

BBS MARKETING Student  
→ IRISH I.T. COMPANY - SALES  
RECORD OF PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE (RPE) Position

About the company

[REDACTED] is Ireland's leading Business technologies and IT consumables Providers. They are an Irish owned Company and have been operating for over 26 years. They deal in three different areas; Business Solutions, Information Technologies and IT Consumables. They have operations in [REDACTED] different locations in Ireland, two in [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] and they employ over 200 people nationwide. I was located in the [REDACTED] in Dublin which dealt in the IT Consumables sector.

They supply original products to the Corporate and Public sectors, resellers and directly to the consumer. The [REDACTED] Branch is the main distribution centre which is ideally located beside Dublin's M50 and they stock over 4000 different products in their Warehouse. The Product Range includes Laser supplies, Inkjet supplies, Fax Machine Supplies, Thermal Printer Supplies, Magnetic Media, Dot Matrix Supplies, Cleaning Products and Accessories such as Mice and USB memory sticks. [REDACTED] are the leading suppliers of top manufacturers such as HP, Brother, Canon, Epson, Lexmark, Oki and Maxell.

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### Training given

I worked on the Corporate Sales floor so I was essentially dealing directly to Businesses. When I arrived first I was given training on the Company's operating system which is called [REDACTED] this is the system they use for placing orders, quotes and the general day to day running of the Business. I learned how to place an order on the system, send a quote out to a customer and place a Purchasing query if I could not find a product on the system. The roles in the department were explained and I also learned how to run a report on sales figures and targets which was updated at the start of each morning.

I also spent some time in each of the other departments so I would gain an overall understanding of the running of the Business. In the Purchasing department they explained how they deal with the various queries that are sent to them so that they can help the sales reps. They showed me how they submit quotes to vendors and how they obtain the best possible price for the various products. Whenever a product on an order is not in stock it goes on "back order" and I learned the process they have in place to ensure the quickest turnover of stock.

The Distribution department deal with Customers who resell the goods such as [REDACTED] etc. I listened in to some phone calls and made some calls myself and learned the different approach they use and the various sales techniques which gave me a more rounded approach for dealing with customers. I also spent some time in the Customer Service department. I learned how they deal with the various queries on a day to day basis and their many other functions. They explained how they deal with restocking fees, returns and the transfer costs incurred when goods are returned, this gave me an understanding of how to avoid potential problems in the future.

I spent a day in the Warehouse and was shown the system they have in place to ensure that errors are kept to a minimum and how the goods were "Picked", "Packed" and sent out to the various customers. All orders are sent to the Warehouse and it is their job to locate each product and pack them in suitable containers to ensure that the goods were not damaged.

I was also given Manual Handling training, in this I was shown the correct way to pick up objects and to avoid potential hazards with my back or any other potential problems. So overall I spent some time in each department so I could understand how each department worked as a team and their various functions.

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### Daily Tasks

Every morning the first thing I did after logging in was to run the morning figures. To do this I had to run a report on [REDACTED] which had the updated sales figures and all relevant information from the previous day. I would then transfer this onto an excel spreadsheet to determine what my daily sales target would be. I would keep one copy for myself and give another copy to the manager.

I was working as part of a sales team so I had targets to meet every day and every month. To achieve these targets I had to build relationships with the various customers I was dealing with. A lot of my time was spent on the phone dealing with customers or checking and replying to emails, so I was in regular contact with the various customers throughout the day. I was allocated two "territories" to work on, these territories contained over 250 customers and I was the account manager for all of these customers.

There were several ways a customer could order; by email, fax or by phone. The faxes had to be collected downstairs at reception and emails I would check every few minutes. Any order that came in by fax I would place on the system and then file it in a folder to keep it as a hard copy, similarly I kept all email orders and saved them in an appropriate folder. I spent most of the day on the phone as a lot of the customers would call in to place an order and this was a chance to build a rapport with the customer and of course to increase sales. Whenever I made a phone call to a customer I would record it on a call log sheet, I would note their company name, their own name and whatever feedback I received from the customer.

There are over 4000 products in the Warehouse so it is impossible to know them all off hand; this is why a "purchase query" system was in place. If a customer was looking for a good and I couldn't locate it on the system I would note whatever the customer was looking for and I would send the query to our purchasing department and they would give me the relevant product as soon as they could. Similarly if a customer placed an order but we didn't have it in stock, the item would automatically go on back order, the purchasing team would be notified and they would supply me with an estimated "lead" time so I could tell the customer when we would have the product.

