A Pattern vocabulary for product distribution (EuroPLoP 2009)

Allan Kelly - allan@allankelly.net

1 Abstract

This paper aims to codify the vocabulary used for discussing the marketing and distribution channels used by software companies. Many of these patterns will exist inside companies but are not explicitly recognised, they exist only as tacit knowledge or embedded in practice.

The vocabulary presented here is part of a larger pattern language by the same author. The patterns presented here focus on product distribution:

- Branded Shops
- Named Sales People
- Internet Store
- Independent Retail
- Local Guide
- White Label
- Wholesaler

These patterns are intended to fit with the author's earlier work (Kelly, 2005b, Kelly, 2005a, Kelly, 2006, Kelly, 2007a, Kelly, 2007b, Kelly, 2008) in building a pattern language of business operations and strategy.

2 Audience

The patterns given here are intended for those creating and applying corporate strategies. This group includes: existing managers, future managers and entrepreneurs as well as those studying to take on such roles.

The author has chosen to confine the domain and context of these patterns to software companies for two reasons. Firstly this is the domain the author knows and has experience in. Secondly, limiting the domain helps maintain the brevity of the patterns. Still, many of these patterns, and others in the series (Kelly, 2005b, Kelly, 2005a, Kelly, 2006, Kelly, 2007a, Kelly, 2007b), may be applied in contexts outside the software domain.

3 A route to market

Creating a product is only part of the story; you need to get the product into customers' hands. Or rather, you need to put the product somewhere where potential customers will find it and can hand over their hard earned cash in exchange for your product.

The nature of the product, the nature of your customer, price and a host of other factors will affect the best place for your product to be seen and sold. Getting it to this place is referred to as a *route to market*.

Just getting a product in front of customers can be a big challenge. Getting it in front of the right customers, at the right time, with the right presentation is an even bigger challenge. Get it in front of customer at a time they are unlikely to buy is a waste of your efforts. Get it in front of them when they have a real and pressing need and you will be able to charge far more than presenting it at a time when they see the advantages but don't need to buy.

These patterns document a few of the many possible *sales channels*. Innovative companies regularly inventing new channels, some are successful and some not. Each channel will have advantages and disadvantages and each comes at a cost. A direct sales force might be able to command the highest prices for your product but is also expensive to employ. A retail sales approach may generate a thousand times more sales but at a fraction of the price.

Perhaps the first question facing an entrepreneur is whether their product will be sold directly to customers or through an intermediary. Both approaches have advantages and disadvantages, and both are applicable when selling a high tech product like software. Still, there is a decision to be made.

4 Channel Patterns

Each channel is subject to a multitude of forces – effectiveness, existing market structure, accessibility, timing and more. Unpacking each channel in detail would require patterns which are significantly longer than most of those in this series. Some forces, consequences and details of the solution are omitted for the sake of brevity and readability.

The patterns presented here provide a vocabulary for later patterns that will explore the selection of channels and the interplay between them. Figure 1 shows the connections between the patterns, while Table 1 and Table 2 contrast the patterns.
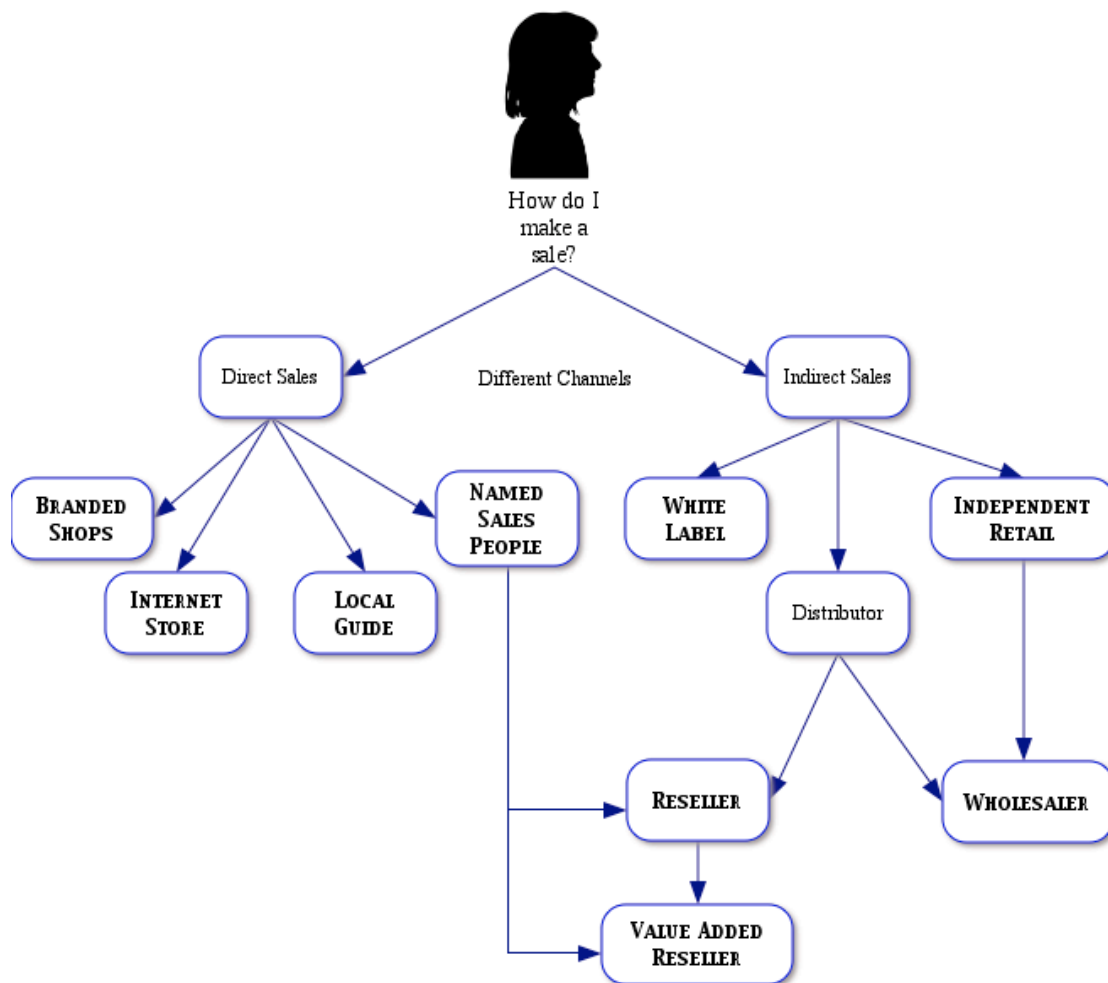
Figure 1 - Map for distribution patterns

There are at least three views of each channel:

- The product producer
- The channel owner
- The customer

In keeping with the overall audience for this paper, these patterns are written from the perspective of the **product producer**.

Table 1 - Comparison of direct sales channels

	Advantages	**Disadvantages**	**Example**	**Notes**
BRANDED SHOPS	Complete control of sales process. No middlemen to share revenue with.	Expensive to operate Require management time and attention. Slow to launch.	Apple, Vodafone, Telstra	
INTERNET STORE	Massive international audience. Quick to set up.	Customers spending tens of thousand of dollars will expect more than a download.	Grisoft Anti-virus software	
NAMED SALES PEOPLE	Good for high value sales when customers expect attention	Expensive to build and maintain. Takes time to set up.	Oracle	Common for Enterprise Software.

