

# NMBS to Offer sales-i to its Independent Building, Hardware and Plumbing Merchants

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- sales-i to boost sales analysis, awareness and profitability; enabling NMBS merchants to compete more effectively -

Solihull, UK – January 27th , 2009 – sales-i, ([www.sales-i.com](http://www.sales-i.com)) the real-time sales intelligence service for front line sales people today announced it has signed a strategic agreement with the National Merchant Buying Society ([www.nmbs.co.uk](http://www.nmbs.co.uk)), the most successful buying group for independent builders', plumbers', hardware and timber merchants in the UK, to offer sales-i to its 660+ building industry members.

NMBS was formed over forty years ago and has adopted the motto "Strengthening Independents". Everything it does is aimed to improve the profitability and operating costs of its independent members and includes everything – from getting better deals on products to driving down costs by utilising its highly efficient clearing house services and electronic trading facilities.

The decision to offer sales-i's sales intelligence service to its members comes at a time when they face the threat posed by the large national merchants coupled with a struggling economy. Smart sales analysis and identifying who is buying what and at what margin and profitability, is now more important than ever before.

sales-i is a unique sales support service that streamlines and accelerates sales people, sales processes and sales figures. By carefully monitoring customer behaviour and purchasing patterns, sales-i discovers and analyses precisely when, why, where and how businesses buy their products and services, transforming this knowledge into qualified, targeted, high-quality, sales opportunities. These opportunities are then express-delivered to salespeople via automatic text and email alerts. And because sales-i also identifies and flags up potential competitive threats and predicts competitor activity, not only do sales people get to the sale fast, they get there first. sales-i is delivered on-demand via the web with a monthly fee so no need for software installation or downloads.

Nick Oates, the NMBS's trading director came across sales-i from his previous experience in the office products industry where a leading buying group, Integra, recommends sales-i to its members to boost sales in a tough market. On investigation, Nick recognised that sales-i could potentially offer the same benefits to the building products industry.

Nick explains, "Independent merchants compete against big national players by offering a trusted, customer focused service. However, keeping abreast of which customer is buying which products and identifying upselling and cross selling opportunities can be difficult to spot amongst hundreds of customers and potentially thousands of products. " Nick continues, "With sales-i our merchants can have this information at their fingertips in real time and that empowers them to identify sales opportunities when out on the road, or in the office, or at home before setting out on a sales call. We are delighted to offer this to our members and to give them the opportunity to improve their profitability in these testing times. "

Kevin McGirl is co-founder of sales-i and comments, "We are honoured to forge this strategic partnership with the NMBS and we look forward to helping its members to gain a competitive advantage as they face challenging market conditions. As part of the NMBS evaluation we have already received the go ahead from a number of members and suppliers, including: Huws Gray, Leeds Plywood, Proctor Group and Rodo.

Nicholls & Clarke, one of the UK's largest manufacturers and distributors of building products, was amongst the first in its industry to give sales-i to its sales team on mobile phones.

Nicholls & Clarke equipped its sales team with Vodafone Smartphone PDAs installed with satellite navigation, email, Internet access and sales-i mobile and this is clearly improving their effectiveness and the way they work. Richard Hill, a Nicholls and Clarke director, explains, "The barriers to adopting sales-i were minimal as all the sales people are familiar with mobile devices. Now they are empowered with everything they need to get to the customer armed with instant account information so they go into meetings fully informed and prepared. We are using the sales-i alert system which also tells us if there is any change in the customer's buying behaviour, so my sales people can identify upselling opportunities and maximise the account visit."

NMBS will shortly begin a campaign to promote sales-i to its members through the NMBS website. Nick adds, "sales-i is a very straightforward system that requires no software installation or downloads. It is easy to set up and get running and the cost is very low too so we are expecting it to be a successful venture with very good take up."

#### About NMBS

The National Merchant Buying Society (NMBS) was formed over 40 years ago by a group of independent merchants in the Midlands who wanted to come together to buy better and compete more effectively with their larger counterparts.

Today, NMBS is the most successful buying group for independent builders', plumbers', hardware and timber merchants in the UK and has an annual turnover of around £550m, with approximately 660 members and over 1400 branches. It has deals with every major supplier to the building industry. To find out more, please visit [www.nmbs.co.uk](http://www.nmbs.co.uk).

#### About sales-i

sales-i© is a real-time sales intelligence service for frontline sales people. Through sales-i, sales professionals are equipped with real-time customer buying behavior alerts which are delivered by email and text messaging, empowering them to make better informed, personalized and faster decisions which maximize repeat sales and reduce customer slippage.

sales-i is a true Software-as-a-Service solution charged on a per-user, per-month, basis.

Sales and marketing organizations rely on sales-i to maximize their sales intelligence. This delivers

protected customer share, better margins, visible cross-sell and up-sell opportunities and increased customer buying behavior know-how resulting in more intelligent, profitable selling.

sales-i is a privately held company with offices in California, USA and Solihull, UK. For more information about sales-i visit [www.sales-i.com](http://www.sales-i.com) or email [tellmemore@sales-i.com](mailto:tellmemore@sales-i.com)

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