



From an Idea to Revenue
in Just Nine Months

**Rovema North America - Capital
Equipment Sales & Marketing**



Case Study

German Engineering - American Flexibility

Walk down nearly any aisle in any grocery, pet or drug store and you'll see products that have been packaged on vertical baggers (also known in the industry as vertical form/fill/seal machines.)

[Rovema North America](#) is a wholly owned subsidiary of Germany's Rovema GmbH - a long-time innovator in vertical bagging technology. Rovema's customers include companies from small family owned spice businesses and collective nut and fruit farms to the world's largest and most recognized consumer goods companies.



As in every industry, competition is fierce. From small US machine shops that build machines, through upstart international players, on up to the global conglomerate Bosch, there are many machine companies vying for business and making similar sounding claims.

CPG manufacturers compare solutions carefully - a vertical bagger sits at the intersection of production efficiency and retail sales success. The machine must deliver consistent, reliable operation to keep the factory moving - and the resulting packages must satisfy notoriously fickle retail consumer tastes. These aren't just "packaging machines", these are critical to companies' success.

The Challenges: Starting from Scratch

John Panaseney, a long time packaging industry veteran and former President and CEO of US subsidiaries of other European machine builders, was recruited to take the helm of Rovema NA during the summer of 2014.

He faced a number of challenges from staffing to brand confusion in the North American market. Not only did he have to build a sales team, but he knew he had to reach engineers who may have had frustrations in the past which they mistakenly associated with Rovema.

Yet without even a US website, he had few tools at his disposal to build the PR, brand, product marketing, lead generation and sales enablement engine that he knew he would need. Accustomed to having established marketing functions in previous companies, he turned to some traditional packaging machinery industry resources.

He soon realized however that the investment wasn't creating opportunities for his sales team to nurture dialog and eventually explore applications with CPG engineers.

About Rovema North America

Annual sales: >\$20MM USD

Employees: approx 35

Target Industries: Food, Pharma, Pet Care & Chemical

Typical sales: \$250,000-500,000

Location: Atlanta, GA



John identified a number of challenges facing his sales team:

1. They lacked a digital presence that spoke authentically to American engineers, maintenance, marketing and management - all key stakeholders in any evaluation and procurement of V/F/F/S equipment
2. The parent company owners had aggressive expectations for US market contributions to revenue and growth goals - he needed measurable results, fast
3. Many of the approaches which made him successful selling equipment earlier in his career were of decreasing value as key engineering and management contacts today are inaccessible behind moats of caller ID and email screening.
4. Only a small number of prospects are actually in the market for substantial capital equipment at any time - and while his sales team was busy dealing with current projects he needed to connect with those who would become next year's projects
5. The traditionally transaction/project nature of the industry meant that buyers normally saw machine companies as vendors rather than resources.

“As the excitement was replaced with a cold assessment of reality, I realized that none of my long packaging industry experience, nor any of the traditional marketing & PR players, were well suited to the rapidly evolving nature of the market.” says John. “When we’re sitting with an engineering team working on a project we win a huge percentage of deals. But I wasn’t any longer confident that we could consistently earn our spot at those conversations. I was looking for ideas.”

The Approach: Start from scratch & build fast

Inspiration struck in the form of an email and presentation from Ed Marsh which explored the changing nature of customer buying habits. ([view it here](#))

John had originally met Ed over a casual dinner in Duesseldorf Germany during Interpack 2015. A veteran of industrial capital equipment sales (including partnership with a German company in their US operation, founding a company in Mumbai, India to sell used US machines, and leading the team that advised PMMI on developing its digital strategy which ultimately resulted in the purchase of Summit Media) [Ed instinctively understood the cultural and market challenges John faced.](#)

Over the ensuing six months, including a meeting at Rovema NA’s Atlanta office with the parent company Managing Director, they discussed possible approaches. Packaging machinery companies rarely allocate 5% of revenue to marketing as is common in other industries - and like many CEOs, John wrestled with the intellectual imperative and the emotional hesitance. Finally in March of 2016 they launched an initiative which included basic building blocks of qualitative buyer research and persona creation, understanding of company strategy and priorities, market research, and website creation building on HubSpot’s COS and simultaneously integrating the companion marketing automation and CRM.

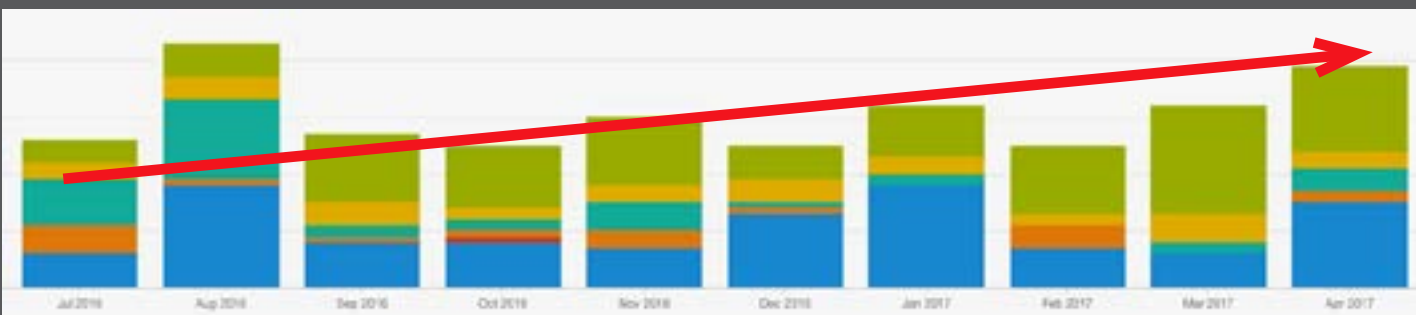
The site launched and the program was implemented in July, 2016 with the release of a guide to improving packaging OEE (instead of pitching some machine feature as is commonly done.) Within days Rovema NA began to engage with new contacts from the world’s preeminent CPG manufacturers.