Table 2 - Comparison of indirect sales channels

INDEPENDENT RETAIL	Retailer has record of selling products.	Little control of how product is presented, priced and sold.	Best Buy, DSG	
WHITE LABEL	Can address additional market segments and opportunities. Can help protect own brand.	Brand owner controls customer relationship and can change providers.	Virgin Mobile	
LOCAL GUIDE	Has access to potential customers.	Takes cut of revenue for little added value.		Used in conjunction with Direct Sales Force or VAR.

VALUE ADDED RESELLER	VAR has customer relationships, sales force, professional services.	VAR control customer relationship. VAR may have other objectives in a customer relationship.	Oracle have over 300 VARs[*]	All VARs are not equal, it is important to find one appropriate to your product.
WHOLESALER	Reaches more independent retailers	Even less control on sales. Little contact with final buyer.	Entertainment UK	

---

[*] On 30 December 2008 Oracle's website list 308 value added resellers in worldwide. (http://solutions.oracle.com/SHARED/PartnerCategory/ValueAddedReseller/Items

5 Patterns of Direct Distribution

All companies need to sell; if they don't sell they don't last long. The patterns in this section look at how a company can go about making their own sales. Many more sales models exist than are covered here, many of these deserve a pattern in their own right but space and time impose some constrains. Innovative new sales models are regularly invented but for software companies a few patterns appear again and again.

Of course that means the company needs people who do the selling, a sales team.

When the company uses technology, like a website, to make a sale, the sales team does not actually make the sale. They provide the technology and content that leads to the sale. Yet in most sales models the sales team actually make sales themselves - in which case they are often called the *sales force*.

There are many different types of sales model and correspondingly many different types of sales force. Some walk a shop floor, others sit in call centres and some knock door-to-door. In the enterprise software market named sale men are the norm.

When a company manages their own sales they controls the sales process. They also pay the costs of sales. So it is important to ensure the cost of making a sale can be covered by the price charged for the product.

It is seldom worth using a direct sales force to sell consumer products. The value of the sales doesn't support the model although there are exceptions: Real Estate Agents sell houses directly to customers and some financial products like life insurance are still some door-to-door. The number of products that are sold in this fashion has been declining in recent years as customers become more knowledgeable and channels like the Internet provide other options.

5.1 BRANDED SHOPS

5.2

Figure 2 – The largest Apple store in the world on Regent Street, London

The Apple store on Regents Street in London says as much about the Apple lifestyle as it does the products. Located with fashion brands like Burberry, Armani, Jaeger, Hugh Boss, Banana Republic, and Zara, the store feels more like a Starbuck than a computer shop.

The store sells Macs, iPods, iPhones and other Apple related products from other companies. Customers can see and feel products before they buy them; it is also a place to get Apple equipment repairs, and talk to experts at the Genius Bar.

Physically it is less 6,000 miles from the nearest Fry's but style wise it is over a million.

Context Your product is aimed at a mass market - the consumer (B2C) market and possibly some business (B2B) customers. There is more to selling the product than a simple transaction. Maybe the customer needs to buy a subscription – such as when buying a mobile phone. Or maybe, like Apple and Sony, your product is something of a special brand and customers need specific advice before they purchase. If consumers cannot buy your product easily they may well buy a competitors product.

Problem **How do you sell directly to a mass market while controlling the retail experience?**

Forces When selling through an independent retailer suppliers loose control of the customer experience. Online selling is a transactional format, it is hard to create an overwhelming experience. But, for some products the sales process is part of the product – either by design or accident.

Potential customers are significantly more likely to buy if they can touch, feel and experience your product before they purchase but

physical contact is needed for this to happen.

It might be possible for middlemen to sell your product but your brand will be better promoted if you control the sales process. Selling through a third party middleman reduces the revenue you receive, looses your control on the sales process and how your brand is presented.

Therefore...

Solution   **Open your own shops under your own name with your own staff.** Only sell your own products and those that complement your products. You get to control the sales environment, the promotion of your products and preserve your brand; your staff are knowledgeable about your products.

Retailing is a very different business to technology product development, so hire people with retail experience to guide your retail strategy at a senior level. On the shop floor hire people who understand technology and can speak with customers.

Select sites that match your company image and the style you wish to project even if these are not the cheapest available. Undertake some experiments in retailing before rolling the concept out on mass. Set up a first experimental store, see what consumer reaction is and incorporate feedback before committing to expensive leases and staff.

It is unlikely that your own shops will completely replace other sales channels. Shops provide an additional channel and some image enhancement so keep your other channels. Seek ways to extract synergies from the two. For example, this author visited his local Apple shop to buy a cable. The cable was not in stock but the assistant e-mailed him a link to the online store where he could buy the cable while they talked.

You will need to determine a pricing strategy for shops relative to other channels. If you want the shops to stand alone and demonstrate a profit in their own right you will probably need to charge higher prices to justify the retail costs. So your product may sell at one price on the internet and another over the counter.

Consequences   Controlling the physical sales experience allows the seller to generate emotional investment in the product, thus increasing the chances of a sale and creating more opportunities plus-one sales (up selling). You are able to create an image of exclusivity around your brand and control product positioning.

Providing an enveloping sales experience – physically and emotionally – is particularly advantageous when persuading a customer to change an element of their lifestyle. For example, switching from Windows to Mac or changing cell-phone provider. By simply entering an Apple or Vodafone shop the customer has started their product experience.

Allowing customers to physically handle a product and ask

questions of knowledgeable staff help customers to appreciate the product and address their doubts and questions. Customers get good advice and are helped in selecting the right product for them without the confusion of competing brands. Your corporate relationship with the customer starts in the shop.

Running you own shops allows you to control the sales experience and process, and position your brand. BRANDED SHOPS help raise the profile of your brand and provide opportunities for additional sales and customer services.

There is no middleman to share the revenue with or discount your product against your wishes. But expanding a chain of own brand shops takes time and sales will increase more quickly if independent retailers are allowed to sell your products.

If prices are higher in the stores than online customer may visit the stores, examine the products then purchase online. The stores contribute to the purchase decision but this does not show in the sales figures.

Owning your own stores is an expensive option and a major distraction for technology companies. Retail is a different business to technology and requires different skills and experience.

Variations   Classic department stores have long rented space to brand names in cosmetics and clothing. In the UK, 3 – the fifth mobile telephone operator and part of Hutchinson – has copied this model. 3 sell through concessions within the existing stores of non-telecom retailer Superdrug. This provided the company with a presence on the high street quickly and at a lower cost, although at the loss of some visibility, brand promotion and environment control.

While some companies, like 3, use BRANDED SHOPS early on to build brand awareness others, like Apple, start with an already established brand they wish to expand.

Examples   Apple, Sony, Vodafone, AT&T and Lego have followed and fashion brands like Prada and Benetton.

Other companies like BT in the UK have used BRANDED SHOPS in the past but discontinued them. Telstra in Australia are, at the time of writing, experimenting with "Telstra Life" shops.

Also known as

Related patterns

Sources

5.3 NAMED SALES PEOPLE

Figure 3 – Everyone knows what a salesman looks like

Owen was a salesman. You rarely saw him in the office but he had frequent flyer miles coming of his ears. He sold telecoms software to some of the biggest operators in Europe. He wasn't alone, the company had another half dozen like him. The CEO would have liked more, they even recruited more, but those who couldn't sell didn't stay long.

