

## **Change. - Adapt and Evolve; vs Reject and Expire?**

Change is a strange thing sometimes isn't it? You wake up one day and realise something is different, something is not as it used to be - a new building has gone up where there wasn't one before, that air route you used to fly is no longer operating, your spouse or friend changed their hairstyle and you didn't notice.

Truth is, we're not programmed to notice these things – they just happen around us and one day we either notice ourselves or someone else points them out to us. Take a moment now to look around you and consider what has changed in the past week. Now think about what has changed in your environment in the past month, the past year, and even the last five years. Notice anything different?

Well change happens at all levels – micro, macro, it doesn't matter, it happens all around us. Sometimes we notice, sometimes we don't. BUT, the smart ones among us in society see these changes, adapt, respond, and gain a competitive edge over the rest of us. Those with real foresight see change that hasn't even happened yet and prepare themselves to take advantage when it does.

So what's this got to do with vacation ownership? Well, let's look at what's changed in our world. Average tour prices have risen inexorably over the past 5-10 years, the whole industry has become more professional (costs money), the brands have risen to a position of prominence, marketing has become harder and harder, new independents have become a rarity implying that barriers to entry are high.

Society has changed enormously during this same 5-10 year time period. Cheap air travel has opened up legion possibilities; global terrorism, global warming and global disasters have paradoxically spawned a new family oriented and caring society; work, work, work has turned to work-life balance; we crave more for life experiences rather than materialism around us; and technology has quietly been transforming the world.

Let's look at technology then. I would venture that we are now into the second phase of the global technological revolution.

The first phase was to do with provision of the basic building blocks – cell phones, computers on every desk, the internet, the shift from booking things over the telephone to doing these things online, email, digital TV, music downloads, blackberries. We all use these things and take them for granted.

The second phase is where these things get even more integrated into daily lives, and move to more human areas of society. Look at how the younger generation spends more time on social networking sites than they do watching TV, look at how you now check in for a flight, think about how medical science now depends on technology, think about how technology has revolutionised movie-making and your enjoyment of a movie – who doesn't

have digital home entertainment these days? The I-Phone 2 is a great example – music, youtube, GPS/Satnav, an office interface that feels anything but that. And look at how style is now becoming as, if not more, important as the technology itself. – We want beauty, we want emotional qualities, we want wonderful experiences, but we want all these wrapped around technology that is so simple to use, but so powerful in what it does.

So back to timeshare. And the good old pencil pitch. And writing upside down. And wild flailing of arms to describe a magnificent sunset over an exotic beach. And anything but subtle “incentives” to buy today. And clumsy T/O handovers. And verification officers who neatly undo nicely sold deals.

So let’s think about it. On the one hand our generation has more than tripled the average tour cost in the past ten years, and on the other, we’re going to then use the very same yesterday techniques to convince them to buy from us? Is your TV still black and white? Do bugs develop immunity to medicines? Do you still handwrite letters and post them?

Now please don’t imagine that we’re throwing the baby out with the bathwater. The sound principles of the timeshare sale still prevail. Win the prospect’s trust, create real need and desire, show how timeshare satisfies that newly realised need, create some urgency to stimulate a buy decision today, and close the deal. Only we’re suggesting that you recognise just how society has changed, and how they now want to be sold to.

We are a society that loves to buy, but hates to be sold to. So how do you sell them?

Answer – you don’t, you persuade them to buy. And you do it using the tools at your disposal today. And you do it in a way that your prospect’s expect – you entertain them, you transport them into their own tomorrow’s, you inspire them, and then show them clearly and precisely how your product will give them what they want.

Technology has now reached the sales deck. Why then is it a good thing, and how can it work for you?

Your sales people come in all different shapes and sizes, the ability to deliver a first class sale varies from one salesperson to another, from one week to another. Some people are consistently good – only problem is, there aren’t very many of these. How about if you could put something on every sales table that would deliver the perfect pitch every time, if you could then tailor that pitch automatically to match the very needs and desires of the prospect in front of you, if you could turn every salesperson into a super-salesperson every tour, every day? Something that would confidently lift your VPG by 20% plus?

How about if you could log in to your sales stats, through the web, from anywhere you happen to be, and see and compare individual, line, deck and whole company sales performances and see why some succeed and some don’t?

How about if you could ensure that for the clarity challenged amongst your sales force, you could give them an entertaining, highly visual tool that would deliver vacation explanations with crystal clear, memorable, lucidity?

How about if your tours finished up saying “that was the most enjoyable presentation I’ve seen in ages – I’m going to buy today”? And even “I’ve got to tell my friends about this”?

Interactive sales systems are now, powerful technology on the sales table. The better of those systems do it in a way that it looks and feels like entertainment rather than an office. Your highly expensive tours now expect to see things on a screen, they expect to see video if you’re selling them dreams, they expect to see graphical explanations. They think in pictures, they use the internet for everything, they have multi-channel digital TV, they want to spend time with their loved ones and families, they want experiences and they want you to paint their dreams for them and show them how you will deliver.

A good interactive sales system will enable your sales force, it will work harmoniously with them, they will trust in it. A good system will deliver graphical explanations as powerfully as your best sales person, every tour, every time. A good system will ignite the flames of desire and inspire emotion beyond belief. A good system will personalise every presentation to the desires and needs of each and every tour, changing imagery and video to match. A good system will give back end management reporting that your exec team will drool over. A good system will deliver both results and a highly lucrative ROI.

Do make sure though that you work with someone who knows the territory, knows what it takes to implement such a system, and knows what it takes to keep it performing for you. - Horse to water and make it drink?

So change? – Yes. But not change that throws the baby out. Change that builds on the well honed and refined structure of a successful vacation ownership sales pitch, and repackages it in today’s highly entertaining and fulfilling clothes. Change that integrates technology, not replaces what you’ve worked hard at. Change that protects your brand, change that delivers new power into your hands, change that consumers want to see. Change for the twenty first century sales environment. Change that will deliver refreshed and desirable results right into your hands.

Change. Adapt and evolve; or reject and expire? - Time to change?

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