

# Top 10 Tips to Help Your Business Maximise Sales & Profitability

Having the right tools in place to capitalise on all opportunities is vitally important to any business, as these can be harnessed to help improve sales performance and promote business growth through increased profitability.

- Benefits of giving staff the information they need
- Importance of fast order fulfilment & delivering good customer service
- Benefits of using a fully integrated multi-channel system

In this whitepaper, we observe the crucial processes your company should have within your sales operations so that you are able to maximise your revenue and further expand your business.



The main purpose of any business is to generate revenue, therefore making the sales process the most integral part of any operation by default.

Regardless of how and what a business is selling, every company will strive to ensure that their sales order processing is handled as efficiently and as effectively as possible. However with every business processing sales orders through their own chosen channels, what are the essential things that all businesses must

remember when figuring out the best way for them to manage the sales process?

Here are the 10 things we believe all businesses should consider in order to ensure sales opportunities are fully maximised and profitability potential capitalised.



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# 1. Bring Your Sales Channels Together

In today's highly competitive trading environment, many businesses will look to get ahead by taking orders through multiple different sales channels.

Whether selling through their own website, online marketplaces, retail counter, trade counter, sales reps out on the road or something else entirely, it is important for businesses to find one central location from which these orders can be processed.

The problem is that too often businesses will rely on dispersed systems to manage sales orders depending on the sales channel from which they originated. The result of this is staff time spent jumping between these systems with information having to be rekeyed across multiple unconnected systems in order for the sale to be processed. For many online retailers, the process of updating stock figures and prices can be a manual one, with staff having to log into separate back offices in order to adjust these accordingly.

Although a lot of businesses still rely on

these methods, there are multi-channel systems available that enable companies to manage all their different sales channels from one centralised location. By using one of these systems, businesses are able to benefit from greater efficiency which can help drive handling of greater order volumes and

increased profitability. So don't waste time when processing orders, ensure that if your business is selling across multiple channels that you have one central system where you can manage all aspects of your daily trading.



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## 2. Arm Your Sales Staff With The Information They Need

When looking at why sales are lost, a lot of the time this can be simply down to staff not having the right information available to them.

Sometimes this can be inaccurate stock figures leading a member of staff to send a customer away as they believe they are out of stock of an item. Other times, it may be a new member of staff dealing with a customer they never have done before, missing out on opportunities because they don't have the customer's history to hand. Although these situations may only occur every so often, these lost sales all add up to the business missing out on potential revenue and profits.

In order to cater for all situations and leave nothing to chance, it is important for businesses to ensure that each member of the sales team has the information they require to serve customers effectively. Most importantly businesses should always ensure that their stock figures are accurate and automatically updated, with sales staff provided with these live stock figures when

dealing with customer enquiries. This will ensure staff know whether they are able to fulfil an order straight away, if stock is due in, if stock can be brought in from another branch or if the item needs to be ordered in specifically for the customer.

Additionally, all businesses should ensure they have an order processing system that is able to store a detailed record of a customer's sales activity. By having this information readily available, staff who may never have dealt with a customer before will know what a customer has previously bought and the price they paid. This not only allows them to offer excellent service, but also fully capitalise on the opportunity that has been presented. Therefore by simply having stock information and customer history to hand, businesses are able to prevent certain sales from being lost.



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# 3. Get More Out Of Each Sale

One of the oldest sales techniques but still one of the most effective, sales staff making till point or checkout suggestions on items to customers can help businesses to easily add value on to their orders.

Therefore tying in nicely to providing sales staff with the right information in order to capitalise of sales opportunities, businesses should ensure that staff are able to offer related or alternative products to customers. This could be items related to the product they are buying, something they have previously been

quoted for but not yet purchased or a suitable alternative if the item they are after is not currently in stock. Whatever the scenario, companies should ensure that sales staff have the right tools in order to maximise the profitability and value of each sale through suggesting related or alternative products for the customer to purchase.