Commission payments meant that when times were good they were very very good, and when times were bad... well, a good sales man knows how to sell himself above everything else.

Context   Complex software products, particularly those which are innovative - like enterprise software - require a more sophisticated sales approach than is possible with the Internet alone. When your product is highly specialised, technically advanced, and/or very expensive each sale becomes more complex.

Problem   **How do I sell a complex (and expensive) product to corporate customers?**

Forces   Sales with large price tags to corporate customers take time: potential customers need to be identified, contacts made and cultivated, demonstrations provided and business cases written. But the Internet and retail selling is very transaction oriented. It is difficult to develop the necessary kind of relationships online.

There is more to selling these type of product that simply showing

the customer the product.   The product may be new and novel, it may not be obvious what the product can do for the customer let alone the value it can generate or money it can save.

Buying such a product involves more than just taking delivery. Existing systems and process may need to change; old and new systems may need costly integration, jobs may be created or lost as a result of such decisions.

Committing to such a product may be a strategic decision for the company and may involve years of commitment. Then there are competitors who would also like to make these sales.

Selling into a corporation requires a pro-active approach. Large companies have many mechanisms to stop employees spending the company's money and ensuring expenditure is approved and generate value. And corporate customers are likely to have a number of suppliers chasing after their budget.

Therefore...

Solution **Employ your own sales force of specialists to sell your product to customers directly. Assign named individuals to named customers and allow them time to understand the customer.**

By employing the sales force yourself you can target the customers you think will benefit from your product. Selling is a person to person act, its about getting in front of the right people, having the right image and a good relationship. When you employ your own sales force you control – and take responsibility – for the relationship.

Over time the relationship between your staff and the customers will become as important, or even more important than any sales transaction – as described in IT'S A RELATIONSHIP, NOT A SALE (Rising, 2002). Your organization will own the customer relationship so there is no middleman to take a cut, control the information flow or take the customer to a different product.

The more a sales team focus on their customers and market the greater their chance of success. Help them do this by dividing up the prospects. Start dividing by sector, geography or deal size to meet your business objectives.

When you sell more than one product you will need to decide whether to divide the sales force between customers or products, i.e. should one sales person sell all your products to one customer, or will sales people specialise in particular products. If the latter you need to avoid confusing customers who find themselves dealing with several different people at your company.

Different types of sales people may be appropriate at different times of the sales pipeline: call centre staff may identify and qualify leads, a SALES/TECHNICAL DOUBLE ACT to meet the customer and make the case, a single sales person to close the sale, and an ACCOUNT MANAGEMENT specialist to follow up and secure future sales.

Anecdotal evidence suggests making a small sale to a big company can be as difficult as making a big sale so don't shy away from big sales. Focus on the biggest deal when there are many open at once.

The job title "Sales man" or "Sales person" can trigger immediate resistance in some people. You may give your sales people a euphemistic title such as "Commercial Account Manager".

Consequences   When you control the entire sales process, you can give high value customers individual attention to address their needs and concerns. You can decide which customers and contacts are worth pursuing and spending time on, and which should be passed over (or directed to another sales channel.)

The direct sales approach allows time for outlining the benefits of a product, the technology behind it and how companies can get the most value. The sales process may need to discuss corporate changes that result from product adoption.

When a purchase is a major, or even strategic, decision for a company – for example adopting SAP – customers will need reassurance that your company will be around for the entire life of the product. Customers may want to know about your cash flow, sales prospects, management team and investors to reassure themselves.

Your sales people can help potential customer navigate their internal controls and help them show how your product delivers value above the price you are asking. They can also monitor competitors' progress with the same customers.

Employing your own sales force is expensive so it only cost-effective for high value products. When a market starts to commoditise prices will be driven down and sales tactics will need to change to stay cost effective. Migrate low margin sales to the Internet, distributors or other low cost channels so your sales force can focus on the relationship and high end products.

It is normal to reward sales staff with a significant commission on the sales they make. Although they may get a very low base salary (or even none). Sales staff are often goal directed individuals who are motivated by money. Such a reward structure can be at odds with the relationship approach.

A sales force that is out meeting and listening to customers will be gathering information. Most of this will be sales information and needs to be fed into what ever system the company uses to manage sales. Other information may be helpful to product managers, development teams and top-level management. However, sales staff are unreliable reporters as they are chasing sales. Relying on what sales staff report alone can be misleading so cultivate multiple information sources.

Variations

Examples   This approach is often used by producers of enterprise software like Oracle and Microsoft. Smaller independent software vendors usually take this route when selling to corporates.

Also known as

Related patterns   A direct sales force often work with a Local Guide or Value Added Reseller to help cultivate contacts and deliver complete solutions.

For really technical products use SALES/TECHNICAL DOUBLE ACT (Kelly, 2007a) so sales people can focus on selling and specialists can focus on pre-sales support and technical issues.

The sale should not be the end of the relationship. ACCOUNT MANAGEMENT (Kelly, 2007a) describes how to deepen the relationship and keep it active.

Now the customer now owns your product several more patterns can be brought into play to further the relationship and sales, SAME CUSTOMERS, DIFFERENT PRODUCT, CUSTOMER CO-CREATED PRODUCT (Kelly, 2007b), ACCOUNT MANAGEMENT (Kelly, 2007a) can be used to generate further product sales. While PRODUCTS WITH SERVICES (Kelly, 2006), START-UP SERVICES FOR PRODUCTS and CONTINUING SERVICES FOR PRODUCTS can be used to help the customer get the most from the product. Ultimately you may find SERVICES TRUMP PRODUCTS (Kelly, 2005a).

Sources

Sales over kill

The wrong sales approach can sometimes deter customers. You might actually want to do this as part of your filtering process so no time is wasted on customers who are unlikely to buy or are outside your target market.

For example, I was tasked with evaluating two different software packages for detecting, and possibly fixing, memory leaks in our application. The first was a well know product, you downloaded it, evaluated it, if you like it you put in a credit card number and bought it for $500.

The second package was less well known but came highly recommended. To get a trial version I had to talk to sales guy. Right from the off he wanted to come and visit us. A trial could be arranged but not for the 30 days like the first product but for three days, and we would need to have one of their technical consultants there to show me how to use it. No download and try.

I stopped returning his calls and answering his e-mails. Eventually he got me on the phone "What's the problem?" he asked "Trouble is" I said, "I don't know whether you are selling me a Honda or a Lexus. No matter how good the product we've only got a Honda budget and I think your selling a Lexus."

Selecting the right sales approach is important. You could use multiple sales channels to reach different groups of customers: a direct sales force for high-end customers with deep pockets, and an internet store for entry-level customers. Most likely you will need to differentiate the products sold by each channel to deter customer simply choosing the cheapest route.