The sales figures had to be checked every hour and the department figure would then be written up on a white board in the office. This showed everyone how much the department had to achieve before the end of the day. These figures would be sent around in an excel spreadsheet just before lunch and also at the end of the day. Overall hitting targets and keeping to deadlines was my main focus for the day, I used various IT packages such as Word, Excel and Navision on a daily basis which vastly improved my IT skills.

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### Weekly tasks

Every Tuesday we had a Sales meeting during lunchtime. Everyone on the corporate floor attended to discuss the week ahead. At the start of each meeting the minutes from the previous week were read and then everyone was given the chance to discuss their own tactics and goals for the week. I contributed to each meeting and explained what my own plan was for the week, what my current run rate was and which customers I was going to contact that week. I didn't have meetings like this in my previous jobs and it was beneficial to speak in front of a group like that as it gave me more confidence and experience on a professional level.

The minutes were kept from each meeting and occasionally I was asked to take the minutes, these would then be uploaded onto the company's intranet [REDACTED]. These would be distributed to all members of the corporate floor for the following weeks meeting.

At the end of each week I filed away any orders that had come in either by fax or email. I also filed the call log sheets for the week. Every Friday I looked back through the log sheets to see if I had missed any customers and I would make a note to call them the following week. I looked back over the plan for the week to see what had been achieved and what could be improved upon. I also collected the paper and cardboard that built up in the office throughout the week and brought it down to the Warehouse for recycling.

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### Monthly tasks

At the beginning of every month I wrote out a monthly Business plan. This plan outlined exactly what I intended to do for the following month and I gave this to the manager. This gave me a clear outline on what I had to do for the month and which areas to focus on. I would also look at the previous months plan and overall figures to analyse which areas to improve upon such as missed targets or high transfer costs. These plans were also discussed in the first sales meeting of the month and the departments goals were outlined for the month.

Some of the customers that I dealt with required a record of their orders from the previous month. I would record their various orders from the month and upload them onto an excel spreadsheet and send it to their purchasing manager. Some of the Hospitals also had contract prices and they required a report of their orders every three months so I conducted two of these reports.

There were several large Companies I dealt with on a daily basis such as; Aerlingus, Bord na Mona, the Tallaght Hospital, the Mercy Hospital, Eircom and An post, so it was important to know what they ordered and the prices they bought them at. These customers have contracts with [REDACTED] and have set prices for many of the products that they order, but sometimes these prices needed to be update on Navision so I would upload these onto the system so that the prices would come up automatically whenever they ordered these products. I also created excel spreadsheets for all of the customers I dealt with which showed the products that they ordered and the prices they ordered them at, this made things a lot easier whenever I called a customer as I had a record of their order history.

The main objective for the month was to hit my sales target and also to help other members of the sales team to hit theirs. So I was working to deadlines and targets on a regular basis and also worked as part of a team. There were some incentives we had to work towards also which was another reason to hit our sales targets. In May there was an Oki incentive in which we had to hit our monthly sales target and also sell a certain amount of Oki products and I am glad to say I hit both targets.

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### One off tasks

Just before Easter it was decided that we were going to do a promotion which we would send to our customers. Myself and my colleague [REDACTED] were appointed to design a card and slogan for the promotion which would be sent to the top twenty customers from each of the various *territories*. We firstly got a list of these customers from our colleagues and then added their details to a mail merge, we then created a design and slogan for the card. The card was sent with an Easter egg to these customers wishing them happy Easter, the promotion was quite successful and many of the customers rang in to say thanks and it gave us another reason to call the customers. I enjoyed being involved in this promotion and I found it a worthwhile and beneficial experience.

When I was leaving I updated the *cheat sheets* for the territories I was working on. These are notes on the various customers that I dealt with over the last seven months; the notes include contact names, numbers, order patterns and any other relevant information that would help whoever would be dealing with these customers after my departure.

On two occasions I went down to the warehouse when they needed another person, while I was there I also spent some time on the collections desk and dealt with various customers face to face. This was totally different to the corporate floor but it gave me a better view into the overall running of the company.

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### Summary of work experience

Overall I spent seven months at [REDACTED]. I have never worked on a Business to Business basis so this was a new experience for me. I was working in an office as part of a sales team working to deadlines and sales targets which was beneficial to me. I improved my interpersonal skills and I was constantly working with various IT systems which vastly improved my IT skills. I learned some new sales techniques and various ways to negotiate and deal with customers so overall it was a worthwhile experience.

<i>Signatures:</i>	<i>Date:</i>
<b>Student</b>	
<b>Work Supervisor</b>	
<b>Employer Name</b>	
<b>WIT Mentor</b>	