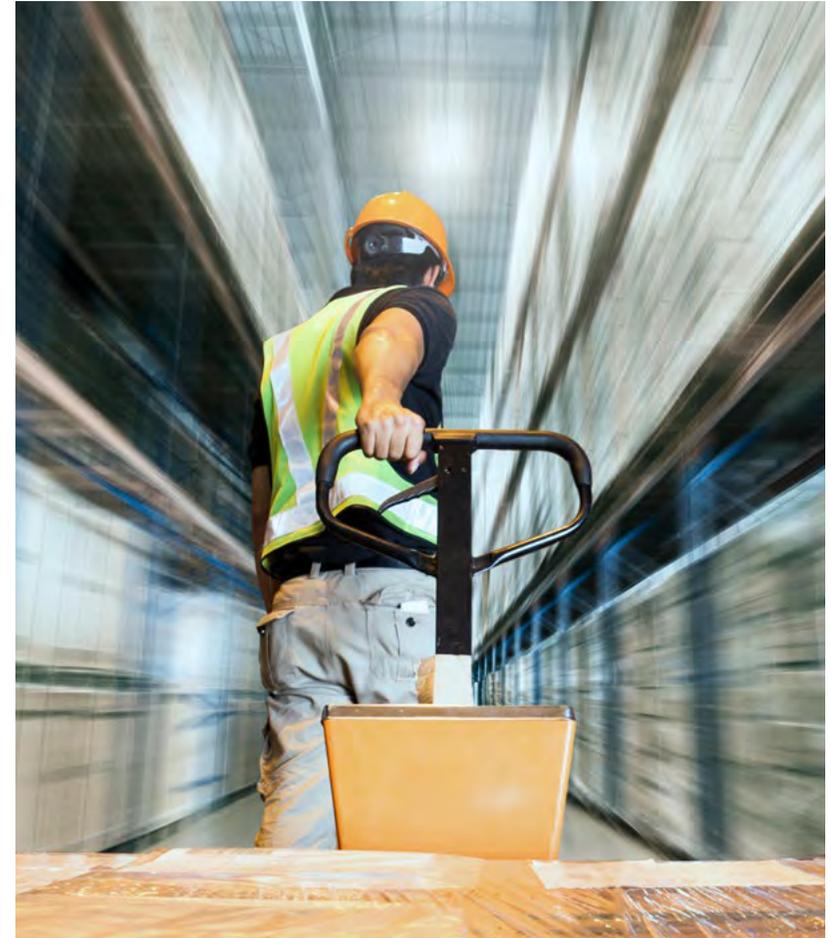
## 4. The Need For Speed

It may seem like common sense, but often businesses forget that the best way to maximise sales is to turn orders around as quickly as possible in order to accommodate for more.

The bonus of this is that whether it is an on or offline sale, fast service is good service as far as the customer is concerned. Therefore whether businesses put systems in place that allows online orders to be automatically imported when they are received or a user-friendly EPOS interface that drives faster processing, giving sales staff the tools to move sales forward as quickly as possible can only help to drive better service and better profitability.

However it is not just the actual selling of the product that needs to be

kept streamlined but also the delivery. Therefore businesses should also look to find ways to drive efficiency into their despatch process. Whether this means getting order information quickly across to couriers, efficiently transferring the necessary details over to suppliers to drop ship the items or ensuring warehouse pickers are working to maximum productivity, ensuring order despatch is kept as fast as possible can go a long way in to improving the overall speed of the sales process.



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# 5. Ensure The Price Is Right

If you ask most customers what was the deciding factor when choosing which supplier to purchase an item from, nine times out of ten the chances are they will tell you it was down to the best price.

Therefore it is vitally important that companies ensure that they have effective control over product pricing, offers and discounts.

