



NEW PRODUCT TRAINING AND LAUNCH KIT FOR APARTMENTGUIDE.COM

CHALLENGE

PRIMEDIA was focused on shifting from a print-centric media company to an online media company. New online products and product enhancements for www.apartmentguide.com were a major focus. Since product development had not been a priority in previous years, the company lacked a repeatable process for launching new products to field sales as well as current and prospective clients.

Product launches were often done in pieces with training regarding the nuts and bolts of the product coming first and product positioning customer-facing sales tools coming much later in the process. The field sales organization wanted product training to be delivered in conjunction with a launch kit of customer-facing tools to begin conversations with existing and prospective clients.

ACTIONS

- Researched existing webinar vendor and established an account.
- Developed timeline for project management office to build comprehensive product launch timeline.
- Included touch points in timeline with Product Management, Sales Operations and Sales Readiness teams.
- Wrote product training module in PowerPoint.
- Developed product positioning in conjunction with Sales Operations team.
- Trained customer service team prior to launch to sales to ensure that all corporate support teams were aware of features and benefits of new products as well as steps to fulfill product purchases.
- Wrote customer-facing sales materials including PowerPoint, customer letter, detailed product business rules document and product FAQ document.
- Developed a waterfall training approach for sales teams to start at the top with RVPs of sales and work down to front line account managers.
- Developed internal communications plan for product training and launch kit and executed plan.
- Led 10 different webinars to train over 400 front line sales people spread across 75+ local markets.
- Developed survey using Zoomerang to gain feedback from sales teams after training was completed.

RESULTS

- Delivered the first ever comprehensive launch kit for a new product launch including training material, FAQs, business rules and customer-facing sales material.
- Based on a survey implemented after the training:
 - 95% of front line account managers felt that they had a strong understanding of the new product launch after one training session.
 - 98% felt that the waterfall methodology used for the launch and training was effective and sales teams were thrilled to have the first launch kit.
 - Sales said, "It was the best product launch ever for Apartment Guide."