

# When the best and final offer isn't actually best...or final

How Dark Horse rode in at the last minute and saved a multimedia company over \$300K

## Contract negotiations had stalled

Our client, a large midwestern multimedia firm, had had a turbulent year. The entire leadership team had been replaced, their stock price was down, and they were under the gun to boost sales and profitability. To do that, they decided to implement best-in-class marketing automation tools for retail sales.

The company's VP of Marketing and IT Director agreed to a cloud-based solution from three short-listed vendors. The IT Director negotiated directly with the technology provider, getting them down to the "best and final" pricing offer on a five-year agreement...which was set to expire in two weeks.

However, the VP of Marketing, whose budget would actually be paying for the software, felt the deal could be better, and that the IT Director didn't have quite enough skin in the game to push as hard as he needed to to get a lower price and better terms. And then the company's lawyers got involved, and they had multiple concerns that could have brought the entire deal to a standstill.

Vendor:  
**SALESFORCE MARKETING CLOUD**

- CLIENT**
  - ✓ 5 stakeholders across HR and IT
  - ✓ 5-year contract
- DARK HORSE**
  - ✓ 10 days
  - ✓ 2 rounds of negotiations
  - ✓ 18% / \$310k saved

## Close the gap with outside help

That's when the company's CIO stepped in and brought in Dark Horse to help with the final negotiations, get the legal concerns addressed, and get the deal signed and out the door before those two weeks were up.

At this stage, what the company wanted and what the vendors were offering were pretty far apart. And while both sides wanted to close the deal, it would take some doing to get either one to compromise. We combed through the contract for any threads that could bring them closer together, and liaised between the two companies to get them to an agreement they could both be happy with.

## Setting realistic expectations – on both sides

With a strong global advisory network of sales executives from all the major tech vendors in our back pocket, it didn't take long to identify a more senior decision-maker to involve in the negotiation. Dark Horse interacted directly with the vendor's Sales VP to improve pricing, as well as terms for future increases and additional purchases during the term of the five-year agreement. It took two rounds of negotiations to get there.

We also advised our clients' legal department on where the vendor definitely wouldn't budge, pointed out additional terms and conditions they could (and in our opinion, should) demand, and managed their expectations for what a realistic outcome would look like. They agreed with our recommendations, and all legal issues were resolved with two days left to go before the signing deadline.

## Final offer: \$310k less

The deal was signed, with both parties satisfied. The VP of Marketing got the solution her department desperately needed, on time and under budget.



## Our insights + your contracts = better deals

We know the IT world – and we negotiate tech contracts every day. With a global advisory network of 80+ IT sales leaders feeding us up-to-the-minute insights, we have the knowledge you need to get you the best terms and prices. If you'd like us to review a "best and final" offer, give us a call. The review is always free – you only bring us on if we think we can help you do better.

**Your move? Think before you ink.**

**BOOK A CALL TODAY**

**DARK  
HORSE**  
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