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Advancing CRM

InterAction® Accelerate 2017 Business Development Summit

April 10th 2017

Location: Umstead Hotel and Spa, North Carolina

At the Accelerate event, the agenda had some main themes around growth ('it's hard but equally not optional!') and that the CRM is more than 'just about data', and very much the focus towards Business Development (BD) and data driven decision making. The first day's keynote speaker was Kelly Hoey, author of "Build your dream network" and she provided a brilliant and engaging insight into the new definitions of networking particularly in the digital age. The key takeaway for me was about building your own personal brand - something we are all doing in our respective firms to ensure we have the gravitas to advise and consult at a strategic level.

Next up was an industry survey with the results being delivered by our very own Meghan Frank from the US team. This survey brought in insights from a COO perspective, and it seems we are in the 'new normal' and therefore what counts is that we need to ride out those opportunities and challenges and work as strategic and innovative leaders.

The US InterAction team managed various breakout sessions from knowledge bursts on GDPR and InterAction in line with the new GDPR features to Business Development operations. Bryan Austin focused on how the BD role has evolved and how to engage leaders across the business. Scott Wallingford provided brilliant insight into growing your firm whilst protecting your data, the key takeaway here was more data isn't always better, good data is the selling point to InterAction and very much extends the value of InterAction. There were two marketing strategy sessions focusing on technology and operations, people process and technology. Thoughts on how to build this into organisations was delivered by our

very own Stacey Morrow with Brad Stites working on a go to market strategy - which struck a chord with me as it got me thinking about the impact of culture and size when handling our strategic projects.

Day two brought with it the road map expertly delivered by Scott Winter, which was whole heartedly embraced by the US clients. The room was very receptive and positive, and you could see the clients realising the impact of what we have produced and what is to come - and the excitement was palpable.

The keynote speaker for day two was Ron Tite, who delivered an engaging presentation around the creativity of the CMO and how close to the decision-making Marketing really is. We all left repeating "THINK DO SAY" - or certainly I did on the plane on the way back.

There was also plenty of action and breakout sessions, my only disappointment was that I had to choose from them all - they were all so engaging and expertly delivered by the US InterAction Team. The clients that attended were from a range of backgrounds and positions, but they all came together with the drive to increase CRM adoption in their respective firms and to work more strategically. Interestingly, to coin a phrase we here in the UK have been talking about for a while, **'repositioning InterAction as a business tool'**, was the main focus for many clients - exactly the same as our challenges over the pond. We talked about BD strategy, marketing communications user adoption and data driven decision making... ring a bell anyone...?

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