Having multiple channels and products at different price levels also allows you to sell to customers who today have little money but tomorrow may have more. Closing the door on an unsuitable customer today may leave a bad impression. The same customer may be very desirable in a few years time.
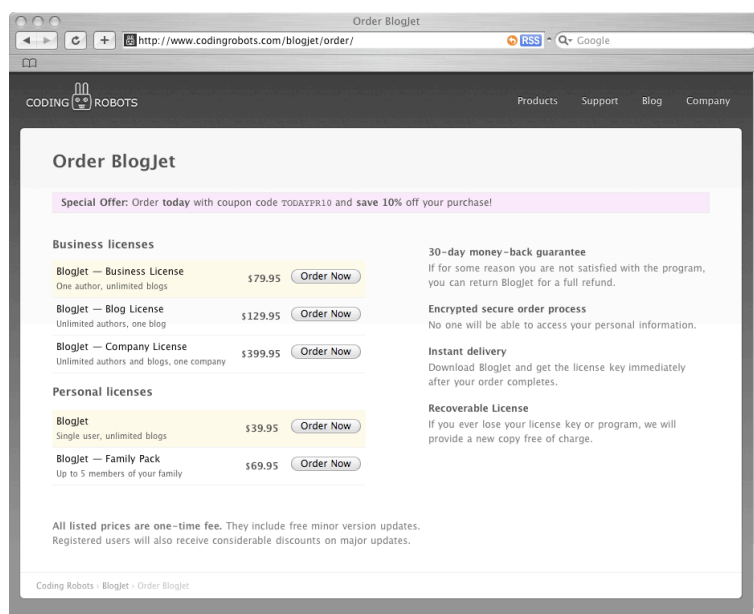
5.4 INTERNET STORE

Figure 4 - CodingRobots sales page for BlogJet

Coding Robots are based in Moscow and sell worldwide; Two Cubes are based in South East England and sell worldwide; the list could go on. The world is full of software companies that only sell their products online, and it doesn't matter where these companies or their customers physically are.

Context   Your potential market and potential customers are dispersed and your funds are limited. You don't haggle or negotiate with your customers, there is one price list, everyone pays the same even if they pay in different currencies. Even if you could afford a direct sales force there is no sensible place to base them.

Problem   **How do you sell to a dispersed market while controlling costs (ideally minimising) without a third party and little infrastructure?**

Forces   You want to sell your product directly to customers. But the selling price does not justify a large direct sales force; opening your own shops takes time, and is again expensive. Even finding and appointing distributors takes time – and if you are a new, small, operation they may not be interested in carrying your new products.

You wish to sell direct but do not want to incur the infrastructure costs of BRANDED SHOPS, or extra employees of DIRECT SALES FORCE. Signing shop leases and recruiting people takes times and entails commitments that reduce flexibility.

Selling online carries risks for the consumer. How do they know you are who you say you are? That you can be trusted with a credit card number? Or that your product does half the things you claim?

Therefore...

Solution   **Sell your products from a website. Provide all the information the customer needs to make a decision and then allow them to pay online.** Case studies, data sheets, testimonials and videos can all be used to convince customers that your product meets their requirements.

Offer customer time-limited trails and straight forward – no argument, easy to understand – return and refund policies to reduce their purchase risk.

Even internet sales require infrastructure: a website, shopping cart, payments system, download capacity and stock warehouses. As a software company you may be tempted to develop (and run) these yourself. Just because you can develop your own website does not mean you should develop one. A professional website designer may do a better job.

There are many good shopping cart and payment systems retail solutions available today. The likes of Google Checkout, PayPal and World Pay can be used with little development, are trusted by customers and have well known interfaces,

Once payment is made software may be downloaded over the internet, or the customer may be provided with a token or e-ticket that can be exchanged at the point of consumption. When customers need to take delivery of your product you will need a fulfilment processing system to get the goods to the customer. This too can be outsourced to specialist providers.

Internet sites can be set up, changed and withdrawn quickly. You can experiment with different offers and withdraw those that don't work. However, rapid changes or poorly prepared experiments may confuse customers.

Before any sale is made customers need to find your site, for this outbound market is needed to create a awareness and generate visits. Offline (traditional advertising, public relations, etc.) and online marketing tools (banner ads, AdWords, search engine optimisation) all have a part to play.

The anonymity of the process makes it hard to understand why your customers are buying your product. Without discussion it is difficult to know *why* they are buying. Monitoring site usage statistics can provide some useful information. You may also choose to contact some customer (and some almost customers) direct after the event and enquiry into their buying decisions.

To maximise usage of your website gather statistics, lots of statistics and spend time analysing them. There are lots of questions to ask and improvements to make: Where do customers come from? Which adverts are successful? How do customers use the site? What is their path through the site? Why do they abandon shopping carts?

Software companies first used the internet to sell their products

online with customers either downloading the product or receiving media through the post. An increasing number of companies now offer products that are delivered online over the internet. SalesForce.com is the best-known example of this *software as a service* trend.

Consequences   The internet provides a low cost channel for sales although marketing costs may be high.

Geographic location is not very important when purchasing on the internet. Still, you will need to check local taxes and customs, and you can break local laws if you do not take account of customer locations. For example, eBay has had to limit sales of military paraphernalia in some countries.

Pricing on the internet is transparent and there are few opportunities to differentiate your offering for particular customers. Potential buyers can see you price and compare it directly with competitors.

There may be limits to how much people are prepared to spend on products they have not physically seen. In the early days of internet retail it was believed second hand cars could not be sold online. Today eBay has a thriving second hand car market.

There will still be infrastructure costs and transaction costs to pay. The more transactions you have through your site the more attention you will need to pay to these factors. Security also needs considering, a breach of online security could damage your company image.

Customers risk is reduced when you use well known branded service providers for transaction processing. No quibble trails and returns makes the risk of a poor purchase decision less.

Variations   Parts of the fulfilment process can be outsourced. Google cart (and similar) can handle the sale and logistics can be contracted out.

In the extreme *Drop Shipping* can be utilised. In this case the seller only maintains the online presence, the WHOLESALER operates a WHITE LABEL fulfilment operation that will ship to your customers using your brand.

Examples   Software companies like Adobe and Intuit sell large amounts of product over the internet. Online software can be selected, bought and delivered with the click of a mouse.

EasyJet in Europe and South West Airlines in the USA sell tickets for future travel online. Provided a service can be delivered separately from purchase other service companies can do likewise.

When physical delivery of a product is required online selling needs to be supported with a physical fulfilment system. This too can be sub-contracted to companies specialising in fulfilment and logistics.

Also known as

**Related
patterns**

Sources

Mail Order

The internet has displace mail order as the dominant direct marketing technique for the mass market. Today while you can still have things delivered by mail they are likely to be ordered on the internet.

Before the internet companies would advertise their products in newspaper and magazines, on television or radio, or circulate their own catalogue. Mail order buyers would place their order by writing to the company, or perhaps filling in a form and sending it, with payment to the seller.

Mail order has many of the same attributes as internet selling. The seller had complete control, there was no middleman and products were shipped direct. Once complication was the lead times required by publications carrying adverts.

The big difference is the speed with which orders are received, processed and dispatched. On Internet the order is placed once the form is complete, dispatch can happen the same day and delivery the next day.

During the early personal computer boom companies like MITS in the US with their and Sinclair Research in the UK successfully established their machines using mail order. While Sinclair made later machines likes the ZX Spectrum and QL were available by mail order the company used Independent Retail to reach the mass market.

Mail order survives as a supplement to Internet shopping and in some niches – particularly in clothes with the likes of Boden and Littlewoods in the UK still offering mail order catalogue shopping. Maplin Electronics still makes a printed catalogue available but on the whole it the technology industry has migrated to the web.

