

Success Story: SL Powers

In addition to offering healthy margins, Eaton has spiff programs and other activities that can really excite the sales staff.

Bob Hochmuth, vice president of sales

SLPowers leads with Eaton, protects clients



Location:

East Coast locations

Type of Sales:

IT solutions and services

Challenge:

Gaining the support and product range to ensure all customers' IT equipment purchases are properly protected when they go out the door.

Background

SLPowers specializes in aligning business and IT through cost-effective solutions that make companies more agile, flexible and productive. Founded in 1986, SLPowers delivers managed IT solutions, borderless computing, and IT professional services, with an emphasis in storage, security and virtualization. The firm's original, award-winning Managed IT and Continuity Platform, Guaranteed Networks®, has evolved into a next-generation suite of management and on-demand services, which can be tailored to fit any small to medium enterprise.

With its corporate headquarters located in West Palm Beach, Fla., SLPowers staffs offices in New York, Connecticut and Atlanta.

The Eaton advantage

For more than four years, SLPowers has relied on Eaton® uninterruptible power systems (UPSs) to protect its customers' critical equipment. "We lead with Eaton every time," reveals Bob Hochmuth, the firm's vice president of sales.

Originally introduced to the brand by Eaton's channel manager at Tech Data, SLPowers has standardized on Eaton's 9 Series of online UPSs for all server sales. The company also attaches mid-range Eaton UPSs to other equipment orders, for applications ranging from wiring closets to mid-span switches.

"We make power protection a big deal, we don't just think of it as an afterthought," Hochmuth emphasizes. "We tell our customers that it's part of the quote, you have to have it. They rely on us to give them a proper and complete solution."

And winning over clients on the Eaton line has proven to be an easy sell, according to Hochmuth. "Sometimes our customer will ask why Eaton instead of APC," he acknowledges. "We talk about Eaton's warranty, and about ABM battery technology, and then we talk about the technology inside the box and why it's a better fit for servers, VoIP and other applications."

Even more, because Eaton offers such a comprehensive power protection line —with UPS solutions designed to protect a single desktop up to a vast data center — Hochmuth says it's easy for the company to meet clients' varied needs. Additionally, SLPowers often deploys Eaton PDUs in customer rack and cabinet installations.

Virtually amazing software

Hochmuth is also impressed by Eaton's ability to tap into one of the most timely and pertinent technologies in the IT world — virtualization. Eaton's Intelligent Power® Manager (IPM) software seamlessly integrates into VMware, Citrix, Microsoft and RedHat's dash boards, providing a single pane view for network management. "That's a fantastic feature for clients," Hochmuth enthuses.



POWER ADVANTAGE
Partner Program

"There are a lot of outstanding features built into the software," he continues, "especially the ability to gracefully shut down VMs in an orderly fashion or trigger live migrations in the event of an extended power outage."

Noting that the majority of SLPowers' project clients have implemented or are in the process of integrating virtualization, being able to tout Eaton IPM is a significant sales advantage, Hochmuth says.

"It absolutely comes into play," he shares. "People are very excited about it."

Higher margins = happy sales people

When it comes to selling the Eaton line — which is not over-marketed like some competitive brands — there are generous profits to be made, a fact that has not gone unnoticed by SLPowers.

"You can't make any money with APC, but there are great margins with Eaton," Hochmuth points out. "I always like having a solid product that I can still make money on. It's wonderful when you can find something that offers good value to a customer and allows you to stay in business!"

And reselling Eaton products is clearly paying off for SLPowers, considering the company has grown its UPS business by more than 50 percent over last year, according to Hochmuth.

"In addition to offering healthy margins, Eaton has spiff programs and other activities that can really excite the sales staff," he adds.

Powerful support

Most salespeople will agree that while superior products and attractive price points are appealing advantages, they hold little value without accompanying support.

"The biggest factor for us is that we have a great vendor relationship with Eaton," Hochmuth reveals. "We like doing business with people we like, and we really appreciate a vendor relationship that is warm, friendly and helpful. When you work with some big companies sometimes you don't get that personalized service," he adds. "But Eaton always brings a personal level."

For example, Hochmuth says, Eaton representatives are ready and willing to provide product training whenever it is needed, most recently participating in SLPowers' joint virtualization lunch and learn, along with Dell and VMware.

Hochmuth also appreciates the opportunity to work with same support people year in and year out, noting, "It's not a revolving door. We really get to know the people at Eaton. They are regularly in contact with us, and always willing to help. I think that really drives our sales," he adds. "You want to work with the people who think about you."

The VP of sales is quick to praise Eaton's ongoing communication, as well, which keeps resellers apprised of the latest product and program news. Furthermore, he values the variety of tools designed to ease sales efforts, such as UPS sizing configurators and "a great web site with lots of information for both end users and resellers."

Eaton even helps SLPowers' altruistic efforts by sponsoring the company's annual Margarita Ball, a holiday toy drive to benefit the community. "These are the kinds of things that happen when you have a close vendor relationship," Hochmuth says.

SL Powers PowerAdvantage Benefits:

- **Comprehensive Product Offering** ensures the company can meet its clients' varied power protection needs
- **Support** that includes a dedicated account manager and ongoing training and communication, which have helped the company grow Eaton sales by more than 50% over last year
- **Healthy Margins** are achieved through products that are not over-marketed like competitive offerings, plus regular spiffs and rebates

Results

When it comes to selling power protection, SLPowers has discovered that partnering with Eaton truly facilitates a win-win situation. "We've found that Eaton has great technology and products, and then the vendor relationship drives the whole package," Hochmuth sums up.

As an Eaton PowerAdvantage partner, SLPowers is able to:

- Offer customers a complete power protection solution, regardless of their application
- Deliver management and control in virtualized environments through IPM
- Achieve exceptional profits with Eaton's high margins
- Gain the tools and training needed to expand sales through Eaton support personnel

Eaton Corporation
Electrical Sector
1111 Superior Avenue
Cleveland, OH 44114 USA
Eaton.com

© 2012 Eaton Corporation
All Rights Reserved
Printed in USA
COR220CSS
September 2012

Eaton is a registered trademark of Eaton Corporation

All other trademarks are property of their respective owners.



Powering Business Worldwide