



CoLibri System S.p.A.

LEARNING

After 20 year on the market, 5 subsidiaries and over 20 international distributors worldwide, we have acquired valuable learning that we feel sharing with you here:

SERVICE

CoLibri system to the end user or consumer is a service, not just a product. Its value and price are defined accordingly to this nature; it cannot be compared to other products such as rolls, pre-cut covers or self-adhesive rolls. It's crucial that this concept is clear to both the person offering CoLibri to clients and to the clients themselves (and eventually this value transferred to the end user).

VALUE CHAIN & SALES NETWORK

A key success factor has proven to be a strong and winning value chain; from manufacturer, to distributor, customer, all the way down to end user.

The value chain needs to be built in a way that generates a strong appeal and motivation at each step (margins and end user price).

We therefore suggest to price the product & service correctly at each step and to avoid too many steps and intermediaries that would inevitably dilute the appeal and motivation behind CoLibri products.

This is the recommended structure:

CoLibri → Importer/distributor → Shop → end user

CoLibri → Importer/distributor → Customer (in the case of Libraries, Schools and other similar institutions)

It's important that an international distributor has a strong sales and distribution network in its market, in order to have a direct presence and not recur to other distributors that would only dilute margins and therefore weaken the motivation in pushing CoLibri system in the market.

VISITS, DEMO, EDUCATION

This product requires an important investment in terms of time and effort, especially at the initial stage. The CoLibri system needs to be presented in person to as many customers as possible (stores, schools, libraries, etc) to demonstrate the many benefits and advantages of this system compared to the other existing products and ways for covering books.

It's not a product that can be solely sold via catalogue. Demos are the best way to convince people of the superiority of this system and to educate them on why this product is better than the methods they have been using so far. The power of the "wow factor" that comes with a face to face demo is very difficult to match with any other form of contact or presentation.



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TEXTBOOKS

Most of the books covered with CoLibri System worldwide are textbooks. The key to successfully develop the CoLibri business in the market is to go where textbooks are.

The exercise of mapping the “book journey” as highlighted in the first part of this document is crucial to designing a strong plan and offer the system where it’s needed the most and where it can generate business.

Go where the textbooks are sold, provided, distributed or the service of book-covering can be offered to the public. Another way is to either provide the service to clients the require it (ie: covering large orders of books for schools, libraries, etc) or to provide the system to those customers (ie. Book distributors) that want to deliver large orders of already covered books to their clients.

Another relevant market, non text-book related, is the Library market where large volumes of books are purchased and covered every year.

THE BUSINESS IS IN THE COVERS (not the machine)

Quality over quantity, reorders over machines sold. The goal is to place machines in the right places, to those clients that can deliver high volumes of covers. There is no point in placing thousand of machines if the clients order covers just once or reorder just a few hundreds every year. Especially at the beginning it’s very important to target and select clients that can generate a good and steady stream or reorders. Our suggestion is to apply this concept to pricing as well: it’s better to have a good margin and high volumes on covers and make the machine as affordable as possible.

KNOW YOUR MARKET

This point is the outcome of the market analysis exercise and the combination of some of the above learning. Once you have mapped out your market and have determined its potential, having a complete and detailed database of all the prospect clients is the first fundamental step to start this business venture.

These databases are usually available for each market segments (libraries, universities, schools, bookstores, stationery stores, etc) for a reasonable price and are most effective when integrated with a good CRM.

To “know your market” also means to know your customers. Distributors that already operate in the textbooks (bookstores, libraries, schools) and stationery market have proven to be more effective in launching and driving to success the CoLibri brand and products in their territory.

Having an existing network in the above markets has the benefit of already knowing the product category, the clients and potential clients, speaking the client’s “language” and having all the relevant arguments to propose the system effectively and tailored to their needs.



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SHARPEN YOUR AXE

Give me six hours to chop down a tree and I will spend the first four sharpening the axe.

(Abraham Lincoln)

The market analysis exercise and the good use of the above learning are key to designing a winning business plan. Once we have a clear understanding of the market and have a strong plan in our hands, we can know for sure what potential the market holds and whether we have the right tools and structure to launch and develop CoLibri business successfully.