Before we spent another dollar on acquisition, we fixed what a dollar was actually worth.

PosiGen, PBC · Solar & Home Services

Real time measurement and a performance mindset drove faster decision making and bought us time and money to invest back into the planned growth of the business.

THE NUMBERS

$20M+/mo

Lifetime value sales driven at peak

30%

Year-over-year growth sustained through market expansion

25%

Reduction in CAC on recurring revenue, achieved *while* entering new markets, not before

$375M

Portfolio growth in national home services sales

01 The Situation

PosiGen topline sales were growing fast. A 150 person sales team was closing deals every day; the company was pushing into new states, and by most measures, things looked good. **Nobody had asked the harder question yet: what did each deal actually cost to win, and was that number getting better or worse as the company scaled?**

No one in the room had a job to ask it. Marketing had never had a seat on the executive leadership team. I became the first one, in April 2022, brought on as the company's growth marketing leader. The role expanded from there, and I moved into General Manager of Sales & Marketing as the mandate grew.

That's the trap growth stage companies fall into more than any other. Topline volume looks like health. It isn't the same thing across the customer journey to completed transaction.

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02 The Stakes

Two thirds of homeowners wanted solar, but only about three in one hundred single family homes had it. PosiGen needed to expand into new markets. New markets mean new acquisition costs, new sales cycles, new everything. Scale a broken unit economics model into three new states and you don't get three times the growth. You get three times the problem, faster than you can fix it.

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03 What I Did

First 60 days: listen before building.

Before touching a channel or a dollar of spend I visited every market team to assess the frontline performance. I co created field playbooks with Sales and Community Impact, built directly from listening sessions with core customers and key partners in our highest volume public/private partnerships like the CT Green Bank, Rhode Island Office of Energy Resources and City of Philadelphia. You can't fix an economic model that isn’t pulling every lever for efficiency and value. Our research clearly showed us: 44% of customers who signed feared hidden costs, 31% worried about technical issues with their systems, 26% feared “scams”, 22% felt the offer was too good to be true. Only 27% of those surveyed had no concern at all.

(Paragraph Project “State of the Brand,” Nov 2023)

Our Positioning.

We commissioned The Paragraph Project research and strategy firm to help us listen to our current, potential and the customers who said no. We didn’t need to educate people on the benefits of solar. We have to prove to them we are removing the obstacles. We rebuilt our GTM on a brand house of simplifying solar.

Rebuilt the foundation underneath the numbers.

We diligently reworked our Salesforce CRM, built multiple sprints to attack our looming tech debt and redesigned sales compensation so incentives actually pointed at the right outcome: profitable, recurring revenue, not just closed monthly volume.

Opened new channels, but only after the foundation was sound.

Digital performance marketing channels came next, aimed specifically at acquisition that would hold up on a recurring revenue basis. We measured performance on all the levers we could pull from SEO, customer referrals, sales compensation, measured mail campaigns and our hardest nut to crack: paid affiliate leads.

Built the operating system to run it at scale.

A new annual planning framework focused on the complete customer journey and marketing maturity model brought discipline to a ~$15M P&L annual spend, run through multiple agency and contractor RFPs to bring burden costs down. We found old campaigns delivering at $475 per lead when our target needed to be in the $35-55 per lead range. Any purchased leads under ~$30 lowered intent well beyond our close rates.

Ran cross department sprints on the pieces the model depended on.

Our research told us: 43% of customers had thought about canceling. Their top reasons: panel performance 55%, communication 45%, maintenance 39%. Customer satisfaction scores fell from 75% at the first rep meeting to 56% post install. Working with Sales and Ops, I improved CRM data accuracy so decisions were based on numbers we could trust. A rebuilt CX journey targeted the specific moments customers were most likely to cancel. And the referral work that started as a trust repair effort scaled into a program of 25,000 active advocates, one of the company's most cost efficient acquisition channels.

Then, and only then, expanded.

With the economics holding, PosiGen entered three new markets within 24 months.

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04 The Result

Everything in these communities ran on “word of mouth”. It’s human trust. CAC on recurring revenue dropped 25%, during the exact window the company was entering new, unfamiliar markets, which is normally when acquisition costs go up, not down. LTV sales reached over $20 million a month at peak, with 30% year over year growth sustained through the expansion.

The customer base grew to 36,000 homeowners across 15 states. The broader portfolio scaled to $375 million in national sales, and the organization grew to 750 plus employees in 36 months without losing its footing.

The supporting work held up under scale too. CRM accuracy improvements gave the business numbers it could actually plan against. The rebuilt CX journey brought cancellations down by ~3% with a goal of 7% to get us back to industry standards. And the referral program grew quickly from 5,000 to 25,000 active advocates, a channel that got cheaper to run the bigger it got, not more expensive. Our top earning sales team members all built their customer books on referrals and asked not to receive paid affiliate leads.

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05 Why It Matters

Most growth stage leadership teams reach for more spend when growth stalls or slows. More ads, more reps, more channels. It's the obvious move, and it's usually the wrong first move.

The right first move is diagnostic: find out what's actually broken before you add fuel to it. Fix the economics, then scale the spend. Do it in the other order and you're just buying your problems in bulk. Our priorities across the org centered on tech debt, CRM reporting accuracy, lead management & efficiency, sales compensation, and training of our Sales Managers.

At PosiGen that diagnosis didn't stay inside marketing. It ran across departments, because the constraints did too. That's usually where the real answer is hiding. Not in the function with the marketing budget, but in whatever function is quietly feeding it bad data or losing customers out the back door before the installs could be completed.

That's the sequence I run for every client, under a performance marketing system. Diagnose the real constraint first. Measure everything along the customer journey. Then build. Not the other way around.



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