

# SEED SELLER BLUEPRINT

LIVE STREAM



(1)

Seed Delivery

## Introduction

Many salespeople struggle to make their sales goals. RC Thomas has developed a system that, when followed, makes selling easier and ensures they will never miss a sales goal again.

### Old ways won't open new doors!

What old ways are keeping you from achieving your goals?

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

**Our industry does not ask you what you want to achieve. It gives you OPTIONS.**

We're going to begin studying the most unique and effective process ag sales reps can employ when selling to farmers—the SeedSeller Blueprint—your roadmap to success.

But it only gives you ONE OPTION!

**You have to become the ONLY VALUE a buyer buys.**

You can't use products, programs, technologies, or price to get sales. Your only option is **customers have to buy YOU!**

**How do you make sure you never miss a sales goal again?**

**Answer:** Deliver value to buyers that no one else is delivering, and get buyers excited about fully utilizing that value.

**How do you make that happen?**

**Answer:** Follow a Blueprint that creates a unique buyer experience.



**John Wooden said, "Things turn out the best for the people who make the best of the way things turn out."**

Make a list of the biggest challenges you faced in 2020 that made it harder for you to achieve your sales goal. What keeps you from getting where you want to be? Place a check mark next to the ones that are **reasons, not just excuses.**

- 1. \_\_\_\_\_
- 2. \_\_\_\_\_
- 3. \_\_\_\_\_
- 4. \_\_\_\_\_
- 5. \_\_\_\_\_
- 6. \_\_\_\_\_
- 7. \_\_\_\_\_
- 8. \_\_\_\_\_

### **A Unique Buyer Experience Like the SeedSeller Blueprint...**

- Is made up of surprises that both challenge and benefit the buyer
- Is a system consisting of each experience setting up the next
- Is a learning experience for buyers
- Improves a buyer's success

### **What would you like the actual Buyer Experience to do for YOU?**

- Get farmers out of the Ag Cycle
- Combat price in a price-driven marketplace
- Increase average order sizes to all buyers
- Increase buyer retention rates to as close to 100% as possible
- Stop à la carte buying by buyers
- Control conversations with growers
- Create a competitive advantage over competitors
- Get your teams to work together as one unit
- Take ownership of the entire acre on every farm
- Be THE leader in your market area



## What If You Had a Strategy That Would...

- Overcome the primary obstacles your company faces
- Give everyone a new sales approach
- Increase the excitement and enthusiasm among employees
- Force everyone to practice a new strategy
- Get the buyer to look at your company differently
- Challenge the buyer to think differently
- Excite buyers about getting new and unique experiences from your company
- Increase buyer loyalty and retention
- Increase success of your company's products on buyers' farms

## The SeedSeller Blueprint is the Roadmap to New Levels of Sales Success

Starts with Seed Delivery as the First Step in the Buyer Experience AND the First Step in the High Yield Strategy

**The SeedSeller Blueprint is a totally Outside the Circle strategy.** The Goal of the Buyer Experience: Stay Outside the Circle of Competitors



## When You Step Inside the Circle, the Experience and the Value Stop

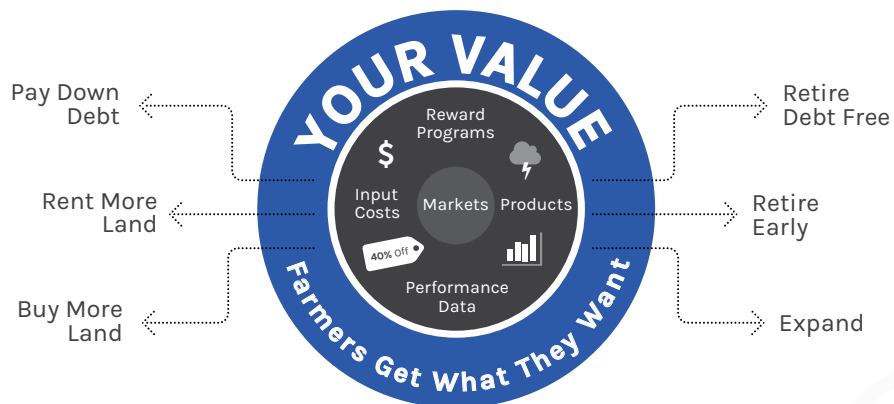


When Inside the Circle, you discuss...

