



AFRICA SALES BLUEPRINT

16 Lessons Learned While Selling
European Quality in Africa in 2017

By David Karanja

WELCOME TO THE AFRICA SALES BLUEPRINT

Hello,

I am David Karanja, the Founder of Crane Consulting House.

I would like to invite you to join me as I share with you my experience of selling European Made equipment in Kenya.

Now if you have been working in Africa for some time, you may have noticed that in multiple markets across the continent, business has slowed down significantly. Whether you are talking of Southern Africa, West Africa, East Africa or Central Africa, the situation is very similar.

As a Senior Sales or Business Development Executive responsible for Africa, I imagine you might be experiencing:

- **Frustration** with slow pace of sales or no sales
- An **increasing fear** of being conned as you enter a new African country
- A realization that you have **difficulty understanding the various cultures** in various countries
- The **reality** that identifying on the very good and reliable on the ground distributors, partners and agents is not as easy as you initially thought
- **Trouble justifying multiple trips** to various African countries over the last few years with little progress
- **Difficulty knowing if clients will buy** or not from the beginning of your discussions with them
- **Not having a clear cut guide** in how to conduct negotiations and close sales in Africa that guides you from the beginning
- **Stagnation** in building a lead pipeline for more and more customers
- **Difficulty in understanding the trends of your industry** in different countries

You are probably asking if Africa is really the market to be in?

In the year 2017 against a backdrop of odds, I managed to help a German manufacturing client of mine based begin sales in Africa and specifically in Kenya. This was approximately 15 months from when the client first decided to work in Kenya.

My initial timeline to the client for the first sale was between 12 months and 18 months and indeed this 15 month timeline is right in the middle of that.

While achieve that, it is worth to note that this year Kenya held its most complicated elections. These elections slowed business growth across the country in a major way and very few companies were investing in new equipment.

In the process of selling the equipment I learnt a number of lessons. This PDF blueprint is the second part of an Executive Training Series in which I share these lessons and also help companies plan to sell in Kenya in the year 2018 and beyond. The other part is an article on my website and a Risk Free Virtual Training.



I am quite certain this series will add significantly to your bottom line in Africa as I share first hand information on my experience which will be useful to you.

The lessons I have learned begin on the next page. Enjoy the Read.

1. Ground work they did before hand

Before establishing a new market, it is important to establish a network of potential customers or agents. With my client I already had established networks in various companies in their sector. This made it much easier to begin discussions with them due to a prior personal connection. Such connections can be established through networking events, conducting a visit to their company, conducting a research study that involves them as respondents, providing resources materials that are beneficial to the company or their processes.

This goes a long way in establishing credibility and trust with the customer which is essential in developing sales.

2. How having a demo unit on the ground and how that helped

One of the biggest reasons customers do not buy equipment is because they do not know how the equipment works and if it is easy to use. My client sent a demo lab unit to Kenya for conducting tests. This unit was also on sale for a discounted price. Our customers tested this unit and the results were superior to what they usually got with their current machines.

I therefore recommend having a demo unit in Kenya. This unit can be a small lab or research machine. It can be your smallest range and should be located in a venue close to where majority of your customers are. It is very essentially that you establish you can trust the agent you are sending the unit to. And also that they will not sell your unit without your knowledge

3. How to Negotiate in Kenya and Africa

Kenyan business people irrespective of their backgrounds once they ask for the price immediately ask for a big discount indicating they are ready to buy. A key lesson over several years of experience is that do not start by giving a big discount. It is always good to start slow as the negotiation process tends to be long with each contact involving a request for a discount. Additionally give a payment plan once you reach your final price. Also find ways to extend them cheaper credit terms via your bank or your country's export-import bank. Interest rates are much higher in Africa than Europe and the US. This steps help in sealing the sale

4. Political events and how they shape sales in Africa

Unlike most parts of the Western world, elections and referendums in Africa have a major impact on African businesses. The main reason for this is political contests are heavily contested as political offices especially nationally have a lot of power. This leads to uncertainty in knowing how future policies will affect businesses. Customers therefore tend to wait until the election contests are over before they commit to new investments. This also creates pent up demand for new equipment in the period following major electoral contests. In Kenya, following this year's election, an investment boom is expected in 2018-2021 as happened in 1993, 1998-1999, 2003-2005, 2008-2010, 2013-2015 after the presidential context of the prior year.

