

How Obama has Outsold Clinton

A classic duel between Demand Capture and Demand Creation

Just a few months ago, most of us had barely heard of Barack Obama. Currently, he is leading in the delegate count and in the popular vote as well. By contrast, nearly all of us knew of Hillary Clinton. And because of her popularity, the political pundits were united in their unending announcements that the nomination for the Democratic Party was hers to lose.

How did this Happen?

To be sure, it doesn't appear to most of us that his "rise to stardom" was because of his different standing on the issues. Obama and Clinton are alike on more issues than they are different. Therefore, it would be naïve to think that Obama's current lead is based on any specific standing on any particular issue. A closer look would suggest that the actual reason for his lead is the campaign he is waging. To get the real story, all one has to do is to look closer at the strategy he selected and the tactics he utilized to advance that strategy.

I was doing a keynote address for Lutron Corporation at their headquarters in Bethlehem, Pa. the day before their primary. Arriving at the beautiful and historic Bethlehem hotel at around 5:00 pm, I was afforded some time to take a walk. My first stop was at a local Obama office. I interviewed 5 people (3 men and 2 women) who were in their mid twenties. None of them was "politically active" prior to the Obama campaign.

By contrast, I then walked to a Clinton office and met with seven individuals (all women) who, with the exception of one, were in their forties. Most of them were political veterans and had worked in previous campaigns.

This is the evidence for which I was looking to justify my theory. The Democratic Party has added over 300,000 new voters to their rosters since January. And over 62% of those new recruits are supporters of Obama. Their new presence is a direct result of Obama's campaign—a campaign that was built on a Demand Creation philosophy. Compare that to Clinton's adopted strategy built on Demand Capture.

View their individual campaigns through Revenue Storm's definitions of these two very different approaches:

- **Demand Capture Selling** – Finding and fulfilling a pre-existing need with a product or service to eliminate "pain." (*Clinton's adopted strategy*)
- **Demand Creation Selling** – Creating the compelling desire to achieve "gain" by focusing on something not seriously considered before by taking advantage of a

product or service in which there was little to no interest before (*Obama's adopted strategy*)

Demand Creation can trump Demand Capture.

The net of this is – Clinton set a strategy to “capture” traditional voters by talking to them about traditional issues which were causing them “pain.”

On the other hand, Obama set a strategy to “create” a coalition of new voters by promising them the “gain” of a new “order” to be achieved under his leadership.

Two Summarized Conclusions Worthy of Emulation

Sales professionals analyzing the sales strategies used in this campaign can come to some important conclusions that will benefit their own sales campaigns.

When up against a known and popular competitor, your best chance for winning may be

Executing Revenue Storm's “Flanking” strategy (changing the buying criteria)

By implementing Revenue Storm's Demand Creation approach to bring new “buyers” into the buying decision.

When in a tough budget fight, the emphasis on “Gain” as opposed to “Pain” will create a more compelling business case to create more budget dollars to fund your solution. If you doubt this, just look at Obama's bank account compared to Clinton's.

One Summarized Conclusion Worthy of Avoiding

The Democratic Race is far from over as this is written, and lots can happen. Mistakes can be made. And some mistakes are so fatal in nature that they can cause even the best of strategies to fail. Revenue Storm has a saying, “A poor strategy brilliantly executed is far better than a brilliant strategy poorly executed.”

Now that Clinton has won the Pennsylvania primary convincingly, the question has to be asked, “Did Clinton win it, or did Obama lose it?” Obama has made some tactical errors in the last several days, and we do not know just how much damage was done, and how long that damage will last. Given the long and steady winning by the underdog Obama, one has to conclude that his tactical mistakes played a bigger role in his loss than any notable thing that Clinton did right. Time will reveal the real answer to this question.

As you watch the political campaigns continue to unfold, you may have other points of view that should be shared on our blog with all of our sales colleagues. [Click here](#) to go to the blog. And while you are there, register your opinion on the Revenue Storm poll. Your insights are important to all of us who love the profession of selling.