- Price
- Product Performance
- Data
- Commodity Markets
- Weather
- Competitors

Any resistance to change comes from Inside the Circle.

## When Inside the Circle, Farmers Can't Get What They Want



The only way a customer can get what he wants is by receiving Outside the Circle values through the Blueprint.



## Season 1: Planting Season



(1)

Seed Delivery

# PLANTING SEASON

## (1) Seed Delivery



### Do You Know?

- How to use seed delivery as a mechanism for managing the rest of the sales year?
- The best time of year to deliver seed to a buyer?
- Whether you should deliver seed to your buyer's warehouse before or after he takes delivery on your competitor's seed?
- How to ensure all of your seed gets planted and your competitor's seed is sent back when one of your buyers orders too much seed?
- How to cut the number of allocations and substitutions by 90%?

## The No.1 Customer Contact of the Year

Seed delivery can be the best of times or the worst of times. It's the best of times when seed starts being delivered to dealers and customers the same way it was ordered. That indicates order fulfillment—the goal of every sales rep. In fact, I don't know another sales rep that doesn't get excited when shipping starts. It signals a hard-fought sales year coming to a close. The only thing left to do is to get the seed that you sold and shipped planted.

The worst of times during shipping comes when the seed that was on order (and in many cases paid for) is canceled for some reason. But that's just the beginning. Seed that is delivered and assumed to be planted can also still be returned.

It's called haulback—a dirty word in the seed industry. Haulback surprises have caused more sales reps to lose their jobs than almost any other factor. Haulback causes companies to lose lots of money they hadn't planned on losing.





Seed delivery is much more than shipping seed. It's part of a very important customer development strategy that most sales reps don't use to their advantage.

Seed delivery is not the final step in the sales year. Instead, it's the first step in the customer development process. **So many emotions come together during seed delivery that it becomes an important part of the buyer's experience.**

To be a successful strategy, seed delivery requires two important steps. The first step is to take the customer to the field to confirm the variety by field plan. If you don't actually go to the field with the customer, you can review the variety by field plan in the customer's warehouse. This not only solidifies the order and keeps competitors away, but it also puts the customer in a positive frame of mind, looking forward to spring.

The second step is to give the customer a schedule of what he can expect from you during the upcoming growing season. You review the planter visit, emphasize the Top 5 Factors to Produce a Top Crop along with the idea of setting the date to do his cropping plan during the summer.

## Delivery is Not Just About Service

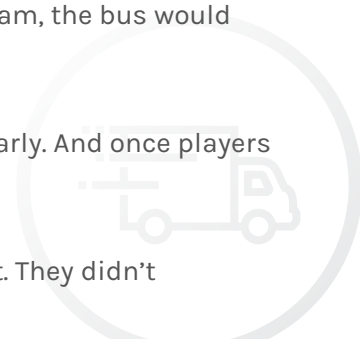


Most people believe delivery is mostly about being on time and delivering what you promised.

Vince Lombardi was one of the best football coaches in the history of the game. He was noted for telling his players to be at the bus by 7:00 am. If they showed up at 7:00 am, the bus would already be gone—it left at 6:45 am. They called that "Lombardi Time."

Players soon learned that, to coach Lombardi, being on time meant being early. And once players figured that out the hard way, they were never late again.