5. Be patient

This particular point is mainly for 1st time European and US companies in Africa. Due to the cost of equipment from those regions, rarely will your very first sales happen in under 6 or 9 months. Typically in the African market, due to the amount of multiple risks that African businesses face, being the first

customer to buy a new machine in the market is seen as a risk. Therefore many will adopt a wait and see approach to see if others will buy. However after the first sale the growth of your business can be fast. Be prepared for this growth with materials and people resources.

6. A yes, is not always a yes until you receive your payments

In most African cultures, it is rude to say no outright at the beginning of meeting with someone. Therefore you will encounter multiple clients who seem very interested and enthusiastic from the day you meet them. They will ask for quotations and even get to the point of requesting for Proforma invoices. This should not be taken to mean they will buy. One of the best indicators that they will move forward is that they request lots of information on the machine including pictures and then they send you a purchase order. However once you send the invoice for payments remember that until you receive the initial payment, the deal is not yet done. Do note that it can take a month or a month and a half between when you receive the purchase order and receive payment.



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7. Working with Government Officials?

For many businesses government offices and officials are a key or first point of call. While this sometimes can be a good way to start your business, it is important to be sure that it is a necessary step to take. Many times it is not necessary to visit government offices especially if your business is mainly directed at private businesses. From experience I have actually seen some cases of officials creating unnecessary bureaucracy and road blocks on the way so that they can benefit financially.

8. Correct messaging to customers is Key

Buyers in Kenya want cheap but would go for a pricier product if it is presented well and has benefits that cheap products do not have. Some benefits include having warranties, long life of the machine in comparison to other equipment they use, few or no breakdowns, extra parts on purchase etc. Also if

equipment uses less electrical input, has more power etc then this should be included. Secondly be prepared to meet with customers up to 10 times to discuss similar benefits before the customer says yes. Additionally lots of communication on phone and email will be required. Leading to the next point

9. Have a good and reliable agent on the ground

Negotiations are many times long and tough processes in Africa. It is therefore important to have a well established agent who knows how to handle customers of different backgrounds. Your agent must be able to speak authoritatively about your product. It is also important to empower them to handle a certain level of negotiation on their own. Additionally there should be someone who is always be available or have someone available to the agent to respond to customer queries promptly.

I found also customers want to have a face close by they can call or meet. This gives confidence that you are not only going to sell them you products and disappear.

10. One size does not fit all in Kenya or in Africa

As a sales or business development executive you should know that things happen very differently in Africa compared to Europe or the USA. It is also different from how things work in Asia. Additionally due to cultural, ethnic or racial differences, what happens in 1 country is not what will happen in all countries. North Africa and SSA are very different. Also in SSA how things work in West Africa are not the same as in East, Southern or Central Africa. These differences are a critical factor that what dictates how you negotiate with customers. If you have an agent they will know how to negotiate through these differences.

11. Participation in targeted events is key

The first few years you should plan to exhibit or play a major role in industry specific events. In these events you have to be visible. These events include expos, exhibitions, conferences etc and should be well targeted to your customer. This participation should create visibility and should not be about networking only. It should introduce you to customers who you did not know existed in the first place.

12. Launching with your own event and press release can be helpful

Depending on whether or not you're customers are available, if you have a budget, lay the ground work then invite people for a launch event in a good location near where they are. The launch should include brief training and thereafter a networking session with potential customers and agents.

13. Timing when customers will make purchases

Most customers are always looking to buy new equipment. However political, social and economic events in different countries will affect the customers timing. In Kenya, the next 3 years are expected to be boom years and therefore now is the time to really look for customers. An upcoming webinar will detail more about indicators of the potential of Kenya and East Africa booming over the next few years.

14. Not getting the right advice

From experience due to welcoming and helpful cultures in Africa, there are many people who will tend to give advice to you. The problem is if that advice is wrong it will lead you down a wrong path. Sometimes also this people will want to get in the business yet they are not the best people to work with. You need to

work with professionals who are in the business you are in or are in the position to get you the correct information.


