Elaine Nichols

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**Professional Sales & Marketing Executive**

An accomplished and energetic sales professional with substantial experience in planning and leading large business units (sales of $4 to $120 million) and developing successful sales programs with consumer retail. An award-winning track record of improving results, increasing growth and building winning teams with accountability. Specializing in creating niche programming for current and new categories and channels utilizing a hands-on approach and ready to contribute.

* **Leader** – Strengths in communicating the mission, vision, expectations, and organizational culture combined with coaching and mentoring high-performance teams that exceed sales goals and go after new and innovative business. Utilizes creative thinking and emotional intelligence to build future leaders.
* **Sales & Marketing** – Excels at driving sales, margin, and share using an exceptional skill set to assess a situation, analyze the facts, define the opportunities, and provide a recommended solution.
* **Builder** – Utilizes a strong work ethic and collaborative management style, as well as extensive knowledge in manufacturing, OEM, distribution, direct sales, business-to-business, and retail channels.

**Core Competencies & Management Qualifications**

* **Sales Management:** Marketing & Operations Leadership • Business Creation & Development • Category Management • Team Leadership & Development • Negotiations & Contract Review • Private Brand Development • Forecasting • Visual Merchandising • Product Development & Implementation • Trade Shows • Direct importing • Sports Licensing • Extensive Travel throughout U.S., Canada, Mexico, and China
* **Financial Management:** P&L and Financial Analysis • Corporate Governance & Policy • Purchasing • Vendor Selection Revenue & Profit Generation • Budgeting • International Sourcing
* **Business Development and Execution:** Strategic Alliances & Partnerships • Strategic Planning • Operational Planning Cross-Functional Teamwork & Development • Community and Stewardship

**Professional Experience**

**CPG SALES CONSULTING** *2013-Present*

**Sales/Business Development – Consumer Retail Division**

Providing strategic leadership and sales management advisory to (13) small to mid-sized manufacturing companies for over (6) years. Responsible for establishing and maintaining a strong sales network using direct salespeople and manufacturer’s representatives. Collaborated cross-functionally with each client to manage direct line manufacturing budgets/inventory control, new product development, marketing, and expanding distribution.

* Directed retail distribution for CPG Food (Packaged/Specialty), Hardware, Construction, Health, Home Furnishings, Sports, Toy, Craft and Office, Pet Care, Lawn and Garden, Pool and Spa, Fitness, Direct Sales and Personal Care clients. Focused on decreasing sales expenses by over $4 million, while allowing for new product development, marketing, and promotions leading to increased market share.
* Developed sales programs within multiple categories. Developed a new SKU for testing at Walmart, The Home Depot, and Walgreens leading to $570,000 in first-year revenue and a line extension continuing market penetration.
* Utilized direct sales force teams, often in tandem with manufacturer representatives. Restructuring the sales organization for each client, often dramatically lowering overhead and sale expenses by 20% within the internal sales organization, while increasing revenue by over 25%.
* Developed a training outline for all new sales hires with comprehensive training handbooks. Trained and provided information for over (40) sales programs. With training, presentations, and trade shows, travel is currently over 70%.

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**FITNESS EM LLC** *2012-2013*

**National Sales Manager/ Business Development – Consumer Retail Division**

Responsible for sales within assigned account base for Consumer Division of major Fitness Accessory manufacturer. Utilized industry data through effective management of IMS, NPD, IRI, and other trade publications to create targeted campaigns and execute sales strategies across the organization that drove business profitability.

* Developed innovative and specialized sales programs within the Diet/Nutrition, seasonal, and sporting goods categories targeted to Mass, Hardware, Specialty, Drug, Military, College, Sports, Grocery and Department Store channels.
* Enhanced our marketing efforts and program development, which resulted in new distribution to CVS, Military, Supervalu and Sears for inline and test distribution leading to $675,000 in new distributor sales and 100% new buy-in by all retail accounts through our new category and merchandising programs.
* Developed an Efficient Collaborative Retail Marketing (ECRM) program for new business development and extension of 2013 programs resulting in a 45% increase of all new business.

**RAPID RACK INC.** *2011-2012*

**Director of Business Development – Consumer Retail Division**

Responsible for Sales and Marketing for the Consumer Division of a major steel manufacturer of Shelving and Home/Garage Organization. Evaluated and hired sales teams for specific trade channels and established a winning sales network through effective sales administration.