All the players thought Lombardi's time tactic was just about being prompt. They didn't



understand that being on "Lombardi Time" was his entire method of teaching—including following the rules, doing what you say you're going to do, and so on. It was part of his complete football experience. **Just as seed delivery is part of a top seller's complete buyer experience.**

## One of the most misunderstood systems in the selling process.

### Delivery...

- Sets up the beginning of the new selling season—it doesn't close the old one.
- Is the beginning of reorienting the buyer to your way of doing business—not the end of your teaching.
- Signals sales reps to initiate post-delivery protocols.
- Is the time to teach growers how they can dramatically increase their chances of getting what they order.
- Is the time to deliver buyer satisfaction to ensure the success of future transactions.
- Means your brand image is enhanced once your product is in the buyer's hands.
- Is the time to teach buyers that delivery is not a promise—it's subject to changes.
- Is the time to teach buyers that delivery is not a separate act, but part of a system of doing business with your company.

### Pre-Delivery Protocols

#### 1. Warehouse inspection checklist:

- Moisture proof
- Insulated
- Climate controlled
- Rodent proof
- Unloading dock
- Forklift
- Accessible via semi-truck
- Tar or gravel roads
- Secure
- Floor type:** (circle one)  
concrete – wood – dirt
- Building type:** (circle one)  
steel – wood – concrete

#### 2. Pre-delivery load confirmation:

- The intended load has been reviewed with the customer
- Customer agreed to load "as is"
- Load must be reconfigured

#### 3. Fix problems before seed is shipped:

- Problems are fixed—customer signed off on the load
- Customer agreed to partial shipment

#### 4. Inform customer of the delivery schedule:

- Customer agreed to shipment date and time

#### 5. Always be 15 minutes early

## Summary



Seed delivery is not the end of the selling season. Instead, it's the first step in preparing for the new selling season.

Seed delivery is the perfect time to review everything you talked with customers about helping them raise the best crop possible. It's the perfect time to review with the grower the plans you have for him once the crop is planted.

When done properly, the seed delivery process should create a well-informed, highly-energized customer who is looking forward to following your lead so he can grow the best crop possible. The more detailed and deliberate you make the seed delivery process, the greater the amount of cooperation you will receive throughout the growing season.

Ask the grower questions to make sure he understands and agrees with everything you will expect of him throughout the growing season. This is the time to work out differences, or at least "plant the seed," concerning changes you want him to make that he may not agree with initially.

Most of all, leave the grower in a positive frame of mind, looking forward to achieving yield goals that, in the past, he had no idea how to pursue.

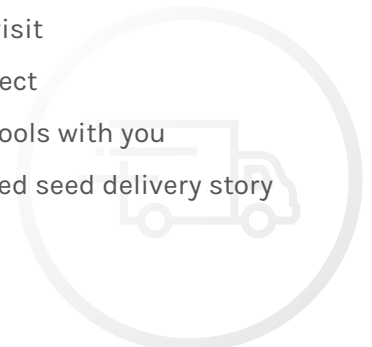
## Role-Play Practice

Circle the type of buyer/customer below that you are going to develop your story around and think of when you practice and role-play seed delivery:

1. First-year buyer
2. Current buyer
3. Current customer
4. 100% customer

To complete the scenario, address the following parts of your story. If you don't have a specific person in mind, make one up.

- Introduce yourself, repeat his name
- Outside the Circle greeting
- Your One-Line BIO
- What your One-Line BIO means
- Progress Report (compliment)
- Doggy Treat
- Your agenda for the visit
- Reposition the prospect
- Have ALL your sales tools with you
- Follow your preplanned seed delivery story



## Post-Delivery Protocol

1. Reconcile the cropping plan with delivered inventory
2. Reconcile the field-by-variety plan with delivered inventory
3. Confirm the presence of 10% unsold inventory for last-minute needs
4. Reconcile dealer warehouse inventories by customer
5. Review the Planter Visit Plan and the yield goals he set with you for each field
6. Review the Planter Visit Card with the grower and your intention to set the cropping plan date at the planter
7. Remind the grower of the Top 5 Factors and give him a copy of the "Planting Speed Kills" brochure and review it with him
8. Review the field-by-field planting order with the customer
9. Leave your contact information with every party involved in planting the crop
10. Tell the customer to expect a Planter Report Card visit two weeks after planting

