaborate.

Chamilia has shifted their thinking around the role of the customer. A heightened emphasis on people, selling tools and marketing support has led to more collaboration, better partnerships and improved results.

3. **You can't make change in a vacuum.** All organizations are perfectly built to achieve the results they get. If you want to deliver a different set of results, you have to make some changes. But, to make the change sticky, you have to consider all components of change—people, structure, information, tasks, reward/recognition, metrics, governance and process. When launching the new customer management framework at Chamilia, we made sure that the new organization was more than just boxes hanging on a structure. We addressed all of the elements listed above, including:
  - The profile we wanted in each role
  - How they would be compensated
  - How they would be measured
  - What geographies/customers they would manage
  - The systems and tools they would need
  - The selling process they would follow
4. **It's not a flick of the switch.** Once we put the model in place, hired and trained the people and moved to a higher level of customer engagement, the results don't come overnight. A change of this magnitude requires a level of patience, but also a willingness to tweak and optimize along the way. At Chamilia, this has included infrastructure changes, ongoing training and defined/refined selling processes.