For companies selling to both wholesale and retail customers or through different on and offline sales channels, it is likely that they will be operating with multiple different price lists in effect as they strive to produce pricing suitable for the market, match competitors and win custom. Additionally, businesses may also have current promotions running based on product seasonality and current trends. In other cases, businesses may also have customer specific pricing for their regulars that also needs to be taken into account. Although targeting different prices at different customers is the right way of working, without a structured method of managing these various different prices businesses

can struggle to handle these effectively. Therefore in order to keep customers coming back, businesses should ensure they have a comprehensive tool for managing product pricing in place.

However one of the most important sales tools businesses have at their disposal is the ability to offer discount at the right time. When trading with customers, often as a last resort sales staff will negotiate a discounted price that is both acceptable for the customer and still profitable to the business, allowing them to successfully close the sale as a result. The problem is that in order to be able to do use this tool without making a loss, businesses need clear, accurate visibility of sales profitability.

To achieve this, businesses need to ensure that the exact cost price of the item being

sold is recorded. Whether the product is imported from overseas, manufactured on-site or bought from domestic suppliers at a one-time discounted rate, companies need to ensure all product costs are accurately recorded at a transactional level in order to obtain an item's true profitability. Having this information will allow sales staff to know when they can offer customers discount in order to close sales that may have otherwise been lost.



# 6. Track Your Sales From Start To Finish

For businesses where the sales process may stretch over days, weeks or even months, it is vitally important to have the structure in place to handle this effectively.

Often when the sales process stretches over long periods, businesses can often lose track of what has been said and what has been agreed to, particularly prevalent on occasions where multiple members of staff are all working the same opportunity. This commonly results in confusion on both sides, causing the sale to be lost somewhere along the way.

To counteract this, businesses should look to use Customer Relationship Management (CRM) or Contact Management systems in order to accurately record all customer

interactions and ensure customer accounts are always managed effectively. By having a detailed history of all customer discussions, businesses can ensure that negotiations are properly handled, problems are quickly resolved and customer service is satisfactorily delivered.



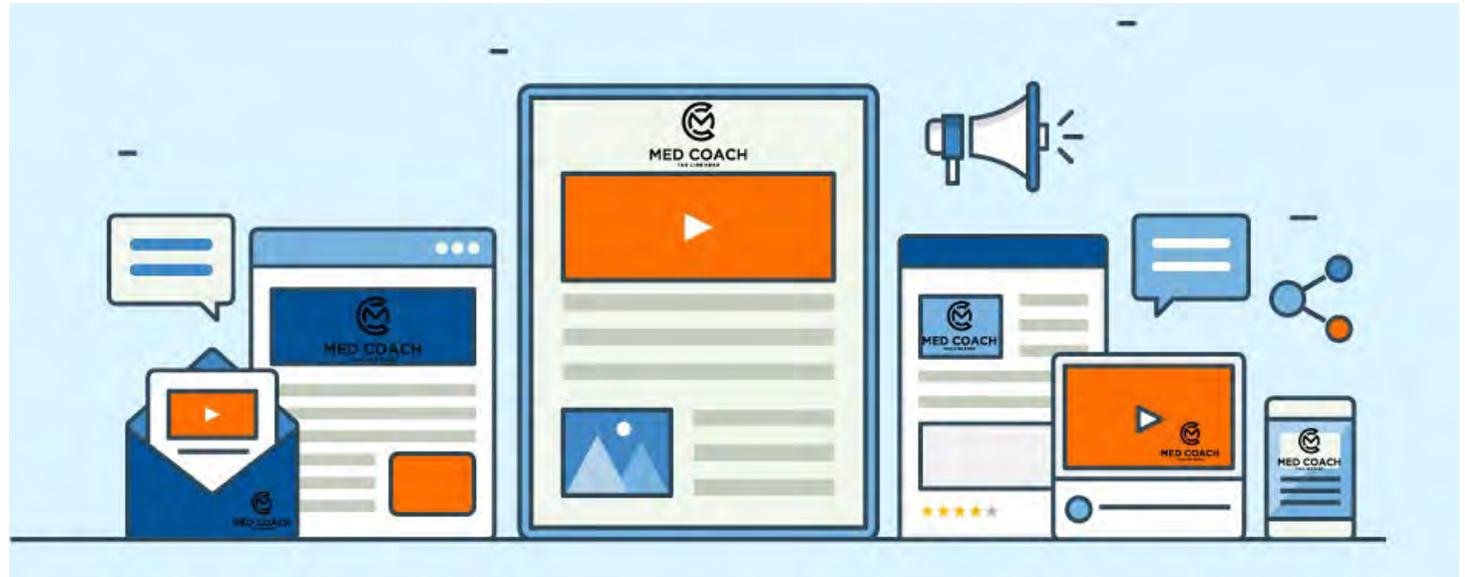
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# 7. Stationary Matters

