

MHI Global - The Largest Dedicated Sales-Performance Company in the World



Sam Reese - CEO

About MHI Global:

MHI Global is the largest dedicated sales-performance company in the world, bringing game-changing insight to sales leaders worldwide and pioneering the \$1.2 billion sales-performance industry. MHI Global helps companies build and sustain successful, customer-focused organizations that can drive profitable, predictable top-line growth on a global scale. Through an unparalleled combination of counsel, processes, tools and technologies, backed by extensive research into the world's most successful selling organizations, MHI Global brings a level of perspective that companies simply cannot find anywhere else.

Five powerhouse brands operate under the MHI Global umbrella. Throughout their long, storied histories, [Miller Heiman](#), [AchieveGlobal](#), [Huthwaite](#), [Channel Enablers](#) and [Impact Learning Systems](#) have taken an uncompromising stance that the best approach to every client engagement is one that is collaborative and is driven by each client's specific needs and challenges.

MHI Global's mission is to help clients grow profitable sales. Its vision is to be the key resource for sales leaders globally, who want to empower growth through strong, meaningful and ongoing connections with their customers. MHI Global's purpose is to elevate the role, status, precision and strategic importance of the sales profession.

MHI Global provides all of the key components of a multi-dimensional and interdependent sales system, based on the central belief that everything starts with the customer. The company's tagline and promise "to empower growth" signify its goal to help sales leaders optimize their time, effort and potential to better create and manage customer relationships, while achieving business goals.

For more information, visit www.MHIGlobal.com.

Interview Conducted by:
Lynn Fosse, Senior Editor, CEOCFO Magazine

CEOCFO: Mr. Reese, what is the main concept behind MHI Global?

Mr. Reese: MHI Global is the largest dedicated sales-performance company in the world and the key resource to sales leaders across the globe. MHI Global is made up of five companies – Miller Heiman (which I led as CEO for 15 years), AchieveGlobal, Huthwaite, Impact Learning Systems and Channel Enablers – so the combination of wisdom, experience and innovation is helping sales leaders and organizations from every industry to drive growth and stimulate effective strategies.

We are building customer-based strategies and capabilities that pivot around our sales system, which is truly the framework for how great sales organizations continually perform -- keeping the customer at the center. We believe the single most important decision sales leaders make is the decision about how they want to connect with their customers. Do they want to message and pitch things, or do they want to collaborate with clients? Do they want to sell by pushing, or do they want to sell by having perspective in front of clients? That is what we think about joint venture selling with clients, and we have a strategic system for helping clients understand the power of perspective.

CEOCFO: Are you surprised that so many companies do not have that strategy or do not realize the value - which they do not realize it is about the customer?

Mr. Reese: Yes, I am surprised. What I often see is that companies intuitively choose a customer-based strategy, but they do not know how to actually operationalize that strategy. They do not understand the difference between having a

company-wide way of doing things versus just letting every individual do their own thing. That is where MHI Global brings a great deal of value. Everyone wants to get close to the customer and be customer-focused, but companies need to take that commitment well beyond the slogan line.

CEOCFO: *What are one or two insights that your company has that people do not usually recognize? If a company says they need help, what do you know that is over and above what others understand about the sales process?*

Mr. Reese: MHI Global shares the proven methodology, expertise and measurable results of five leading companies – Miller Heiman, AchieveGlobal, Impact Learning Systems and Channel Enablers – all under one umbrella. No other company can say that. With this combination of resources, we have unprecedented insight, perspective and vision that make MHI Global the key resource to all sales leaders.

I feel like we know a lot about the sales process, but I would say our business is grounded on research. The research, combined with our insight and experience, is really what drives all of our thought leadership through the MHI Research Institute, run by our expert, Joe Galvin. We believe there can be much more precision in research and in the way companies go to market – helping companies predict their results, the way they interface with customers, and how these opportunities advance. We have the tools, technology and methodology to really understand opportunities for companies to advance.

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Customer-based strategies are a competitive advantage during an economic turning point. More than ever, as the only company with a complete suite of resources to improve sales performance and drive growth, MHI Global gives competitive business solutions that companies are craving.

At MHI Global, we fully understand how customer interaction affects the whole organization. We believe we have a great deal of knowledge of what that means in terms of the right people you want to hire, what you want your leaders to do, what you want the organization to be able to enable – all with the right kind of compensation and the right kind of technology. We have the expertise and the resources to know how that all goes together.