---

6 Patterns of Indirect Distribution

Direct selling is perhaps the most obvious way of getting your product into the hands of customers. However it can also be time consuming and expensive, not all products can sell at a price high enough to justified direct selling.

Indirect sales models seek to exploit the resources of others to get your product sold. In doing so you share some of the revenue with a partner, sometimes several partners. But it is not just revenue you forego in allowing others to sell your products: you loose contact with customers and have less control over the sales process.

There are perhaps far more patterns of indirect distribution than there are direct. At one extreme is Local Guide, simply uses someone else to make contacts and smooth a selling process controlled by your own people. The other extreme is independent retailers who are supplied by a Wholesaler.

Nor is there a black and white choice between direct and indirect sales. Different sales models and channels can be combined as long as they do not cannibalise sales from the other. One way around this problem is SIMPLE PRODUCT VARIATIONS (Kelly, 2005b) to create different products for different channels.

6.1 LOCAL GUIDE

Figure 5 - Opening doors can be difficult

The Austrian distributor turned out to be one man. His office turned out to be a rented room in the Austrian equivalent of U-Stor-It. Yet he knew the right people and could get us to talk to the people who needed our product – even if they didn't know it yet.

He did the introductions and left the selling to our sales guy. But when we had done the deal and gone home he was still on there to ensure everything went smoothly. It didn't matter it was just him, it was about who he knew. His office didn't, he spent most of his time with clients.

Context   You are using Named Sales People to reach corporate customers and you are looking to break into a new market or target a specific customer.

Problem   **In a strange market how do you get to meet the people at the companies you want to sell to? And how do you work with local practices?**

Forces   Making an initial contact inside one company can be difficult. Making multiple contacts inside multiple companies in a new market is an order of magnitude harder. But making contact is only the first step, you need to be taken seriously, you need to them to return your follow up calls.

Local laws, customs and business practices differ from country to country. What is considered normal in one country may be illegal in another; what is illegal in one country may be essential in another. You can study a country and its markets for years but without feet on the ground and local knowledge you can still fall fowl of local norms.

You might be the most successful company Denmark has ever seen,

you might know all the right people in Denmark but replicating that success in the USA is going to be difficult because you don't know the right people and the right way of going about business.

Therefore...

Solution   **Engage a partner who can open the right doors for you, arrange meetings and give you credibility.** Local agents can help with this; in return they will expect a commission on your sales revenue.

Finding a good partner to act as a LOCAL GUIDE is not easy and may take time. Decide who your final customers are at find out who already supplies them. These companies should already have the relationships that interest you. Former employees of your target customers are another source of local guides.

You need to be able to trust your partner so meet with them several times. Undertake due diligence on their financial affairs and make sure they know the right people and can get the right access.

The LOCAL GUIDE will have the contacts and presence to open doors and introduce you to the right people and get them to agree to meetings. Their knowledge and personal relationships mean their calls are returned and they are told how sentiment is shaping up inside the customer.

Your direct sales force still control the sales process and you can walk away from a deal if it doesn't make sense. Once customers start using your product – and possibly before – your technical people can start building a relationship with the customer so you can understand their needs better.

Local guides may be called them *Distributors* or *Value Added Resellers* although they do little more than make the introductions and watch you sell. They do not satisfy the descriptions given in these patterns of such roles.

Consequences   Effective partners will advise on local customs, laws and practices. They will help in closing sales and protect you from locals who might take advantage of your naivety and inexperience in the market.

The commission earned by a middleman is hard to justify in terms of hours worked, they justify it in terms of contacts, local knowledge and making deals happen. Having the door opened does not guarantee a sale and it might be hard to justify carrying such an expense.

Intermediaries come with their own set of problems and issues. As you operation grows you may find your guide cannot meet your needs. They may also pursue their own agendas that slow your sales process or lose sales.

Variations   While some "middlemen" will remain involved in the sales process and take a hefty commission there are simpler, transaction based variations. Companies exist which will "sell meetings" - you

describe the type of company or executive you wish to meet with and they will identify potential customers and arrange meetings for you. Fees will be levied for each meeting successfully arranged.

Local agents can also act as a useful conduit for paying bribes – especially if you want to obscure the fact in your accounts. (Not that this author condones such practices but it occurs.) While a third party conduit may help in keeping bribes off your books the trained eye will spot the signs and you may still find yourself in legal trouble.

Examples

Also known as

Related patterns

Sources

6.2 VALUE ADDED RESELLER

Figure 6 **- Partner badges**

Cisco, Oracle, SAP and many other technology companies operate value added reseller networks. HP's describes its PartnerONE programme:

"Designed for simplicity, predictability and opportunity, the streamlined PartnerONE Program fully enables HP channel partners to win in the marketplace. HP has raised the bar. We stand behind our partners with more marketing and channel support, ...

HP is looking to partner with companies that aggressively drive revenue growth by delivering HP products and solutions to mutual customers with appropriate skills and support. PartnerONE is open to resellers, solution providers, system integrators and ISVs doing business in the 50 United States." (HP website January 2009).

Context   You have a product with many potential customers and/or many potential ways of being used. Still you have limited resources, and it makes sense to focus your efforts rather than chase after every possibility yourself.

Problem   **How do you reach and support potential customers who have needs and requirements beyond your capability to deliver?**

Forces   Potential customers have money to spend and want your product but you are not able to meet their entire needs with your product and company as it stands. For example, even in countries were you don't operate there are potential customers; and with a few modifications the product might work well for customers you know nothing about.

Customers want a WHOLE PRODUCT (Kelly, 2008) but you cannot (or do not want to) provide such a product. But, another company can create the WHOLE PRODUCT using your product and thereby generating a sale for you.

You can't do everything yourself, even when you have the resources

the more things you do the less focus you have. In reality resources are always limited and there are competing demands for what is available. But without the sales people to visit customers, pre-sales staff to do demonstrations, professional services to do installations and others you will miss sales.

These problems are most acute when a company is starting operations because the need for customers is greatest and the resources most limited.

Success can magnify such problems. Without the people to make a sale customers may buy from a competitor. Not only is the initial sale and following work lost but the competitors market share is increased at the expense of your own.

Even if you can increase staffing to meet demand it may not be cost effective to do so. There are just some sales that are too expensive to make. It seldom makes sense to make a loss on a sale.

Therefore...

Solution   **Work with one or more partners who can reach the customers you cannot, and allow them to enhance the product as needed.**

In the simplest cases a reseller can address a market you cannot reach easily. For example, in a different geographic region. Or they may address a segment of a market within an existing market, e.g. you might already sell in to the North American market but you lack the contacts and knowledge to sell into Government agencies. Although the term "value added" is somewhat subjective it is fair to say any reseller who sells in such a way to generate greater revenue is adding value.

VARs may add services you cannot (or do not want to) provide, for example, an additional line of support, or support in the native language of customers. Some VARs will provide professional services to help customers use the product or integrate it into their existing systems – following the START-UP SERVICES FOR PRODUCTS and CONTINUING SERVICES FOR PRODUCT (Kelly, 2005a) patterns.

Alternatively a VAR may add value by accelerating the sales process. They may act as a LOCAL GUIDE or provide facilities and services you could do yourself but would take time to develop. True VARs will go beyond simply making contacts and helping you navigate a foreign land, they will play an active part in delivering the solution.