15. Knowing who the right people are in a company - Influencers and Decision Makers

Companies are structured differently. In Africa, majority of the companies have 2 decision makers but your product has to be accepted by anything from 3 people to 10 people in the company. Some people are trusted influencers but they not in decision making status. You need to know who those are and be in good terms with everyone. Courtesy and a little bit of charm will go a long way in ensuring that you are well liked by all who meet with you in the company. Because companies in Africa are generally risk averse, they will look for the slightest objection not to buy from you. There are decision makers and there are influencers and you need to identify both categories in your customer companies as quickly as possible. It is important to make the influencers your allies. From experience I have noted that influencers are the ones who you will meet and call the most.

16. Knowing who your competition really is

Is your competition a European company or a Chinese company or an Indian company? This is a very major point to consider when developing your pitch to African companies. For many companies it will be Asian companies who will be competing with but for others it will be European and for others it is both. Key thing is to know who the real competition is.

In Kenya a lot of manufacturers have experience with Asian products. But I am now noticing a trend that they are now much more willing to use European machinery. This is due to the challenges they have encountered with the Chinese and Indian equipments they have bought previously. However how you pitch to them is critical in ensuring that they choose your products, as they may still go for Asian products if your value proposition is not strong.




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WHAT NEXT?

It is due to this experience that I plan to share with you the secrets and insights I gained on how to sell in Kenya so as to help you in boosting your sales across the East African region as well as Sub-Saharan Africa. This is through an Intensive 2 hour Executive Virtual Training on **“Boosting Your Africa Sales from 2018 to 2020”**. This minimal investment virtual training will be held on Thursday 21st December 2017 at 1400 GMT. This training is based on information I have regularly shared with companies looking into Kenya over the last 8 years in my market entry research and consulting practice. It is now also combined with information I have gained in the last 1.5 years of helping clients enter into the Kenyan market through developing actual sales. I have repackaged all this useful information into a very intensive marathon 2 hour training so that it is both useful and quick to grasp to you.

In directly selling to companies in Kenya and East Africa, I work with a very limited number of clients as their agent in Kenya. It is for this reason that I developed this training. But also because I also have to focus on them, please note that there are a very limited number of spots for this particular training session. I have actually had to limit the number of attendees to 60 Africa Sales and Business Development Executives from all over the world.

As this training is valued at over \$50,000 in additional sales or 10-25% increase of sales in the next 2 years and therefore I hope to increase the capacity of students in future trainings.

How will the training be conducted?

- **Intensive 2 hour Executive Online Training** for Senior Africa Sales and Business Development VPs and Directors. You will be able to simply join in using your desktop browser. The Virtual Training room is compatible with if you are using Windows 7 or higher, Mac OSX 10.8 and Linux/Ubuntu*.
- **An MP4 Recording** will be sent to you within 24 hours after the training for future reference of the training
- A **step by step guide** of how I sold and the lessons that participants can apply will be provided at the end of the Webinar and also a link will be sent in an email after the Webinar. It will include mistakes made by both myself and the company and the solutions to those mistakes. It will also have importantly the success steps taken
- We will also **have a live Q& A session** where you will get to ask me questions on what I have shared with you

In this training I will teach you:

- the **important keys** to selling your products to businesses in this region
- **deadly mistakes** to watch out for and avoid
- how to **skillfully negotiate** with Kenyans of different origin
- How to **take advantage of a boom that is coming over the next few years** in East Africa and West Africa due to seemingly positive political changes
- **Step by step explanation of how I sold** to the largest companies in the region in their industries
- How to **identify influencers and decision makers** in customer companies
- How to **compete with Chinese and Indian machine makers** despite your product being more expensive
- **what to do right now** to prepare for selling from January 2018

- **powerful success secrets** to take in advance to ensure you start selling in 1 year or less
- the **4 key sectors** that present opportunities in Kenya in the coming years
- an **in-depth understanding** of Kenya's political atmosphere and how it affects your sales in the region
- and more

How Do You Benefit?