## Part 1: Pre-Delivery

*(Your Goal is to Get at Least Three Yeses)*

**Sales Rep:** Good morning John, Rod, Rod Osthus, RC Thomas Company.

**Grower:** Hi Rod.

**Sales Rep:** I'm glad I caught you. Do you have a few minutes to visit?

**Grower:** Yes, I do. What's up?

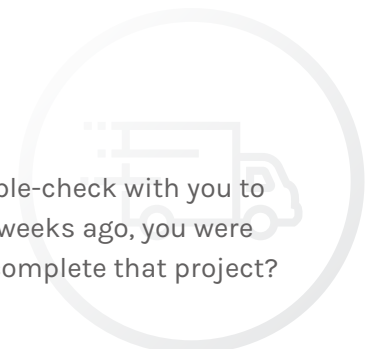
**Sales Rep:** You're on the schedule to receive your seed the week of the 15th and I wanted to be sure you received the revised cropping plan I emailed you last week.

**Grower:** Yes, I got it. In fact, I was looking at it this morning.

**Sales Rep:** Does everything look ok to you?

**Grower:** Yeah, I think it looks fine, but you're the guy in charge. (he laughs)

**Sales Rep:** No, you're the boss—I'm just kinda bossy. (I laugh) I want to double-check with you to be sure your warehouse is ready. When we did your warehouse check a few weeks ago, you were doing some remodeling, making a special place for seed. Were you able to complete that project?



**Grower: Yes,** we got it all done. I'm pretty happy with the results. I think it's going to work out well.

**Sales Rep:** Excellent. Our shipping department has you scheduled to receive your seed the week of the 15th. Are you going to be available that week? They're not sure which day yet, but they'll call you 2-3 days in advance to let you know the specific day and time.

**Grower:** Yeah, if they just call me a day or two ahead of time, I can be here.

**Sales Rep:** Great. Mark Thompson, who is your shipping coordinator, will be calling you to go over the shipment with you, letting you know exactly what will be shipped. Even though you and I have reviewed the crop plan, we just want to make sure everything is right. Remember, I made a couple changes to your cropping plan when we were visiting your fields two weeks ago. You have the updated version of the crop plan, don't you?

**Grower: Yes,** I do.

**Sales Rep:** Great. I plan to be there when the truck arrives to review the shipment and the cropping plan at that time.

**Grower:** Wow, you sure are thorough.

**Sales Rep:** Well, John, if we're not accurate, you can't be accurate either. Remember, the cropping plan we assemble is a plan that, when followed, gives you the results you want. When we stick to the plan, good things happen. Well, I'll let you go and I'll see you at delivery. Thanks for your time.

**Grower:** Thank you. Goodbye.

## Part 2: Delivery

*(You arrive at the warehouse 30 minutes before the truck arrives)*

**Sales Rep:** Good morning, John, nice to see you.

**Grower:** Good to see you, too, Rod.

**Sales Rep:** Another beautiful day, isn't it.

**Grower: Yes,** it is. I could sure take a lot more of these.

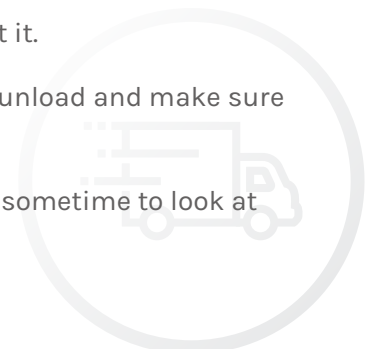
**Sales Rep:** Me too.

*(As you walk into his remodeled shop, you continue the conversation)*

Wow, you really did a nice job on the remodel. It turned out really nice, didn't it.

**Grower:** Yeah, I'm very happy with it. It's going to be a lot easier to load and unload and make sure the seed is well-protected while in storage.

