

## **Resolutions For Prosperous, Productive Reselling In '97**

The holidays are a fading memory by now. Sales budgets have been approved for 1997, and additional employees have been hired to attain those projected sales goals for the new year.

Do you know how to focus your energy for 1997 to be around in 1998?

The changes and suggestions we offer will boost the selling power of your existing sales force, give them technical knowledge to become "partners" with your largest clients and bring you expertise in the area of selling services (not just giving it "lip service").

- If your sales staff has been successfully selling mostly hardware over the years, retrain them and empower them to sell services; elevate their position from an Account Executive to that of a Business Consultant.
- Do not let the phrase "retrain" or "training" scare or intimidate you. Look within your own technical staff and utilize these valuable employees to conduct short staff meetings to assist in the training process. Good salespeople have good sales skills but may need a new approach to that of selling services. The engineers can assist in laying the groundwork and can demonstrate how to ask the basic technical questions, answer many "most-asked" questions about a given product, and can help eliminate technical intimidation and boost the selling skills of the salespeople to be comfortable in the meetings with the IT managers.
- Utilize the co-op dollars available from the vendors to assist in the training process. Remember, they have a vested interest in their product and are willing to demonstrate as well as offer as much information as possible to help make the sale.
- If you view your service department and engineers as the "back-room" operation of your business, reassess their importance. These are the folks who need to be recognized and should be treated as well as your valuable sales force. They will endure, learn, gather needed certifications with the latest technology and will be the most important resource you have as your service business grows.
- If the thought of selling your business is in the plan for the next 24 months and you currently sell only hardware, have you given serious thought to what you will have to sell to a potential buyer?

We have seen this transformation into the services arena over the past couple of years as many wish to remain competitive as well as profitable.