

Decian Closes 200K Deal and Fills Sales Pipeline with eCoast Appointment Setting Service.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Decian

- Managed services and IT solutions provider
- Based in Connecticut and services the NY metro area
- Certified Avaya Business Partner

Challenge

Fill sales pipeline with qualified on-site appointments

Solution

- eCoast appointment setting campaign: 8 guaranteed sales appointments
- Ongoing program management
- Detailed lead write-ups and reporting
- Appointment scheduling and confirmation

Business Results

- 8 qualified face-to-face appointments with business decision-makers
- \$200K Cisco Unified Communications Deal
- 40:1 return on initial campaign investment

Decian, Inc. is a Connecticut based provider of managed services and IT solutions. As a Cisco Premier Certified Partner, Decian offers cost-effective and easy to use support and communications solutions for small and medium sized businesses. With a unique combination of personalized service and technical expertise, Decian built a positive reputation as a Cisco Channel Partner, and effectively landed a \$200,000 Cisco Unified Communications deal.

Challenge

Although Decian had a strong and productive inside sales team, the company was looking to obtain new business opportunities without devoting too much time and energy to cold calling and prospecting new customers. Kyle Hair, co-owner of Decian, was seeking a customized and affordable solution that would enable Decian to obtain high-quality sales appointments without a heavy amount of sales prospecting.

Selection Criteria

As a Cisco Premier Certified Partner, Decian had access to the Cisco MAP tool and was allotted a certain amount of Cisco marketing funds per year. Decian was specifically looking for an outsourced marketing campaign that could fill the company's sales pipeline with qualified appointments, leads, and prospective sales opportunities.

"The more quality deals we have in our pipe, the more chances we will meet our sales goals," said Hair. Hair was additionally looking to engage with a vendor that had significant experience in appointment setting and lead generation and had a detailed communication process in place that

would keep him in the loop at all times. After careful consideration, Hair chose to work with eCoast, a Cisco vendor with nearly a decade of Cisco sales experience.

As a Cisco vendor with a reputable name among Cisco Channel Partners, eCoast understood that Decian, like many other Cisco Channel Partners, was focused on numerous business practices, and could not devote significant time to marketing activities. eCoast designed its engagement process to be straightforward, providing the partner with a designated eCoast Channel Marketing Program Manager to maintain consistent contact with the Channel Partner, manage all processes and campaign details, and set rigorous campaign expectations.

Solution

eCoast provided Decian with an eight appointment play, a telemarketing campaign that guarantees eight on-site, face-to-face appointments with business decision makers, technical decision makers, or C-level staff. The campaign could be customized to suit any Cisco technology, and Decian chose to focus on positioning Cisco Unified Communications and Cisco Security to a calling list of just under 1000 records.

The calling list, included in the price of the campaign, was provided by eCoast, and was formulated around certain criteria provided by Decian including: company size, target geographic location, target contacts, and target vertical markets. Cisco Certified Sales Experts calling on behalf of Decian were tasked to identify a clear purchase opportunity within a 12 month purchase timeframe and schedule an on-site



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Kyle Hair, Co-owner, Decian

appointment or demonstration for a specific date and time. Any instance of channel conflict was to be noted and avoided.

“The engagement process was simple,” said Hair, “the statement of work allowed everyone to be on the same page with targets, geography, and our Cisco technology focus.”

Along with bi-weekly phone calls and ongoing reporting, Decian was to receive a final report detailing all leads and appointments obtained throughout the duration of the campaign. Jay McCarthy, Channel Marketing Program Manager at eCoast, was responsible for managing Decian's eight appointment play, and was Hair's sole point of contact throughout the campaign. McCarthy provided Decian with regular campaign updates and ensured that Hair received all lead write ups, appointment invitations, and appointment confirmations.

The eCoast appointment setting campaign differed from a typical lead generation campaign in that all leads and opportunities were highly qualified and profiled before being transferred to the client. As the program manager, McCarthy reviewed the details of all relevant calls, and ensured that each of Decian's guaranteed face-to-face appointments was highly qualified and truly interested in direct sales engagement, before approving the lead and passing on the lead information over to Hair and his sales team. Each profiled opportunity and detailed lead write up came from a Cisco Certified Sales Expert, was approved by the Channel Marketing Program Manager, and contained business intelligence about decision makers, business drivers, purchase timeframe, and funding situations.

Results

A Smooth and Efficient Process

With the help of the eCoast inside sales team and appointment setting experts, Decian received eight qualified face-to-face appointments with companies in their target market and closed a \$200K Cisco Unified Communications deal with a large, nationwide non-profit organization.

The eCoast appointment setting campaign allowed Decian's sales team to focus their efforts on their current pipeline and leave the cold calling and prospecting to the Cisco specialized sales representatives. Hair was very pleased with the arrangement, and thought it gave his sales team the time and dedication needed to grow his business.

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The Cisco sales representatives were also responsible for the appointment setting process which included sending an outlook meeting request to all parties involved and calling to confirm the appointments prior to their occurrence. “The confirmations were just what we needed,” said Hair. “They assured us that our face-to-face meetings were worth our while.”

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Kyle Hair, Co-owner, Decian

Quality Guarantee

Hair and his team at Decian were also very impressed with eCoast's lead qualification and quality control processes. McCarthy noted that participating in an outsourced demand generation campaign can cause partners to become discouraged if they receive a lead that they felt did not meet qualification standards or align with the lead write up. The eCoast quality control process gives the partner the opportunity to provide feedback to the eCoast calling team. If any leads were deemed unsatisfactory by Decian, eCoast would immediately address the issue and work with Decian to replace the lead or determine if a nurturing strategy should be implemented.

“eCoast definitely tries hard to get us great leads, and we have to remember that it's a two way street. We have to do our part, and keep the lead strong and relationship going,” said Hair. “We recognize that not every lead will turn into a \$200k deal, but we have seen excellent quality leads coming from eCoast, leaving it up to Decian to close deals. eCoast has been more than fair with replacing leads.”

Program Results, Deal Registration and ROI

Despite a downturned economy, Hair and his sales team at Decian approached sales opportunities with an optimistic outlook. Hair stressed the importance of closing business deals and noted that many channel partners might not perceive leads with a 12 to 18 month purchase timeframe as positive opportunities. Decian, however, saw such opportunities as beneficial, and decided to focus their lead nurturing efforts on building relationships while remaining patient.

Decian went on all sales appointments eCoast scheduled for the company, and was able to identify potential deals early in the sales cycle. The company additionally took advantage of Cisco's deal registration program, otherwise known as the Opportunity Incentive Program (OIP), and registered a potential deal early in the sales process. The OIP program provided exclusive discounts to Decian, creating a competitive advantage that ultimately enabled the Decian sales team to beat out the competition on a greenfield Unified Communications deal with a large non-profit organization. The deal was valued over \$200,000, and earned Decian nearly a 40:1 return on their campaign investment. Hair reiterates the importance of the OIP program in stating that “we were able to register a deal and utilize Cisco OIP channel pricing which allowed us to ultimately beat the competition and win the deal.”

Next Steps and Lessons Learned

By leveraging eCoast appointment setting and taking full advantage of Cisco Partner programs, Decian was able keep their experienced sales team in front of more new clients, fill their sales pipeline, and close valuable business deals.

Hair was very pleased with his appointment setting campaign and was looking forward to working with eCoast again in the future. “We will continue to use eCoast and their appointment setting plays because the results are easy to track and act upon,” he said. Within months of closing the successful eight appointment play with eCoast, Hair utilized additional MAP funds to purchase a 16 appointment campaign with eCoast.