Nine months into the program, success is evident. Progress includes:

- Immediate search visibility - outranked Bosch (€73 Billion 2016 revenue) on core product keywords within 3 months, and 9 months after launch the site ranks for 315 organic keywords, with 34 in the top 3 and 66 in the top 10
- Rovema's "thought leadership" content has been embraced by senior engineers in F100 companies and circulated among their engineering teams as suggested reading
- Content has been created in various formats including whitepaper, downloadable guide, video, webinar, slideshare and infographic to appeal to various prospect preferences
- Nearly 3% of website visitors become leads
- Sales, marketing and management all work from a single database for prospect insights, pipeline forecasting and project tracking
- Rovema NA routinely generates international leads which it is able to forward to its parent company
- Marketing automation and email marketing have fostered reengagement with a number of key players in target accounts who weren't open to sales contact
- An editorial calendar incorporates all elements of sales and marketing activity to ensure that key strategic initiatives are supported through tactical execution
- Coaching continues to develop the internal marketing department ability
- Integrated systems alert sales reps to specific activities by contacts who have received quotes (e.g. visit to machine spec page on website) and to new target account contacts

Growth in Leads/Month (after initial program launch)



“We knew we just needed the invitation to project conversations” says John. “Ed’s understanding of the machinery market, buyer behaviors and digital tools have delivered a stream of new leads which exceeds the goals we set for the first year - and which we thought were outrageously aggressive.”



Outcomes:

Because the program was a greenfield project there are no comparative metrics to illustrate the success. Absolute progress is clear.

\$2,500,000

**Approximate
value of
machines
sales directly
supported**

314

New Leads

315

**Ranked Organic
Keywords**

Lessons Learned

Outside marketing firms, even those specializing in specific industries, typically revert to traditional approaches which are poorly suited to meet current market and buyer expectations.

Since only 3% of prospects for any given product or service are in the market at any given time, it's critical to speak to broader business and professional challenges to establish fruitful conversation.

When discussions originate based on big topics (downtime, OEE, consumer trends, marketing goals) later project and procurement conversations are focused on capability and outcomes vs. price and specs.

It's possible for small companies starting with nothing to overtake global conglomerates with targeted work. But it must be strategically envisioned and properly executed. Simply sending press releases, investing in PPC and placing ads yields little.

“Ed and his team not only deliver advice that drives tangible marketing and revenue results, but his strategic advisory and industrial sales savvy are an incredibly valuable by-product of the work we’ve done. He ‘gets it’ and he makes it happen. I strongly recommend Ed’s expertise and advisory model to industrial companies that want to drive more results with their marketing and sales teams.”

John Panaseny, CEO, Rovema NA



DACH Market Savvy

If you're a manufacturer from a DACH (Germany, Austria, Switzerland) country trying to sell in the crazy US market, or a US company working to develop US market presence for a DACH manufacturer, I've been there.

This guide explores the challenges.

[Download it here.](#)



More Info for Manufacturers

Manufacturing Revenue Growth

31 page step-by-step guide to industrial content marketing



Executives Guide to Finance of Content Marketing

Cost, investment, value & return on today's digital marketing



7 Major Risks of B2B Social Media

So social media isn't for industrial manufacturers? Wrong!



Turning Marketing Automation into a Sales Tool

It's only a shiny gadget if you keep it to marketing!

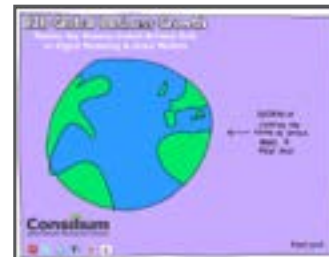
17 Tips to Optimize B2B Industrial Trade Shows

You've got to be there...make the investment count!



Turning Domestic Digital Marketing into Global Sales

De-risk exporting through market intelligence and lead gen



with so many **B2B sales & marketing "experts"**...some much needed **revenue growth wisdom**

About Ed Marsh



Ed Marsh is a consultant, independent director, board advisor and B2B industrial revenue growth expert.

A former Army Airborne Ranger and graduate of Johns Hopkins, he has owned businesses and carried sales & distribution P&L in the industrial manufacturing space.

He's Export Advisor to American Express & a HubSpot partner.

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