CEOCFO: *Is there a typical point in time when a company might come to you for help?*

Mr. Reese: Most of our clients are like world-class athletes who want to get even better, always improving and desiring to do more. They might be experiencing some success and consider themselves in *growth mode*. Growth mode means that they might be growing 5 percent, but we think we could be growing at 20 percent. Every now and then, there will be companies that are in what I will call *trouble mode*. However, they are typically fantastic, reputable companies. Their definition of trouble mode is simply “falling a little bit behind,” but they want to get back on track. It is important to be proactive and crave the desire to constantly improve, just like winning athletes and teams.

CEOCFO: *What is a common engagement?*

Mr. Reese: We do business with 70 percent of the Fortune 500 companies, so we have very large clients, but we also have a whole SMB and corporate and small business unit that has been successful. A typical engagement for us is spending time with the client, starting with an analysis, helping them understand where the gaps are in the way they talk with their customers. The gaps might include how they find new business and create opportunities, how they turn those opportunities into customers and then how they manage existing relationships. It is a really doing an analysis if trying to understand that. Armed with that knowledge, we would then put some solutions together -- programs, training and consulting -- to address that typically it would cut across the entire sales force.

We believe in dissecting real opportunities, putting pursuit plans together for all of the sales people, and then having follow-up work with the leaders to make sure they can reinforce the organizations’ behaviors. Then, we evaluate and

recommend software tools that plug into their CRM. Our audience size ranges from 20 sales people to 5,000, in the U.S. and worldwide. What is interesting is that many of our agents are cutting across the entire organization, not just the sales people, because everyone – from marketing to sales support and executives -- wants to be more customer-focused. That commitment from both the sales and non-sales sides has been a good propeller for our business.

CEOCFO: *What is the key to changing behavior? How do you change what is natural or someone has been doing for a long time? Often, even though they understand a concept, have gone through the program and they know it is better another way people fall back into old habits?*

Mr. Reese: Many companies think they can just bring some new training and ideas and everyone will change; people do not change that easily. As you say, they have old habits and maybe they worked for them. The key for us is to connect the strategy. You cannot just come up with something that they cannot see as an easy conduit to what the company's strategy is, but it also has to connect to current initiatives that are already in motion. This is what happens to many outside consulting firms. They bring new ideas and innovations and new ways of talking to customers, but it can contradict the five other things that are happening. You have to pull that all together.

We design our solutions so they are not intrusive. We do not make you start all over; we find what is already working and make sure we build off that and then try to integrate some of these new ideas. That is part of it. The big part and the one that is the heavy lifting is you have to have the leadership and the coaching behind it. It does not matter how great of a consulting firm you are; there is a point where you leave, and the customer has to have the leaders understand it and pull it through.

Today, what has changed is you have to integrate all these behaviors and strategies into your systems. You have to bury it into the way your forecast and into the way that you have the account reviews. You have to have all that customer language connected to the business, otherwise people will automatically revert to their old habits. What we find with our solutions and why they end up taking shape and very quickly get traction is because of our design to make those customer discussions more effective, efficient and bring more people into it. Imagine we want to do an account review on a million dollar deal, the old way with no structure, which could be a long day; we can do that in 45 minutes with 20 people in the room and tight cadence. It is connecting the strategy; making sure you are not intrusive; getting leadership involved; and integrating operation, rhythm and cadence of business.

CEOCFO: *How do you keep up with ever-changing technology? How do you know what to keep on the radar screen?*

Mr. Reese: You are so right about how much is changing. We believe that technology helps us and that it can be used to help sales people and organizations manage information better. However, we do not believe in technology that is out there to replace selling. We do not believe sales can be automated, we believe that relationships still matter. And, I am not talking about transactional selling – rather, I am talking about value added selling. We look at that kind of technology that is looked to replace those discussions. It sounds good on paper, but we do not think that it is effective. The other thing is that we constantly survey our customers and the whole market.

Since Miller Heiman is one of the five companies that merged under the MHI Global umbrella, we have the largest study, which is called the MHI Sales Best Practices Study. Every year, we go to that study every year and ask what technologies they think are emerging. For example, what about social technologies; do you want sales people selling to you via LinkedIn or Facebook? We find that those have really become selling tools. They become good data and good ways to understand whom you are going to meet with, but it is all really about talking to the customers and getting their view on what they think makes sense in the world of selling. There is so much coming at our clients and at the whole market that people are oftentimes fooled into thinking that this new technology is going to drive the business. It will not. It will help you count the numbers but you have to help people help drive that business.

