

Channel Partner search in South Korea and Japan for Tana Oy

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100+ Years of combined experience in Asia

Asia Business Development Experts



Customer's Problem

- Client company is Tana Oy from Finland. Tana is one of the leading manufacturers of solid waste management technology worldwide concentrating only in solid waste management technology. A big part of the business comes from waste-to-energy business as various waste streams must be shredded and screened to produce RDF by using technologies such as Tana's. When the share of renewables across the world is increasing in the energy generation, it offers also new business opportunities for Tana even at markets, which were previously seen as "less attractive".
- Tana has global presence, and it operates through a network of distributors and after sales activities in 50 countries. Core of Tana's business has nevertheless been in Australia, Europe and North America.
- However, waste-to-energy and recycling is becoming more and more important all over Asia. In order to get its own share of the market, Tana needs to extend its dealer network to new markets in the Asia region as well. The most tangible opportunities for Tana's technologies can be found at the more developed economies of Asia. Because of this, the first priority markets for the Asian market expansion were chosen to be South Korea and Japan.
- There are multiple challenges in identifying, contacting and engaging best possible channel partners in Japan and South Korea. The language alone sets barriers for western companies. For example, company information like homepages are often in local language only. Without local contacts and expertise, it is very challenging to get anywhere in the channel partner acquisition process.



Our Solution

- The cooperation between Asian Insiders and Tana started from South Korea. The partner search is still ongoing in Japan, but the service of Asian Insiders has been identical for both markets. Tana has an exceptionally advanced working concept with their channel partners, which has been developed and finetuned over a period of several years. All the necessary channel- sales tools are in place and the whole organization is well structured to support the sales efforts. Tana has also carefully defined its own role and responsibilities for the joint sales efforts with channel partners.
- The partner search process with Asian Insiders started by joint preparation and finetuning the Ideal Partner Profile for the local markets after which Asian Insiders started the search process by producing a Longlist of available channel partner candidates.
- Each candidate was then evaluated against the Ideal Partner Profile focusing mostly on criteria such as existing clientele and partner's current offering. For Tana it is important, that the partner has its core business exactly among the right target customers and that partner's product range is complementing to Tana's products.



Our Solution

- With this approach it is possible to present a win-win Value Proposition for the partner, where the partner can achieve new sales revenues from their existing customers without jeopardizing their core business.
- The Longlist of partner candidates with some 30 alternatives was then narrowed down in a joint workshop between Tana and Asian Insiders to a preliminary Shortlist of some 10 candidates. After that perhaps the most challenging part of the project started. Asian Insiders contacted all Shortlisted candidates in order to check their real capabilities and genuine interest to become a dealer for Tana. This work is easier said than done.
- First of all, identifying and contacting exactly the right contact persons can be challenging in the Japanese and Korean business environment. Some of the Shortlisted candidates were rather big companies, which makes the task even more challenging.
Secondly, we as consultants must be able to convince the candidate company, that there is a genuinely interesting new business opportunity for them available.





Successful Result

- It is a question of “pre-selling” our client, in this case Tana, to the candidate company. This requires a certain degree of experience, competence and seniority to do it well and professionally.
- The expected outcome is a meeting between Asian Insiders and the candidate company, where Tana’s offering would be presented in more detail and the necessary information about the candidate company would be collected. This work is not something to be done by “googling” or by desk research. In Asia it is always based on personal contacts and face-to-face discussions.
- After meeting the Shortlisted candidates, we usually present to our clients the final Shortlist, which typically contains 2-5 names. In case of Tana the list contained 2-3 names depending on the country. The next step of the process was to arrange meetings for Tana’s representatives with each final candidate. Before any meeting, a Non-Disclosure Agreement with each company was signed for confidentiality reasons. For all of this work Asian Insiders has tested methods, tools and templates, which saves a lot of time and efforts from our clients.
- In South Korea Asian Insiders has also provided operative market support for Tana at sales ramp-up phase. In practice Asian Insiders works between Tana and the new channel partner for 6 months supporting both parties in the launch of joint business activities.

Successful Result

- In South Korea the process was completed some months ago and we are happy to say, that the first orders have been already received from the appointed dealer. In Japan the process is slightly halted due to the outbreak of the Corona- virus pandemic, but the negotiations with the final candidates have been started and are ongoing.

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