Although so far it is clear that businesses need to ensure they have the right processes and systems for managing sales in place, what is also important is providing customers with stationary that leaves a lasting impression.

Something as simple as having clean, professional looking quotes, delivery notes and invoices, as well as sending the latter in a manner and frequency that suits the customer, can help sway a customer into making a purchase or help to ensure that they return to purchase again and again.



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# 8. Where Are Your Sales Coming From?

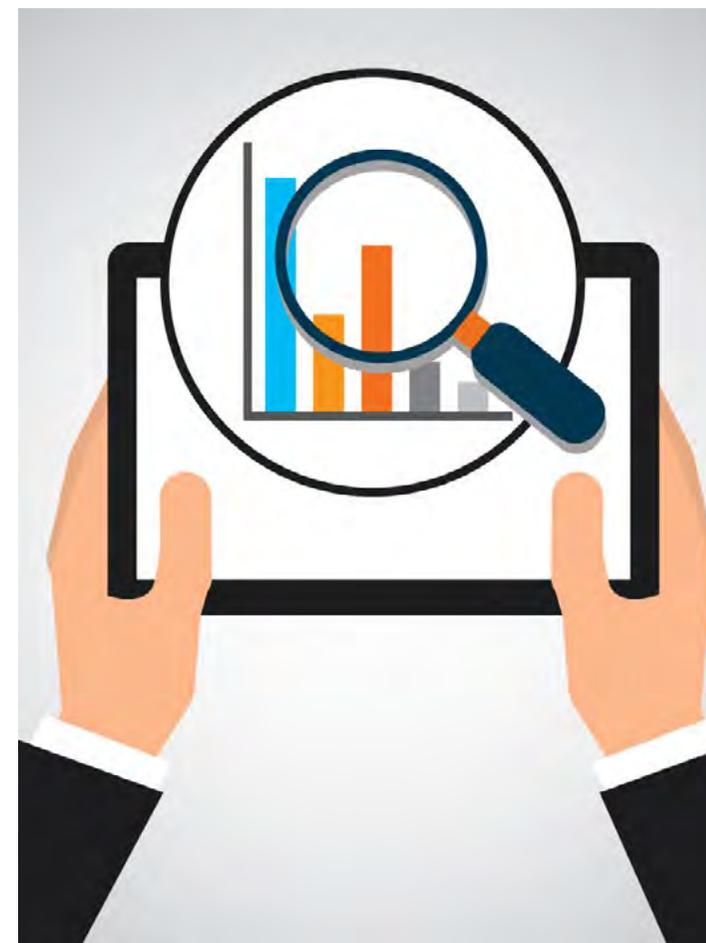
Possibly one of the most important aspects of sales is detailed, accurate reporting of exactly where sales have originated.

Too often businesses will forget to analyse their sales, meaning money is continuing to be spent on marketing campaigns, staff and sales channels that are simply not generating any sizeable revenue. Therefore it is important for companies to regularly analyse all aspects of their sales to see where costs are being incurred and further investment should be made.

When reporting on sales statistics in depth, businesses should be on the lookout for any areas within their sales performance where targets are being missed or sales figures are below satisfactory levels. Once these areas have been identified, companies should ensure they have the tools to drill down into the root of these problems – which sales reps are under-performing? Has a territory missed its target

because one account manager isn't pulling in the sales? By having a reporting tool that is able to provide the answers to why sales are the way they are, businesses can determine exactly where performance is strong and where improvements need to be made.

