

# A SCIENTIFIC APPROACH CREATES MORE CONVERSATIONS FASTER

## THE SITUATION

"We want to develop a structured approach for creating a Marketing engine," were the words Mike Ferris, CEO of Abacode said when he first connected with VisionEdge Marketing. Founded in 2014 and headquartered in Florida, Abacode is a Managed Cybersecurity & Compliance Services Provider (MCCP).

The company combines leading technologies and professional services to implement holistic, framework-based Cybersecurity and Compliance programs for clients throughout the world. Their unique business model empowers organizations to make objective and reasoned security investments based on their business needs, budget, and risk tolerance, ultimately transforming their cybersecurity challenges into a competitive advantage. Abacode enables clients to implement a Cyber Capability Maturity Model and consolidate all cybersecurity initiatives under one roof.

With cybersecurity and compliance as a top priority for every organization, Abacode is well-positioned to take a leading position in the industry.

## THE NEED

Mike expanded on their goal. "What we needed is an overarching measurable plan with a well-defined strategy and implementation process that with your help we can successfully deploy."

For Mike and his leadership team, once a plan was developed, it was important to have visibility and a repeatable process. "We want to be able to know what is and isn't working," added Mike. "As a CEO, I understand that there is an art aspect to Marketing but it's important for us to "marry science and art."

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The science behind the art and a way to assess whether the plan and corresponding tactics are on track, was a crucial need for the Abacode leadership team. While the company had solid

players on the internal team to help with implementation, the science of Marketing and someone to lead the team were gaps the leadership team wanted to close.

## THE DECISION

"We wanted to work with a firm that could speak the language of the C-Suite and collaborate with our existing team," said Mike in explaining why Abacode chose VisionEdge Marketing (VEM). The Chief Revenue Officer (CRO) was familiar with the firm and made the introduction. After the leadership team met with VEM, they believed they had found a firm that could implement a plan and structure to make Marketing relevant to the business; was well versed in strategy, planning, science and process; and, could mobilize the existing team. This was especially important because the current team members were operating without performance targets, or a structured process.

## THE PROCESS

There are many entities in the cybersecurity and compliance space with a wide range of offers. As cyber-attacks continue to rise, there is a lot of noise and need. Therefore, it was important for Abacode to be able to quickly articulate the company's differentiation and value.

The first step in the process entailed VEM meeting with key internal

stakeholders. This included conversation with the CEO, CFO, COO, CIO, CRO and members of the sales and marketing teams. This step helped clarify priorities and areas of focus.

Once this step was completed, a series of virtual sessions were held to refine the positioning, messaging, market segmentation, profiles, and strategy. Three key market segments were selected, specific strategies and connection and conversation performance targets were defined for each market.

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An implementation plan, referred to as the tactical specification (spec), was then developed. The spec detailed the cadence of content, touches and channels to support each strategy. Once the specification was approved, a scorecard and dashboard were developed to track and report on results.

The team employed a sprint process to support the cadence, reporting weekly on results. "The VEM approach of putting a playbook in place and using

the sprint process to mobilize the team helped move the ball steadily down the field," said Mike.

## THE RESULTS

In only 4 months, Abacode had a repeatable process, structure, plan, strategy, and tactical specification completed and deployed. The cadence was effective, enabling the Marketing team to meet its targeted conversations, with 90% of the conversations accepted by the sales team and moving forward. Mike believes the results met his goal of "having an effective, measurable plan and performance targets in place."

Mike added that as a CEO, he would recommend the following to any leader taking a similar journey:

1. Be committed to the science. It may take time but it's a perfect illustration of slowing down to speed up.
2. Align Marketing to the business. Know what your business needs to win and make sure Marketing understands how success is measured.
3. Make measuring a part of the day-to-day work not an afterthought.
4. Invest in processes and tools to support the team and enable the work.

## ABOUT VISIONEDGE MARKETING

Our purpose, simply stated, is to help our customers use data, analytics, process and measurement to accelerate growth, create customer value, and improve performance.

VisionEdge Marketing, founded in 1999, is a trusted expert that brings processes, methodologies, and best practices designed to help you achieve your growth goals faster and with greater confidence. Our core capabilities in data-derived insights, strategy, customer-centricity, performance management and operational excellence, deliver results, close the gaps and upskill your team.

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