



Aligning Your Ag Business: Introduction

Rethinking your Agronomy Business...If Not?

Challenges are facing the agronomy industry. It is critical to evaluate, rethink and align your business to meet those challenges. Significant business may be lost if appropriate changes are not made.

Consider the three specific strategies that are critical to grow your business shown in the image.

“How do we structure and position our agronomy business model, sales model and sales positions to align with the needs and expectations of growers who are expanding acres, while continuing to maintain strong relationships with our current customers who are primarily traditional growers?”

Our Expert for this article is Kevin Eye. Kevin’s career in agriculture has spanned over 40 years. He served as Vice President, Northern Sales Business Unit and Vice President, Agronomy & Product Development at Winfield United from 2013 to 2018. Kevin is skilled in understanding the agricultural segments from B2B to the end-user and providing information and insight to the marketplace related to new technologies, products, sales, and alignment practices.



Kevin, in conversations you have had with CEO’s/GM’s and senior level agronomy leaders, what are their concerns related to grower profitability, grower segmentation, and the challenges of sustaining and growing sales and profitability of their agronomy businesses?

In my conversations I often hear, what does the future look like for our agronomy business in 1, 3, 5 years? As we know, farmers are struggling financially, margins are eroding, tin-sheds and direct ship online portals are growing, bypassing our retail business. They are asking, how do we structure and position our agronomy business model and sales model and positions to align with the needs and expectations of growers who are expanding acres, while continuing to maintain strong relationships with our current customers who are primarily traditional growers? Where do we start?

Kevin, we have identified Five Key Actions that we believe are necessary to minimize erosion of sales and profits and to position agronomy businesses for growth and prosperity in the future. Where do we start?

Grower Segmentation: Segmenting your grower’s is the best way to meet their needs. And for your business to be more successful in developing a win-win business relationship. Invest in understanding what the progressive growers in your market area want from their agronomy supplier and agronomy & seed salesperson.

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Why in your opinion, is focusing on “Sales Alignment”, important if not critical to agronomy retailers?

Sales Alignment & Strategies: It is critical to change the Sales Alignment with more focus on progressive growers, or sales and profits will decline. Providing progressive growers top-notch service and retaining them as loyal customers is dependent on successfully developing and executing on your agronomy business plan. To obtain an effective business plan, it is about developing “sales alignment & strategies” for your business and starts by measuring your customer’s experience.

Why is “How we Communicate” with progressive growers important in building and maintaining a “trusted advisor” status?

The progressive segment, and especially younger growers, want timely digital communications on crop input planning and in-season crop conditions, (text messaging, web site, emails, etc.).

What are examples of communication tools to use with Progressive Growers:

As an example, texting to a grower (or post on YouTube) a 2-minute video, weekly on current crop conditions (in the field), builds that trusted-advisor status. And valuable information for your growers

What are the implications of grower segmentation and sales alignment on the agronomy sales model and agronomy sales function?

Sales Model Analysis & Planning. Improving alignment will require a sales model and agronomy sales business plan based on a deep understanding of what the grower segments need and want from their agronomist and agronomy supplier. It is critically important to adapt the agronomy sales model and positions to match the highest priority needs and wants of progressive growers that you want as customers in the future.

How do we make sure we have agronomy salespeople that will succeed with each grower market segment?

Measure current aptitude of each agronomy salesperson by completing a validated knowledge and skills assessment including technical and product knowledge. Assessment results are used to rank the current agronomy sales team and you to use as an indicator for selecting salespeople that are the best fit for each target market segment.

Why are “Grower Recommendations” based on “Data-Drive Technology” so important to progressive growers?

Using Digital Technology to make Data Driven Decisions: Growers have so much more to deal with these days, from markets to regulations, and having to spend more time figuring out how to make a profit, or more accurately, how to avoid a loss. With that, they need or demand better data-driven digital technology insights to help them make better decisions on each of their fields

What is important in a successful sales team development and coaching program?

Sales Team Alignment, Development & Coaching: Measure current aptitude of each agronomy salesperson by completing a validated knowledge and skills assessment. Assessment results are used to assign salespeople that are the best fit for each target market segment.



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Design group and individual training and coaching plans that develop core competencies matching each grower market segment. This approach will produce better results, including higher-level grower customer satisfaction, and consistent sales performance in both leading (behaviors) & lagging (sales results) indicators.

Aligning your Ag Business is a series of short articles and expert interviews. Each article will focus on one of the Five Actions and actionable steps you can implement. Articles will be asking and answering the why, what, and how of aligning sales with grower segments and as a result, growing sales and profits for growers and your agronomy business.

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