

SUPPLIERS

formerly Supplier Savvy

A Vendor-Provided Case Study

Rapid Competitive Intelligence Strengthens Global Sales Teams

Lucent Technologies
Bell Labs Innovations



Murray Hill, New Jersey

[Lucent.com](http://lucent.com)

Since the beginning of 2001, the telecommunications industry has been in tremendous metamorphosis. Spending on new networks has come to a standstill as carriers look to survive the storm that has driven dozens of companies into bankruptcy. Sales and marketing staffs at many telecommunications giants have been scaled down to skeletal crews. Thus, Lucent faced considerable pressure to protect its global market share. Lucent Learning sales and marketing, the organization responsible for the professional development and training of Lucent's global sales teams, needed to enhance the teams' capabilities so they could compete more effectively in challenging market conditions. Lucent account executives weren't receiving all of the competitive intelligence they needed.

Also under significant pressure to reduce costs, Lucent was seeking additional resources to provide competitive insights without building its internal headcount.

What Lucent needed

Lucent's sales teams needed unbiased competitive intelligence to fully assess sales potential with key customers. Lucent turned to Current Analysis, with whom it had worked in the past. Over three months, Lucent Learning sales and marketing was able to showcase to the Lucent global sales teams how competitive intelligence from Current Analysis would enhance their sales capability. Strong momentum for CA began to build

among account executives in the field.

"Current Analysis's service is essential," says Mary Slaughter, director of Lucent Learning sales and marketing. "Our product management naturally has a biased view about Lucent's products; that's a good thing. We also need the unbiased view of Current Analysis to supplement the insights of our product managers." Lucent's goal was to be able to quickly distribute competitive intelligence using a Web-based platform to all of its global sales teams.

LLSM continued to conduct meetings throughout Lucent with stakeholders in new business development, technical sales, and account management. The decision to invest in an expanded relationship with Current Analysis was intensive, with a strong emphasis on CA's ability to help drive Lucent's revenue. Lucent needed to respond rapidly to its customers about competitors' products and activities. Access to tactical sales tips would enhance Lucent's ability to develop sales proposals and to conduct customer conversations.

Enter Current Analysis

The Current Analysis competitive response solution for Lucent included rapid and tactical analysis, Web-based platform and collaboration tools, and content integration.

Rapid and tactical analysis. Lucent now has access to a continuously refreshed repository of unbiased competitive analysis. Critical industry, vendor, and competitive information is updated

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within 24 to 48 hours of a new development. That includes timely, in-depth assessments of the strengths and weaknesses of key products and services from other equipment and network vendors, and nonevent driven market and competitor assessments.

Web-based platform and collaboration tools. Competitive intelligence is delivered via Web-based applications around the globe. The platform enables Lucent sales teams to filter the competitive intelligence to fit their specific needs and to customize their interface as well.

“The Current Analysis approach enables our global sales teams to have 24/7 access to competitive insights,” says Slaughter. “It’s delivered to their desktops on demand, just-in-time, and in small chunks of information. Integrating CA with other learning interventions lets us have a true blended learning solution for the field.”

Content integration. Current Analysis seamlessly integrated the competitive analysis into Lucent’s existing information systems so it could distribute the intelligence directly to the field. The global sales teams access the competitive intelligence through email alerts or the Website, delivered in a format that’s actionable and relevant to specific sales positions.

“Current Analysis plays a critical role in improving our sales organization’s business development skills, increasing its competitive insights and keeping it current on competitive product knowledge,” says Slaughter. “We use the side-by-side, product-level comparisons

from CA to go head-to-head against toughest competitors. The ultimate value of CA is in helping our frontline sales teams manage competitive selling situations so they can drive increased revenues.”

Lucent Learning sales and marketing uses the Current Analysis product Class Sales Tutorials to help sales teams identify sales opportunities, anticipate frequently asked questions, understand product benefits, compare competing technologies, and provide a complete sales overview at the specific product level. “The Product Class Tutorials are integrated into Lucent’s overall learning strategies. They’re more efficient and less costly than our internal development alternatives,” Slaughter notes.

Lucent also uses CurrentCHANNEL to integrate competitive intelligence from Current Analysis directly into its Web portal that supports Lucent’s channel partners. That value-added service has enabled Lucent to strengthen its relationships with key partners and resellers.

“Current Analysis gives our customer training team a new perspective on our products versus competitors. It helps our instructors position Lucent products with our customer’s installation and maintenance employees during training classes,” says Slaughter.

About 2000 members of Lucent global sales teams now have access to critical competitive intelligence. Current Analysis has enabled Lucent to drive tactical information throughout global sales, marketing, and product

teams and has played a critical role in improving Lucent’s business development skills. As a result, Lucent’s ability to respond to competitive threats has stayed strong.

In a Nutshell

Lucent Technologies is a global leader in the design and delivery of networks for some of the world’s largest communications service providers. Backed by Bell Labs’s research and development, Lucent relies on its strengths in mobility, optical, and data and voice networking technologies, as well as software and services to develop next-generation networks. Headquartered in Murray Hill, New Jersey, Lucent had US\$12.3 billion in fiscal year 2002 and more than 35,000 employees worldwide. Lucent systems, services, and software are designed to help carriers throughout the world quickly deploy and better manage their networks and create new, revenue-generating services that help businesses and consumers.

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