Some VARs may embed your product within theirs so the final customer is unaware that your product has been sold too. In such conditions it might be better to consider the VAR as your customer, not the final user. The final user wants the VARs product, yours is irrelevant. The VAR could switch from your product to one of your competitors without their customers knowing or caring.

Sometime you will need to find VARs yourself and other times VARs will find you. Either way cases you need to perform due

diligence on the resellers to make sure they are who they say they are, that they are financially sound, honest and trustworthy. In many cases they will be representing your company and will be allowed to use your brand. Poor resellers may damage your brand.

Once you have agreed to work with a reseller treat them as an extension of your own company. Invite their staff on your product training courses, support their support desk and agree an escalation procedure, loan them resources to master your products and procedures, give them access to your marketing materials and, if appropriate, let them use your brands and trademarks.

Consequences The additional resources and capabilities VAR partners bring are available to help meet customer needs you cannot. The customer gets the product and service they want, you get another product sale and the VAR makes a little money in the process.

A VAR may supplements your product with enhancements and services the customers' needs to get a WHOLE PRODUCT.

Your people and resources can be focused on your main goals. Customers receive the time and attention they need to buy and recognise value from your product via your proxy, the VAR.

Growing companies can leverage the resources of others to make sales and win customers. Established companies can benefit when faced with rapidly expanding markets (Doctorow et al., 2008). Vendors and VARs agree to avoid competing with one another. As technology changes, vendors expand and VARs embrace additional products partners can come into competition. Vendors may, on occasions, decide to eliminate their VAR network in order to enhance their own revenue and profit.

Each extra sale your product wins thanks to the VAR is a sale your competitors are denied. Thus your market share has grown at the expense of your competitor, and you can look forward to future support revenue.

VARs can be an effective way of extending your sales and service team without incurring cost. However, often it is the VAR who owns the customer relationship. If the VAR decides to resell a competitors product the customer may switch with the VAR.

VAR creates an addition layer between your company and people, and the customer. It is more difficult to understand the customer needs, incorporate their feedback into your product development and involve the customer in your initiatives. VARs may not be keen on following your price cuts, selling your new products or pushing your brand inside the company.

The revenue from the sale of your product is shared with your VAR.

Variations A System Integrator may, or may not, be a VAR. An integrator specialises in making different technical products work together. In some cases the integrator may specialise in particular produces, e.g. Oracle Financials, and is licensed to sell that product. This does not

apply to all System Integrators.

Examples   Most software companies of any size, e.g. Microsoft, IBM, Oracle and others; have a VAR programme of one sort or another.

Also known as

Related patterns   In acting as a VAR companies are following COMPLEMENTOR, NOT COMPETITOR (KELLY, 2005A).

Sources

6.3 WHITE LABEL

Figure 7 - A white label allows someone else to write in their name

Many holidays begin at the airport, so why wouldn't someone start their holiday planning at the airport website? And since airports are in the business of travel and holidays why wouldn't they sell flights and travel packages?

But running a travel website is quite different from running an airport and most airports pass over the opportunity: it's not core business. Heathrow airport solved the problem by putting their name and brand on top of another company's holiday planning product. Book a flight at

www.heathrowairport.com and it looks and feels like BAA—take a look at the HTML below and you'll find out who really manages the booking.

Context   There are times when your own brand gets in the way. Maybe you don't have a brand (yet) or maybe someone else's brand can capture sales that yours can't.

Problem   **How do you take advantage of other companies' sales opportunities, brands and channels to sell your products?**

Forces   You have developed a technology or product but have no brand of your own under which to market the technology. Building your own brand takes time and can be expensive.

Or you might already have an existing brand and some channels in place, and have the capacity to produce more product, thus earning more revenue and exploiting economies of scale. But, selling the extra capacity through your own channels would result in marginal returns. The are costs of making the extra sales (lower prices, more advertising, expanded sales network) might outweigh the extra

revenue.

In any company with multiple products some are less strategic than others. Non-strategic products may bring in good money but need capital and management time.

Therefore...

Solution   **Partner with those who have sales opportunities. Let them sell your product under their name and brand. By putting a *white label* on the product and technology your partner can write their own name on the product and sell your product as their own.**

Supply your partner with your technology and products then allow them to sell it under their own brand. The partner can sell under their own brand and maintain their relationship with final customers while reducing their costs and time to market.

You benefit from having additional channel for your product while expanding to capture new customer segments. In such an agreement you are an *Original Equipment Manufacturer*. (Others may describe such an arrangement with the slightly derogatory term *badge engineers* and *badge engineering*.)

You may allow more than one partner to sell your products under their own brand. Such product might even compete with one another in the same market. Alternatively you may have different partners in different markets, say one for France and another for India.

Your product and organization need to be built for rebranding. Your product will need to be configurable so another company's name, logo, colour scheme and contact details appear in place of yours. Payment processing, call centre support and correspondence all needs to be rebranded.

Staff who operate the product or provide service on behalf of the customer will need to represent the brand used for each sale. You will need billing and reporting systems which can distinguish between your own sales and those of your partner, and apportion the revenue appropriately.

Contracts need to be negotiated, administered and fees pay. This all adds to the cost of partnering so remember to factor these costs into your profit calculations.

Consequences   When a company lacks a successful brand WHITE LABEL can provide an effect route to market – albeit at the cost of loosing some control.

When someone else brands and markets your product, you gain additional sales and revenue from sales opportunities you are not able to exploit yourself. This allows you to focus elsewhere - perhaps on the technology, or on achieving economies of scale.

Placing another brand on some of your products allows you to gain sales you would otherwise miss. You can sell at different price

points, or with different benefits packages.

Partners selling your product as their own benefit in several ways. They broaden their product offerings whilst minimising risk: without spending as much money, or time to create a product of their own. This can help implement SAME CUSTOMERS, DIFFERENT PRODUCT (Kelly, 2007b).

By buying in non-strategic products and labelling them as their own our partners can focus their resources on strategic products. At the same time you can remove a competitor and gain an extra sales channel.

For companies with existing products and brands a WHITE LABEL strategy can deliver additional sales from new buyers. However due care needs to be taken to ensure the third party brand will bring new buyers. If the brand attracts the same customers conflicts will result and revenue will be affected.

Price sensitive customers who come to know your product is being rebranded and sold at a different price may opt to buy the cheaper version. This will erode profit margins on the more expensive brand. If this happens consider ways to create barriers or incentives to reduce the leakage.

Variations   Companies can create their own additional brands in order to tap additional market segments. In some cases these brands offer genuinely different products. For example, the cars sold by Toyota's Lexus division stand apart from the other Toyota car models—'Lexus' is not just a model but also a distinct brand in itself. Conversely, Ford cars sold under the Mercury brand are recognisably the same cars as sold under the Ford brand.

However, launching additional brands is expensive and time consuming. Reusing an existing brand can be far cheaper. Another way of doing this is by licensing a brand.

Examples   Numerous Chinese and Taiwanese manufacturing firms – such as Acer, Asus, BenQ and Quanta - have started life as contract manufactures with their output badged by better known names – like Dell, HP and Compaq. Some of these companies have developed their own design capabilities. Attempts to develop their own brands have a mixed record. While Acer has succeed, BenQ has had to retrench. (See sidebox for the BenQ story.)