This training is worth over \$50,000 to you in the coming 2 years and you will:

- Get Expert tips that will help you **reduce your sales cycle** in Africa
- Learn negotiation tactics for this region that will enable you to **sell with confidence**
- It is **available to you for good** through the recording will make it easier for you to refer back to notes and recording
- learn how to develop a sales system that **reduces your current frustration**
- **Understand the cultural realities** of doing business in Africa
- **Discover Tried and tested ways** to pitch and sell your equipment in Africa
- You can **plan for 2018 with much more clarity** of the coming opportunities
- **Understand the decision making structure of your clients** and learn how to use it to your advantage over your competition
- It is probably the only **Risk free low investment Africa Sales and Business Development Senior Executive Training** available, that will quickly enhance your skills of selling in Africa. There is a 24 hour Money back guarantee if the training is not what I have promised you.

So how much is it?

- This training has the high potential to generate over \$50,000 in added benefits to your business in the coming year or 2.
- I however decided to make it as affordable as possible to everyone. I could easily have priced it at over \$349.
- However I decided to put its normal price at an even more affordable \$249.
- However as this is the Pioneer class, I have decided to discount that amount to the low investment of only \$179.
- But additionally I will give a further discount of \$50 to the first 10 people who sign up before Midnight Eastern time on Friday 15th December 2017. This means if you are manage to get in before this time and are among the first 10, your investment will be \$129 instead of \$179.
- Additionally this training is a risk free training to you. How?

MONEY BACK GUARNATEE: *I am offering a 24 hour Money Back Guarantee to anyone who attends the training and believes that I have not delivered on the lessons I have spelled out above. All you will do is simply email me within the 24 hour window after the training and we get on a quick call, and once I identify the error in the way I conducted the training, I will hit refund in my PayPal account and you will receive your money back.*

So how do You register?

Signing up to this seminar is very easy. Simply fill in the form on the right of this page. You will receive a thank you message and within a few hours you will receive the invoice linked to PayPal.

You can make a payment via PayPal or via your Credit Car. Immediately we receive the payment, a link to the online training room will be sent to you to join the private and exclusive intensive online training.

You will also receive at least 2 reminders before the training

Finally in addition to the training, recording, Q&A and guide I am giving you some Fantastic bonuses

Bonus One

After the call there is a 15-20 minute complimentary consultation for all participants who request. This call is supposed to lead to the half day one on one workshop. Only 10 slots available until end of December.

The rest will begin from Monday 11th January 2018

Bonus Two

Free participation to the next virtual training on the topic as this is the pioneering class

Bonus Three

To be announced towards the end of the training and will only be available to those who attend the training live.

Bonus Four

Email availability until end of December

LIMITED SEATS AVAILABLE!! Now I would like to open this training to everybody who is interested. And this is a very large group of people But unfortunately the online training space for this particular training has space for 60 people as it is a pioneering seminar. Future seminars will have more spaces but the next seminar is probably going to take place in End of January or February 2018, once the year is well under way. Therefore this is an opportunity to take advantage and hit the ground running from January 2018.



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QUESTIONS YOU MAY HAVE

- **What if I am not available but I want the training?**

A recording is available within 24 hours of the webinar

- **Is there a guarantee?**

Yes – 24 hour money back guarantee in case you believe that what I shared is not what I promised. We will simply get on a quick call where you point out the error and then I will hit refund in my PayPal account.

- **How long is it?**

The training is approximately 2 hours with an additional 30 – 45 minutes on a Q&A section

- **How do I sign up?**

Signing up to this seminar is very easy. Simply click the images on this PDF to go to the registration form. Once you fill in the form you will receive a thank you message and within a few hours you will receive the invoice linked to PayPal.

You can make a payment via PayPal or via your Credit Car. Immediately we receive the payment, a link to the online training room will be sent to you to join the private and exclusive intensive online training.

You will also receive at least 2 reminders before the training

- **Can I get the bonuses if I do not attend the training?**

Unfortunately the bonuses are only for those who attend the training as the material in the Bonuses builds up on what I share in the training.

If you have additional questions, please feel free to email me on **David[at]craneconsultinghouse.com**.



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