

Guarding Your Company's Reputation

For those of us that have been in the computer industry for more than 2 years know only too well that ours is an industry with few secrets. Word travels at break neck speed about a particular competitors upcoming acquisition, a major win on an accepted bid with a national account and those top players/performers within a given locale. You see, there are no secrets within the Industry just questionable decisions that can affect a company's reputation within the industry. The following scenario is true. What message are we sending the channel and how else could it have been handled?

Actual Scenario: A \$300 Billion corporation with a sterling reputation entrusts a recruiting firm to begin a candidate search for a qualified Sales Manager in a specified location. The search process begins and the best candidates are presented to the Hiring Manager for review. The interviewing process starts and before too long a hiring decision is made; a job offer is extended to the chosen Sales Manager candidate. The chosen candidate, also interviewing at other corporations within the same industry has a career decision to make and sets out to weigh his options and plans to select the strongest corporation; the one with the best reputation within the Industry. The decision made; he lands at the \$300 Billion ABC Corporation, with the marvelous reputation and embarks on what he considers a savvy career move. He has declined other sound, lucrative job offers from industry competitors and prepares for the start of his new career. Within one month, the Sales Manager is being let go from the ABC Corporation because they have acquired an industry competitor and this branch will inherit a Sales Manager from the acquired company. Can this really be happening? What message is this sending? If the ABC Corporation wanted to damage their sterling reputation, they succeeded with all involved: the recently hired Sales Manager and the recruiting firm.

And so begins the discussion within the channel about how poorly a corporation handled a particular situation (we wonder why our industry doesn't grow up)!. Certainly the Hiring Manager was aware of a pending acquisition and if not why didn't the Executive Level Managers or Human Resources discourage a hire? They probably could have postponed the hiring decision for 30 days. Not only was it a poor hiring decision, it forces the Sales Manager to repair his ego and perhaps revisit those companies that he interviewed with prior to accepting this position.

The recruiting firm will wait and see how all of this plays out but one message is clear; the ABC Corporation is definitely someone to watch. Their reputation within the industry has just been scratched and they are no longer the "Sterling" corporation they once were. They have been successful in handing their competitors something to talk about, a new secret.