**Sales Rep:** That is so great. Would it be ok if I brought a customer or two by sometime to look at it? I have a couple guys wanting to do the same thing.



**Grower:** Sure, bring them over. I'd be happy to show them. Let me know and I'll have the coffee pot on.

**Sales Rep:** Thanks John, that would be great. Before the truck arrives, let's visit briefly about how you would like to layout the shipment. Do you have your copy of the crop plan handy?

**Grower:** Yeah, it's in my office. Let me grab it.

**Sales Rep:** Great thanks. First of all, where do you plan to put the \_\_\_\_\_, where do you plan to put the \_\_\_\_\_ when they are shipped next and where do you plan to put the \_\_\_\_\_ when that comes?

**Grower:** Here's the plan.

*(He shows you the intended location for each different crop)*

**Sales Rep:** Next, since your \_\_\_\_\_ is being shipped today, let's prioritize it by field so, when planting season comes, you don't have to be moving a bunch of seed around to get at the seed you need for that day. From last to first, let's number the fields on the cropping plan as to the order in which you plan to plant those fields. That way the seed for the fields you intend to plant first will be right up front.

**Grower:** That would be great. I've never done that before, but it sure is going to be a lot easier when spring comes.

**Sales Rep:** Yes, it will. Plus, I know you have some seed ordered from another company. You're going to want to do the same thing on the cropping plan you developed with them.

**Grower:** They don't do a cropping plan.

**Sales Rep:** They didn't do a cropping plan with you?

**Grower:** No, they just take an order.

**Sales Rep:** How are you supposed to know what to plant in a particular field?

**Grower:** I guess they let me decide.

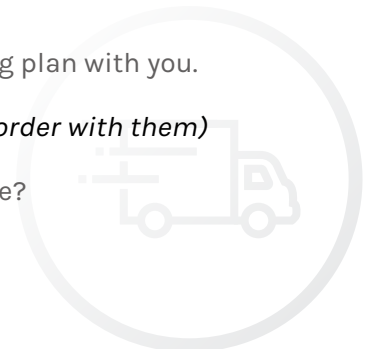
**Sales Rep:** How do you feel about that compared to the kind of planning we're doing?

**Grower:** I feel like I'm on my own, guessing. With you, I feel like I'm in total control. We've set a whole new goal for each of my fields and we have a plan to get there. You know, I'm not even sure I'm going to plant that other seed.

**Sales Rep:** I'm not being critical—I just can't believe they don't do a cropping plan with you.

*(He picks up his cell phone, calls the competitive seed rep and cancels his order with them)*

**Grower:** It looks like I'm going to need some more seed. Can you get it for me?



**Sales Rep:** Absolutely. When we get this shipment unloaded and in its proper place, let's go look at those other fields and create a plan for them. Then I'll call the office and see how soon we can have that seed delivered. We'll need to insert them into the planting sequence also. We'll leave space for the seed for those fields when we warehouse the seed we're receiving today.

**Grower:** That sounds great.

*(I get a call on my cell phone from the truck driver who tells me he's just five minutes away. The customer and I are standing outside his warehouse watching the truck pull into the yard. The truck is shiny and clean like it's just been washed. The driver stops short of the warehouse, gets out of his truck, and walks over to greet us. I introduce him to the customer. The truck driver is well-dressed in a clean uniform. He hands me a copy of the shipping document and says, "This is what's on the truck. I assume you want to warehouse the varieties by field from first planted to last planted." The customer looks impressed and smiles.)*

**Grower:** Yes, we do. Let me give you the order, so you will know what we're looking for.

*(John takes the truck driver into the warehouse, shows him the layout and together they look over the field-by-field plan. The truck driver says to John, "Wow, you are well-organized, we need more customers like you.")*

**Sales Rep:** I agree. John really does a nice job.

*(The truck is now unloaded and everything is in its place. We even left room for the seed that will be delivered later. Now I need to enter into the Post-Delivery Discussion with John.)*

### Part 3: Post-Delivery

*(The truck is unloaded, everything is in its place. The truck leaves.)*

**Sales Rep:** Everything looks really good, John. Do you have any questions about the cropping plan?

**Grower:** No, I think everything looks really good.

**Sales Rep:** That's great. I want to review a couple of things. I know we've gone over these several times already, but you know me, I'm a detailed guy.