This way of reporting on sales also needs to be translated to reporting on the success of promotions and marketing campaigns. Businesses should ensure that when running marketing campaigns, they are able to accurately track any sales and the value that is generated on the back of these campaigns. By having this information, companies will be able to effectively track the success rate of their campaigns, allowing them to easily determine which should run again in the future.



# 9. Make The Best Of A Bad Situation

Although businesses will strive to keep volumes down, customer returns are something all businesses will occasionally encounter from time to time as part of the sales process.

Customers returning items will inevitably have an impact on business profitability, however it is important that companies have a structured method of handling these returns in place to ensure that the impact is kept minimal. Therefore businesses should ensure they have a returns process that is well organised so that costs are kept reduced and customers are

left satisfied by the outcome, whether that is a refund, repair or replacement. By solving these issues quickly and amicably with the customer, companies can ensure that returns have little impact on the overall profitability achieved.



# 10. Customer Satisfaction is Priceless

The final and possibly most important point of all is for businesses to ensure that their sales staff always leave customers fully satisfied with their experience.

Any business is able to achieve one time sales, but in order to sustain success and become market leaders, companies need to be able to promote long term buying behaviour from their customers.

However good customer service doesn't just have benefits in driving returned custom but also in generating new customers as well. If a company is trading through online marketplaces such as eBay or Amazon, feedback scores and online reviews can quite often determine whether or not that customer will be placing an order.

Therefore for online retailers, leaving customers satisfied is particularly crucial as when faced with a number of businesses all selling the same product at a similar price, consumers will naturally be driven to place their order with the retailer with the highest customer satisfaction rate. Therefore by equipping staff with the right knowledge and tools to ensure customer needs are always left fulfilled, businesses can ensure that only the best service is provided each and every time.

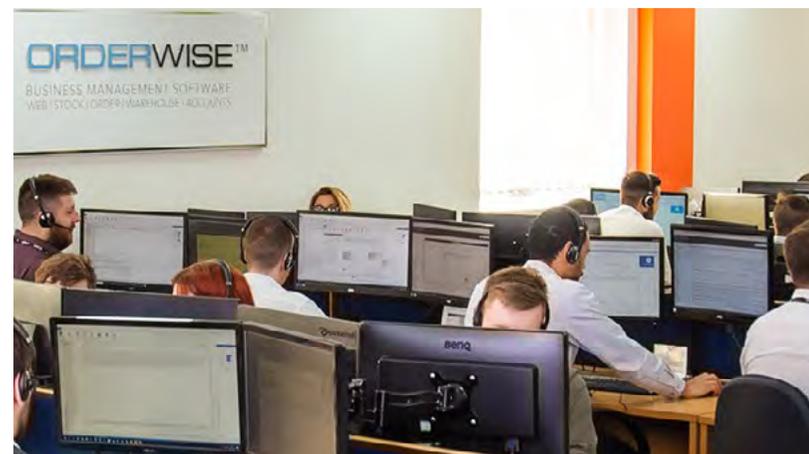


# About Us

OrderWise is a comprehensive all-in-one business management solution, designed to help businesses across all industries, sectors and sizes drive increased productivity, accuracy and profitability into every aspect of their daily processes.

Providing extensive functionality to manage all online and offline sales channels, stock control and warehouse management, purchasing, manufacturing and accounting activities, as well as offering fully integrated responsive websites, OrderWise is

a complete solution for managing operations from end to end. OrderWise are a UK based company who develop, test, supply, implement and support their business management software from their head offices in Saxilby, and have done for almost 30 years.



## OrderWise Key Facts

Companies using OrderWise nationwide	<b>1100 +</b>	OrderWise individual users	<b>15,000 +</b>
New features & functionality each year	<b>600 +</b>	Company founded	<b>1991</b>
Investments into development each year	<b>£2 million +</b>	Staff resources	<b>200 +</b>



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