Success Story:

ILOG, Inc. is in the business of helping its customers operate more effectively, improve return on application investments, and increase operational efficiencies. They do this by selling, marketing and deploying business rule, optimization and visualization software with associated professional services. ILOG products are used by thousands of software developers and indirectly by millions of end-users in financial, telecommunications, manufacturing, transportation, defense, and other industries.

In the late 1980's, ILOG's founders realized that software code reuse was a prized, but largely elusive, goal and pioneered the first commercially available, highly functional software components. Developers, systems integrators, and independent software vendors were then able to reduce development time and costs by constructing large portions of applications with modular code elements. In the early days of implementing these modular, reusable components, ILOG focused upon technology and gained skill in articulating technical benefits to technical customers. As ILOG gained share and product adoption grew, customers began to realize significant benefits—in some cases hundreds of millions of dollars.

The company made a conscious decision to modify its product lines to emphasize a rapidly growing category - Business Rule Management Systems (BRMS) - and better empower their sales and marketing staff to articulate business usages and resulting benefits to enterprise business users. They wanted to ensure that executives at the highest levels knew that ILOG could, through the use of their products and services, help them:

- Meet compliance mandates
- Improve customer interactions
- Improve their business processes
- Extend the usability of their enterprise legacy and third-party systems

These changes required ILOG to develop and implement more customer focused sales and marketing strategies and tactics. CustomerCentric Selling® began working with ILOG's COO, VP of sales and VP of marketing, and mutually identified the potential of achieving several ambitious goals:

- Scale the business by 25%, year-over-year, even in a soft economy.
- Increase the productivity of the average account manager.
- Increase sales management effectiveness.
- Gain early visibility into forecasted opportunities.
- Develop sales ready messaging that would be used during the entire sales process.

Working with CCS®, the company began assessing ILOG's current sales and marketing environment to identify the issues and obstacles preventing them from achieving those goals. They quickly identified that there was a large variance between top performers and the rest of the field sales force. Therefore, they were overly dependent on the sales efforts of a small fraction of the field. They also identified new trends in the market: (1) More vendors had entered into the rapidly growing Business Rule Management Systems market creating greater competition with the majority of their opportunities and (2) that they broadened their selling efforts from selling to highly technical buyers, to include executive-level business and IT decision makers, some of whom are 'non-technical'.

ILOG needed a way to 'codify' its top performers' behaviors and 'map' those best-practices into a repeatable sales process that the rest of the sales team could follow. As part of implementing this process, they needed auditable sales process milestones that would enable management to more accurately forecast the business at the opportunity level. They also needed to develop marketing messages that would yield two critical results: First, messages needed to be delivered that were more than feature/function oriented and, second, these messages needed to better integrate with the new sales process, resulting in greater use by the field and higher effectiveness of marketing investments. Finally, all of this needed to be delivered in a training program for their Sales, Pre-Sales, Marketing & Professional Services staff.

After working with CCS to deliver these capabilities, ILOG experienced positive results that included the following:

- Significant reduction in discounting due to better understanding of value to prospect.
- Reduced number of losses due to better understanding of prospect needs and higher level contacts earned.
- Increased average revenue per customer.
- Created a common language used by everyone inside ILOG to articulate product attributes and customer uses.
- Improved visibility into sales pipeline earlier in sales cycle due to higher level contacts and auditable sales process milestones.

For more information on ILOG, Inc., visit their website at: www.ilog.com. For more information about KeyRoad Enterprises, please visit: www.keyroad.com.