* Developed a marketing solutions program that resulted in new distribution at Walmart, Sam’s, Home Depot, Do It Best, and Sears within the Garage Organization Category resulting in a 45% sales increase.
* Utilized industry data through effective management of IMS, NPD, IRI, and other trade publications. Increased Menards Parts organizational category by gaining a Private label program in addition to the core program.
* Managed Direct Import Program with extensive international travel.

**XYRON INC.** *2007-2008*

**Vice President of Sales and Marketing – Consumer Retail and Commercial, OEM, Distributor**

Directed global sales and marketing of a $27,000,000 division of a major specialty Toy/Craft adhesive manufacturer nationally to Specialty, Toy, Box, DIY(Home Décor), Gift, Mass, Value/Discount, Drug, Direct Sales, Education, Sports, Office, School, Government, Education, Discount, Grocery and Department Store chains. Developed programs (trade spending and sales programs) for sales and distribution within the toy, office supplies, craft/décor, and DIY categories. Developed Promotional, Educational and trade events, Private label and OEM businesses for 3M, Tomy Corp, and Varitronics. Established and maintained a sales network through effective relationship management and P&L administration for the US, Canada, and Mexico Divisions.

* Developed programs with new items and line extensions, resulting in a new channel of distribution (Grocery & Drug), leading to a 15% increase in sales within the first (6) months..
* Reorganized P&L budget allocations, which resulted in an efficient ROI of $230,000 in the beginning (6) months. Evaluated promotional spending, sales tools, and account spending leading to a reduction in expenses.
* Gained distribution in Walmart for a $526,000 increase in the first (6) months.
* Coordinated and managed OEM manufacturing and distribution for our division of Tomy Toys.

**ALGOMA INC.** *2005-2007*

**National Sales Director - Consumer Retail**

Directed sales and marketing for two divisions of the Gleason Corporation nationally. Developed programs for sales and distribution within the home, seasonal, sporting, outdoor, lawn and garden, pool and spa categories, Bags and Accessories, and Promotional Products through domestic and direct import programs.

* Created and executed a new program for Kohl’s utilizing merchandising tools and industry data to gain a $1.2 million program and a 41% increase in sales.
* Developed direct import programs through China and India with new items and line extensions, resulting in a new channel of distribution within Drug & Grocery and leading to a 34% increase in sales.
* Rebranded both divisions for a new company launch to increase volume and profitability with USA-made and Direct Importing Operational Units.

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**Additional Experience**

**ELSA L/ZOOM EYEWORKS - National Account and Business Development Manager**

*Sales and account management of National Territory for Home goods/Tabletop, Fashion Accessories, and Sports Eyewear.*

**TEAM SPORTS AMERICA - National Sales Manager**

*National sales of Licensed Sports Category for Garden Outdoor/ Accessories within the NFL, MLB, NBA, Collegiate Football and Nascar for all channels of retail and specialized account base. Increased new distribution by 23%.*

**CONAIR CORPORATION – Regional/District Manager (Southwest Division)**

*$20 million in sales territories for a significant small electronics manufacturer in the southwestern U.S.*

**TONYS PIZZA (SCHWAN FOODS) – Director of Sales for DSD**

*Directed $48 million in sales territories for a major Frozen Pizza/Dairy DSD manufacturer (Tony’s, Red Baron and Freschetta). Directed lines through a broker network (Marketing Specialists) with emphasis on major grocery chains and alternative C-Channels. Received President’s Club Award and Honorable Mention for Frozen Food Month.*

**AMERICAN HOME FOOD PRODUCTS, INC. – Regional Senior Sales/Marketing Manager**

*$19 million area through direct management of 4 sales representatives and 22-man Broker and Retail sales force.
National Award winner for Sales and Marketing. Developed National Distribution Program.*

**Affiliations & Volunteerism**

**Affiliations:**

Women in the Hardware Industry Association

NACDS member and associate

Johnson and Wales Affiliate Program/Organic Studies

Fund Raising Director for Virginia Special Olympics and Virginia Cystic Fibrosis (Volunteer Services)
Texas: Cooks Children’s Hospital/Special Olympics

**Volunteerism:**

Volunteer Services Woman of the Year - Virginia 1997

Volunteer/judge for Odyssey of the Minds 1999/2000

Volunteer for President’s Council for Health and Fitness

**Education & Professional Development**

**OLD DOMINION UNIVERSITY,** Norfolk, Virginia (Bachelor’s Degree in Business Administration)

Certified Personal Trainer and Life Coach

**Professional Development:** Completed Dale Carnegie Management Seminar and Miller Heiman Management Program

Zig Ziglar Leadership Seminar/Brown Sales Training Program/Witz Training Program

Various Management & Training Conferences/Nutritional & Organic Certification