CEOCFO: *Are there a variety of solutions? Can people come to you and want one specific item or is it and overall package? What is the business model?*

Mr. Reese: MHI Global is the company for how to help the best of the best organizations deal with complex selling situations, multiple decision makers, high-ticket items and high competition. That is what we will call the customer management business and very sophisticated ways to make sure you manage your biggest opportunities and customers. With the acquisitions we have done recently of Miller Heiman, AchieveGlobal and Huthwaite, we can cut across all organizations. We have methodology, training and consulting at the most transactional level -- adding capabilities to help sales managers be more effective and helping customer service be more effective with different channels. Think about anything having to do with the company's interaction with the client; we have expertise to help those interactions improve.

That is what our business model is. We have a global footprint of sales people and sales consultants across the globe, roughly 500 representatives that are touching people all over the globe and letting them know our story and how we can help them.

CEOCFO: *Is there a particular strategy for the acquisitions, or is it more opportunistic? What do you see in that area going forward?*

Mr. Reese: Our vision is to be the key resource to sales leaders, so I have to continue to bring more depth and breadth to our capabilities. These acquisitions allow us to get into some of the other areas of selling, meaning some of the less complex ones, call it more transaction oriented; it's also allowed us to help get into business and really bring us fundamental selling skills to new sales people. It is all helping us fill in our strategy of making sure we bring more capabilities to cross all. It is to bring expertise in how you can be a better leader, expertise in customer service, how to set up your channel. If you think about anything a sales leader needs to be successful, that is on my radar screen of what I acquire and what capabilities I add.

CEOCFO: *If a company is looking, how do they find you? At this point do people know MHI Global and just come to you automatically?*

Mr. Reese: We do a great deal of promotion, but all of what we do is all fueled by our research -- and that is what drives our thought leadership. We are constantly trying to figure out what is going on in the world of selling, we bring our insights to clients through our marketing, conferences and all sorts of trade shows, but it is really being driven by what we call MHI Research Institute. That Research Institute is led by Joe Galvin, who is our chief research officer who you never forget because he is seven feet tall. He used to be the CRM lead analyst for Gartner. Right now he is in the middle of our 2015 MHI Sales Best Practices Study. That is the gold for us. We figure out the largest study in the world around sales effectiveness, we get our insights around all that and then we promote what we learn through thought leadership -- which brings many people to our website. We just launched the MHI Research Institute website, and people are going to that, as well. It is all about thought leadership for us.

CEOCFO: *Put it all together for our readers, why MHI Global?*

Mr. Reese: Today's selling is really all about the customer. When we were in school it was "Caveat emptor", it was "Buyer beware." Now it is "Seller beware." If you do not do a great job with your clients, then they have all sorts of outlets to communicate the shortfall and you will not have a client that continues to build. We bring this focus on how to operationalize; what it takes to get close to customers. Companies that truly focus on how they communicate with clients. How they find opportunities, manage opportunities and relationships are the ones that are going to get scale and success. We have more knowledge than anyone in the world on how to do exactly that. We have a resume of the best companies in the world that will attest to our efforts. We are the leader here and believe that we have a ton of growth ahead of us.

Through MHI Global, CEOs and sales leaders have access to the world's most extensive knowledge base on how to drive customer-management excellence and growth. After all, customer experiences are driving the business world today.

Sam Reese
CEO, MHI Global

Sam Reese is CEO of [MHI Global](#), the newest and largest dedicated sales-performance company that brings together established expertise and methodology from five other companies, including Miller Heiman, where he previously acted as CEO for almost 15 years. Sam is a thought leader and innovator with experience building sales organizations from the ground up, including Fortune 500 companies in 40 countries, such as Corporate Express, British Telecom and Kinko's. Sam also oversees the MHI Research Institute, a research organization for improving companies' performance, where he gathers data, best practices and information for industry leaders.

Sam has managed complex organizations with extremely large sales forces; developed new products and new distribution channels; leveraged technology to drive sales performance; integrated mergers and acquisitions; and dealt with highly complex sales-effectiveness initiatives. He has worked in public companies, as well as in businesses backed by private equity and venture capital. As CEO of MHI Global with roots from Miller Heiman, Sam has built a culture that is passionate and smart about achieving results for clients.

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