**Grower:** No problem Rod. I like that.

**Sales Rep:** Here's a copy of the Top 5 Factors we've discussed many times. I know we've talked about the first two a lot and you agree with those totally. The other one I wanted to stress was number four. This is one, believe it or not, that gets violated a lot, yet it's on the list because it is so important. Let's say you load your planter the night before you were going to plant the Johnson Farm with the varieties that go on the Johnson Farm, but it rains that night and the Johnson Farm isn't fit. However, the Smith Farm, just four miles away, didn't get any rain and you can plant. We need to unload the seed that was intended for the Johnson Farm and put in the seed

intended for the Smith Farm. Too many farmers think they can ignore the fourth factor, so I just wanted to remind you about how important it is to stick to the plan.

**Grower:** No problem. I appreciate the reminders, Rod.

**Sales Rep:** Here is some information I put together for my customers to remind them that planter speed kills. You can look it over. It's also a nice reminder that slowing down doesn't require that much more time to get the crop in. The last thing I want to visit with you about before I leave is the planter visit. What is your target date to start planting your first field, the Johnson Farm, assuming conditions are right?

**Grower:** I would like to start April 25th.

**Sales Rep:** That sounds good. Now let's set one more date. Let's plan for the most challenging situation and imagine you can't get into the field until late. What would be the latest date you would still plant \_\_\_\_\_ (I choose the crop) if you couldn't get into the field until then?

**Grower:** That date would be June 15th for \_\_\_\_\_, then I would switch crops.

**Sales Rep:** That sounds good. Let me know a day ahead of time when you're planning to be at the Johnson Farm and I'll be there to make sure our seed is planting ok and everything is going right for you. Is that ok with you?

**Grower:** That would be awesome. I really like your attention to detail.

**Sales Rep:** Thanks so much, John, it's been a good morning. We've accomplished a lot and I'm really looking forward to spring.

**Grower:** Me too. You've got me so excited about having a plan and being so organized. I really appreciate all you do.

**Sales Rep:** I appreciate you, John. Thanks again, if you need anything call me anytime. Have a great day.

**Grower:** You too, Rod.



# DECISION TIME

## 🔖 Strategy 1 \_\_\_\_\_

What I'm going to do: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

When I'm going to do it: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

How I'm going to do it: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## 🔖 Strategy 2 \_\_\_\_\_

What I'm going to do: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

When I'm going to do it: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

How I'm going to do it: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## 🔖 Strategy 3 \_\_\_\_\_

What I'm going to do: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

When I'm going to do it: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

How I'm going to do it: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



🔖 **Strategy 4** \_\_\_\_\_

What I'm going to do: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

When I'm going to do it: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

How I'm going to do it: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

🔖 **Strategy 5** \_\_\_\_\_

What I'm going to do: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

When I'm going to do it: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

How I'm going to do it: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

🔖 **Strategy 6** \_\_\_\_\_

What I'm going to do: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

When I'm going to do it: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

How I'm going to do it: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_







# The 9-Step Blueprint

To the Complete Buyer Experience

## PLANTING SEASON



(1)

Seed Delivery



(2)

Follow the Planter



(3)

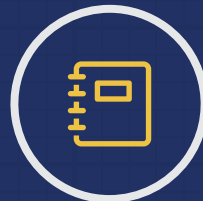
Planting Report Card

## SELLING SEASON



(4)

Prospecting



(5)

Sales Story



(6)

Develop Crop Plan

## CONFIRMING SEASON



(7)

Harvester Ride



(8)

Confirming the Order



(9)

Field Visit to Protect Sale

