

Development Options May be the Key to Boosting Your Business Goals

BY JOEFRY BEAN

Ask seven people what business development is and you are likely to wind up with seven different answers. Working with small and medium sized clients has shown that companies' definition of business development is usually based on the situation(s) they are presently in. This includes making a new sale, investing in advertising or offering a new product or service. Also, a lot of small and medium sized businesses believe that business development options or programs are only for large companies. This is not so.

What is Business Development?

Scite Labs defines business development as such: The set of efforts for identifying, researching, analyzing and bringing to market new businesses and new products. Business development focuses on implementation of the strategic business plan through equity financing, acquisition/divestiture of technologies, products, and companies, plus the establishment of strategic partnerships where appropriate.

Clients are often surprised yet pleased to learn that there are at least ten business development options they can choose from to help solve a problem or accelerate an already successful situation. However, careful consideration to where the problem areas are and where the business is currently flourishing is critical in achieving a successful outcome.

What are the problem areas or acceleration points that need business development?

Business development options can be used for a variety of reasons. Perhaps a company wishes to make long-term strategic improvements or gain a much-needed tactical "quick-win." A few common challenges and acceleration points that most often need to be addressed are:

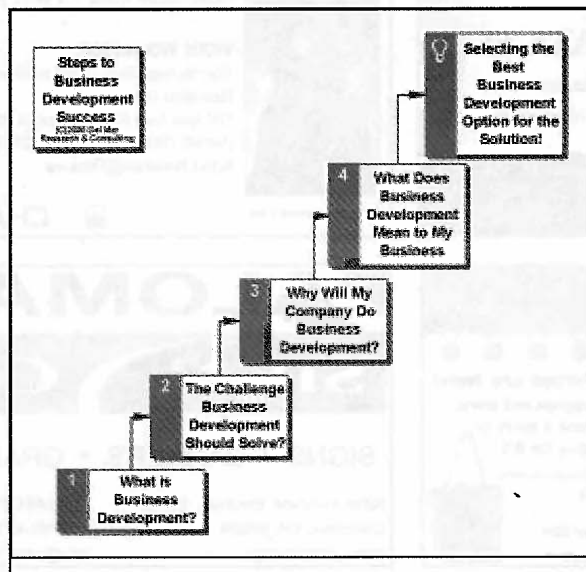
- Reduction in time-to-market and time-to-revenue.
- Improving the scalability of a company.
- Strengthening the go-to-market model for increased targeting and revenue.
- Leveraging or developing a company's brand.
- Expanding product lines, services or customer reach while reducing costs.

How Do I Know Where My Company Needs Business Development?

Understanding why and where you need business development within your company, beyond the desire to increase sales and revenue, allows your business to define the problem areas or acceleration points and their successful solutions. In order to do this, you must understand what defines good businesses development and what problem(s) you would like business development to solve.

Case in Point

After a two hour session with a prospective client who believed they could increase sales by increasing advertising, it was ap-



Case in Point

A 20-person financial services firm invested in having a very nice logo developed after being assured that this was the next logical step to their growth. While the logo developer was satisfied, the results were disappointing to the client. The recommendation: Apply the business development question and options (above) to understand how the company was going to proceed. The first step was actually finding out who their target customers were. It turned out that they did not need a logo.

The problem was they had a distribution challenge preventing them from reaching the proper clients. The company opted to select a business development option to solve their distribution problem and obtained the results they desired within 120 days.

Think about what challenges you have that may be solved through business development initiatives or how you want to accelerate your business. After looking into these areas it will help you to better determine what your next steps should be.

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parent they did not need more advertising. What they needed was to sort out their sales process. The problem was they were unable to process half of the 75 qualified leads already coming in each month. The recommendation: sort out the sales process to allow for additional capacity to address about 125 leads each month. Then select a business development option to efficiently generate an additional 50 leads.

Define What Business Development Means for Your Business

The most effective business development options include these key points:

- Business development is used to solve specific business challenges or used to accelerate targeted parts of the business.
- The business development activity is well defined.
- Determine a gear-up and wind-down time.
- The business development activity is reasonably sustainable.
- When using outside relationships, such as referral sources and alliances, there is a two-way connection in activity and benefit.
- Success can be measured (i.e. revenue, number of clients, reduced cost and/or increased profitability).