

Are You Leaving Money On The Table Because Of Poor Maintenance Negotiation Skills?

By Wendy Reed

How DO you negotiate less? *By Selling More Value.* We have found that, while most software companies are great at selling the value of their *products*, when it comes to discussions regarding maintenance, they are woefully unprepared to articulate the value that maintenance delivers.

Your customer-facing employees include sales, support, finance, collections and consulting. They need to be ready to confidently sell the value of your company's maintenance offering. Is your organization ready to:

- Present your "value for maintenance" story
- Position against competitors and third-party maintenance providers
- Handle maintenance objections
- Negotiate initial maintenance agreements
- Renegotiate at renewal time
- Sell the benefits of maintenance to your highest paying customers

Can't put a check mark in many of the boxes? You are not alone. Many software companies can't. Recently several of our clients have engaged us to help them tackle this ongoing challenge by arming their field ops with these tools:

- ***Maintenance Survival Guide*** - a must-have for anyone who has to talk maintenance with their customers or prospects. This quick reference guide includes competitive differentiators, FAQ's, key features of your maintenance offering, and more.
- ***Maintenance Benefits Statement*** - a powerful tool that can be used proactively to educate customers on the value of maintenance and to diffuse potentially difficult maintenance renewal negotiations. It is a tailored-by-customer statement which clearly outlines the services available to them under their annual maintenance agreement, which services they actually use, and a snapshot of how you have performed against your published targets.
- ***Winning Maintenance Negotiations Skills Workshop*** - hands-on training for anyone who has to sell, negotiate or collect maintenance. Attendees will learn to:
 - Articulate the strength of YOUR "value for maintenance" story
 - Handle maintenance objections
 - Position against the competition
 - Position maintenance as early as possible in the sales cycle
 - Participate in role-play scenarios to practice their skills in real customer situations.

Remember, "***Finding a way to reach an agreement about price very often requires bringing more factors than price into the negotiation***".

Stephen P. Cohen