Company A signed a white label deal with a major Scandinavia telecoms company. Until this deal the two companies had similar products that competed in the same market. The Scandinavian company discontinued their own product (reducing their costs) and instead sold a rebadged version of company A's product. Company A gained a new revenue source and effectively eliminated a competitor – thereby using COMPLEMENTOR, NOT COMPETITOR (Kelly, 2005a) and IN BED WITH THE ENEMY (Weiss, 2007).

Also known

as

Related patterns   WHITE LABEL and DISTRIBUTOR are both patterns concerned with someone else selling your product. The key difference is the role of branding, in the DISTRIBUTOR pattern your product is sold under your brand by someone else. In the WHITE LABEL pattern your product is sold under someone else's brand.

Sources

The BenQ story

BenQ started life as Acer Peripherals before being spun out in 2001. Initially a contract manufacturer of mobile phones and other technique equipment BenQ soon began to design products for its customers as an ODM. From there the company moved to produce products under its own brand.

To some degree these changes were driven by the corporate urge to grow, however companies like BenQ need to increase their activities and revenues if they are to stand still. Contract manufacturers are under pressure from their customers to reduce prices so one way to maintain profits is to move up the supply chain and design products. Supplying designs to customers increases revenue but this too soon comes under price pressure.

Marketing own brand products requires different skills, resources and even culture to contract manufacturing and even design. Contract manufactures aim for low costs so keep a tight control on inventory, supply chains, processes and manufacturing. Brand building and marketing require imaginative thinking and customer knowledge.

Products carrying the BenQ brand brought the company into competition with its own customer. Motorola phones built in BenQ factories would compete in the market with BenQ phones designed and manufactured by BenQ itself. Both Motorola and Nokia eventually stopped using BenQ as a manufacturer.

In 2005 BenQ acquired the Siemens mobile phone handset business in an attempt to grow its brand, gain marketing skills and market knowledge and economies of scale. The Siemens acquisition did not go well and in September 2006 BenQ closed the unit.

This was the start of problems for the company. In September 2007 BenQ split in two. The BenQ brand continues as much smaller company reselling products manufactured by others under the BenQ brand. The bulk of the company returned to contract manufacturing under the name Qisda.

6.4 INDEPENDENT RETAIL

Figure 8 - BestBuy has entered the European market in partnership with Carphone Warehouse

Fry's, Best Buys, Comet, Electro World – different companies, different countries, the same idea. Many brands of similar products under one roof. Take Best Buy's, you can by everything from an vacuum clearner to a fully featured home cinema centre.

Want a new PC? They have HP, Sony, Acer and others all sitting next to each other. Printer? Lexmark, HP, Canon, Epson or Brother? Inkjet or laser? – the choice is yours.

They don't much care which brand you buy, they make money on all of them.

Context   Your product is designed and priced to sell to a broad market, and while simple enough not to require specialist sales staff many customers will benefit from the attention of a sales person.

Physical products in particular can benefit from a physical environment in which to conduct the sale. BRANDED SHOPS is not always a viable option, possibly because the revenue from your product will not support your own shops or because you do not have time and resources to build a chain.

Problem   **Where do I place my product so many people can see it and buy it?**

Forces   While internet retailing continues to grow traditional retail still accounts for the bulk sales. For example, according to the Office of National Statistics in the UK, by the end of 2008 the internet accounted for less than 4% of monthly sales. In categories like electronic equipment this increased to 26% of sales in 2008; 12% of computer hardware was bought online in 2008 (down from 26% in 2006).

When a product is aimed at a mass market it needs to get it in front

of as many customers as possible so they can buy it and take it home. But the internet has limitations: physical products still need to be delivered, not everybody shops on the internet, and even those who do may still wish to experience a product before they buy.

Therefore...

Solution   **Have independent retailers sell your product at locations where many customers will be able to see it and buy it – in malls, on main street and in specialist shops.**

Chains such as Best Buy (USA) and PC World (UK) sell a wide range of computer equipment and software. Home and small business buyers will visit these stores for much of their equipment. In some cases other types of store can provide a mass-market outlet, for example, computer games are often sold by the same shops that sell films on DVD and music on CD.

Getting your product into multiple independent retailers is a sales job in its own right. There are many small retailers who might sell your product, but finding and persuading them takes time. There are fewer big retailers (with many stores) but even these guys have limited shelf space and your competitors also want to be there. You will need a specialist sales force to sell to the retailers, and partners who can help.

Once your product is in the retailers show room you will need to support it with advertising, sales literature and competitor comparisons. The stores, and sales staff, are not experts in your product and will have little time to learn about your product so make it easy for them.

Remember to tell the stores who your competitors are so they can put you next to them – you don't want your tax return software sitting next to the USB cables. Stores may charge you to place your products in prime spot in the store: at the entrance or buy the check-out till for example.

Even in large retail units stores only have so much space and seek to maximise the return per square foot. If your product cannot produce the returns of competitors product they may stop selling your product. Stores may expect you to share the advertising and marketing costs, or offer customers special deals.

Consequences   Retailers often exist on thin margins, they will only stock product they are sure they can shift and may expect to buy on credit or on a sale-or-return basis. Getting a new product, from a new company, into store isn't easy. The biggest retailers, like WalMart and Tesco, may expect to be paid for the shelf space your product takes up.

You lose a lot of control when you sell through independent retailers. The bigger the retailer the greater their power to dictate price. They may squeeze your profit margin, or dictate a sales price they think is appropriate for your product. The retailer chooses how and where in the store to present your product, and they may choose

to discount the product if it doesn't sell. This can affect your branding and market positioning.

Selling the same product through independent retailers and your own channels at the same time may create damaging competition with yourself. If an independent retailer cannot match an online price they may decide to drop the product rather than carry stock that turns over slowly. Consider selling different products through different channels.

Variations   Apple – and before them Compaq, IBM and others – allow independent retailers to brand themselves as "Official Apple Distributors". These retailers borrow elements of BRANDED SHOPS in their presentation and product line up even though they are independent of the brand. Official distributors are often prohibited from selling competing products.

Examples   Microsoft, HP, Cisco and others offer their products through chains such as Staples (office supplies) and Fry's Electronics.

Also known as

Related patterns   Wholesaler pattern can be used to address some of the consequences in this pattern.

Sources

6.5 WHOLESALER

Figure 9 - Wholesalers stock many products from many suppliers

Lion Computers started as a single shop in a suburb of Liverpool. It grew as large as four stores but never moved out of North West England and only lasted a few years.

Still it stocked all the big name software - games, office applications, operating systems, and if they didn't have it they could order it for you. It wasn't as if the owner had a deal with Microsoft, Adobe and all the other software companies, he only dealt with one distributor.

The distributor dealt with the big boys and bought software packages off them in bulk. That distributor knew Lion's owner. He could ring the distributor today and get software delivered tomorrow. The distributor handled returns, logistics and provided credit accounts. Once a month the distributor would bill Lion for all the software they had recently taken.

Context   You are using, or intend to use Independent Retail pattern. You wish to avoid the time and expense of dealing with many different retailers.

Problem   **How do you get your product into many independent retailers?**

Forces   Getting into a few well-known retailers can be hard enough – you have to know who to call, get an appointment, convince them your product will sell and then actually ship the product. But getting your product into all the well-known retailers, department stores, local chains, and Mom 'n' Pop operations is time consuming, slow and expensive.

