



# Canon Europe Case Study – European Sales Channels

## Background & Objectives

Canon, a major multinational communications company, sought to increase its B2B channel sales across Europe. To develop an effective strategy, Canon first saw the need to gain detailed insight and understanding of its current market and competitive position from the perspective of the channel companies.

With its longstanding channel experience, Rhetorik was commissioned to undertake a research programme with the following key objectives:

- To develop an in-depth understanding of Canon's relative strengths and weaknesses in selling to the channel across the four key European national markets of France, Germany, Italy and the UK
- To identify the needs and requirements of the channel in each market and understand what Canon must provide to increase its market position

Based on this research, Rhetorik was asked to draw conclusions and make strategic recommendations to Canon to support achievement of this business aim

## Methodology

To address these objectives within Canon's budget and timescales, Rhetorik recommended a series of in-depth telephone interviews with purchasing decision-makers in a large sample of European channel companies.

Working closely with Canon, Rhetorik developed a questionnaire to be used for detailed interviewing and probing of issues by Rhetorik's experienced researchers. All interviews were to be carried out in the local language of each country.

800 semi-structured interviews were undertaken, with senior respondents in channel companies distributed equally across the four national markets and within three different size bands by company turnover. The interviews, which were conducted across a four-week period, were largely quantitative but featured a number of qualitative questions, allowing Rhetorik's

researchers to explore drivers and barriers to brand uptake and provide ready comparison of Canon's products, services and support with those of its competitors.

Results were delivered to Canon as: a report in MS PowerPoint presentation format; a full set of data tabulations including all breakdowns and results in SPSS format; and a summary of key results, conclusions and strategic recommendations.

## Key Achievements

The research proved of great value to Canon, giving real strategic insight into the market position of the company with respect to its key competitors, as well as supplier perceptions, sales environment and support requirements of the channel across all sectors.

Rhetorik made a number of key strategic recommendations that were well received by Canon. Amongst these was the need for a highly regionalised approach to improve overall market position, due to the surprising variations in market position and channel requirements uncovered across the four geographic market areas.

Rhetorik's recommendations, together with the in-depth research findings, were communicated by Canon to regional sales and marketing teams in a series of strategic meetings leading to the development of a business strategy for success in each region.

***“ Rhetorik's experience in the business-to-business channel meant that their Research services offered more than data collection. Comprehensive and pragmatic recommendations were formed which we have been able to use across Europe. The research has been a great help with our direction.”***

Stuart McGown, Market Research, Canon Europe