Then, when you are successful you have to deliver on the commitments. So you need to get involved in contracts, shipping logistics, payment collection and administration.

Therefore...

Solution   **Work with a wholesaler who already has relationships with
                      many independent retailers and can handle the administration
                      and logistics.** In doing so you outsource management and logistics
                      and pay for it through sales margin to the wholesaler.

                      Choose a wholesaler who works with the type of retailer you think
                      most appropriate for your product. The wholesaler will expect to
                      buy your product at a significant discount to the recommended retail
                      price then sell it on to a retailer who will ultimately sell it at (or
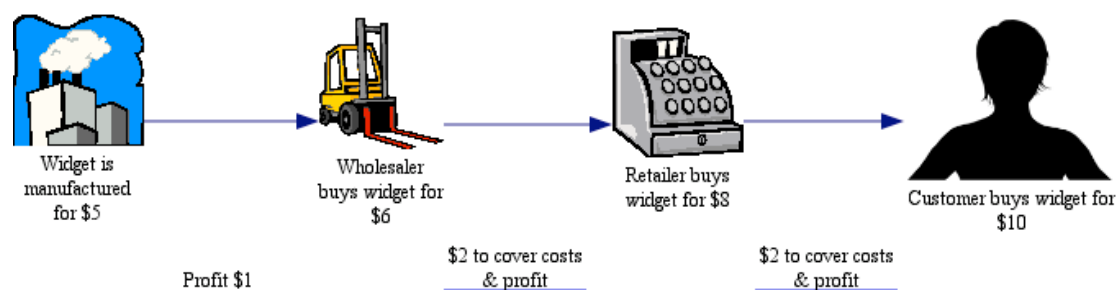   below) the recommended retail price. (Illustrated in Figure **10**.)

Figure 10 - **Everyone in the chain needs to make a little money**

Consequences   Wholesalers specialise in getting products into independent retailers.
                      They take care of the logistics, administration and the process of
                      selling to downstream sellers. These retailers often rely on one or
                      more wholesales for many – or all – of their products. Wholesalers
                      expect their cut of the sale thus raising your prices or cutting into
                      your profit margin.

                      By using a wholesaler there is another middleman separating you
                      from your final customers – the ones whose purchases ultimately
                      deliver your revenue. By placing another seller between you and the
                      customer you also create another barrier to understanding the
                      ultimate customer.

Variations   "Cash and carry" stores like Makro and Booker in the UK are large
                      hypermarkets who sell to business customers, and in particular small
                      retailers. The stores obscure the boundary between wholesaler and
                      retailer, they stock a wide variety of goods from TV sets to frozen
                      chicken portions – including a limited selection of computer
                      equipment and software.

                      Aldi and other supermarket chain further blurs the distinctions by
                      eliminating wholesalers from their supply chain and putting their
                      own brands on products (as per White Label pattern).

Examples   While more and more software is bought on, and downloaded from,
                      the Internet some software, like games, is still best distributed on
                      physical CD or DVD. There is still a role for the likes of Sigma
                      Software Distribution and Softline in the UK, and Mindscape in
                      Europe who distribute software to retailers.

Woolworths (UK) was best known for its high street stores. But the company made most of its profits from a distribution operation called Entertainment UK. This company sold DVDs, CDs, games and other entertainment products to retailers who competed with Woolworths on the high street.

When Woolworths went into liquidation in December 2008 suppliers lost confidence in Entertainment UK. Although the company was a viable business it could no longer obtain the credit and supplies it needed. High street stores which depended on the company for supplies of computer games, DVDs and CD started to experience supply problems.

Also known as

Related patterns

Sources

7   Acknowledgements

Figure 1 - Map for distribution patterns: authors own work

Figure 2 – The largest Apple store in the world on Regent Street, London: Image taken from WikiMedia, original source Apple Inc. provided under GNU Free Documentation License.

Figure 3 – Everyone knows what a salesman looks like. Rights purchased from iStockphoto image.

Figure **4** - CodingRobots sales page for BlogJet - rights to reproduce granted by CodingRobots.

Figure 5 - Opening doors can be difficult: Rights purchased from iStockphoto image 6641794 (Door)

Figure **6** - Partner badges: Need to check or seek rights

Figure **7** - A white label allows someone else to write in their name: Rights purchased from iStockphoto image 839953 (Bottle)

Figure 8 - BestBuy has entered the European market in partnership with Carphone Warehouse: Authors own photograph

Figure **9** - Wholesalers stock many products from many suppliers: Rights purchased from iStockphoto image 4266557 (Warehouse)

Figure **10** - Everyone in the chain needs to make a little money: author's own illustration using clipart from Inspiration.

8   Future work - Patterns arising

The following are patterns identified during the writing and presentation of this paper. At the time of writing no attempt has been made to document these patterns so the inclusion here should be considered as suggestions for future work.

MULTIPLE CHANNELS

DIFFERENT CHANNEL, DIFFERENT PRODUCT

SAME PRODUCT, DIFFERENT PRICE

FRANCHISE

CALL CENTRES – A PATTERN OR A PATTTERN LANGUAGE?

PATTERN LANGUAGE FOR ONLINE RETAIL.

PATTERN LANGUAGE FOR HIGH STREET RETAIL

PATTERN LANGUAGE FOR AFTER SALES SERVICE

9 History

Date	Event
January 2009	First draft
February 2009	Submitted to EuroPLoP 2009
April 2009	Shepherding - reworked in Alexandrian form
June 2009	Shepherding ends; final version for conference
July 2009	EuroPLoP conference workshop review
October 2009	Conference comments incorporated - returned to hybrid form used by other patterns in this language

References

DOCTOROW, D., LIPPERT, M. & SRIVATSAN, V. N. 2008. Rethinking high-tech distribution. *McKinsey Quarterly,* 14.

KELLY, A. Year. Business Strategy Patterns for Technology Companies. *In:* VikingPLoP 2005, 2005a Espoo, Finland.

KELLY, A. Year. A few more business patterns. *In:* LONGSHAW, A. & ZDUN, W., eds. EuroPLoP 2005, 2005 2005b Irsee, Germany. UVK Universitassverlag Konstanz GmbH.

KELLY, A. Year. Patterns for Technology Companies. *In:* HVATUM, L. & ZDUN, W., eds. EuroPLoP, 2006 Irsee, Germany. UVK Universitassverlag Konstanz GmbH.

KELLY, A. Year. More patterns for Technology Companies. *In:* VikingPLoP 2007, 2007a Bergen, Norway.

KELLY, A. Year. More patterns for Technology Companies. *In:* HVATUM, L. & SCHÜMMER, T., eds. EuroPLoP, 2007b Irsee, Germany. UVK Universitassverlag Konstanz GmbH.

KELLY, A. Year. Business Strategy Patterns for Product Development. *In:* EuroPLoP (European conference on Pattern Languages of Program design), 2008 Iresee, Germany.

RISING, L. 2002. *Customer Interaction Patterns* [Online]. Available: http://members.cox.net/risingl1/articles/customer.doc [Accessed 2 August 2004 2004].

WEISS, M. Year. In Bed with the Enemy. *In:* HVATUM, L. & SCHUEMMER, T., eds. EuroPLoP - Proceedings of the 8th European Conference on Patterns Languages of Programs, 2007 Irsee, Germany. UVK Universitätsverlag Konstanz GmbH.