

# The Silicon Review

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Mari Anne Vanella | CEO | Founder

An Interview with Mari Anne Vanella, **The Vanella Group, Inc.**  
Founder and CEO: 'We Offer a Very Deliberately Designed and  
Effective Methodology to Identify Buy-Cycles for Our Clients and  
Engage in Active Sales-Cycles'

# An Interview with Mari Anne Vanella, The Vanella Group, Inc. Founder and CEO: ‘We Offer a Very Deliberately Designed and Effective Methodology to Identify Buy-Cycles for Our Clients and Engage in Active Sales- Cycles’

*“Our Telesales 2.0™ model is unmatched for delivering active sales opportunities, meetings, and building real pipeline.”*

**W**ithout a strategic sales ~~out~~ ~~reach~~ plan in place, B2B companies lack full potential within their industry landscape and miss the potential market opportunity, which can greatly reduce the impact of marketing efforts on multiple levels.

In light of the above-mentioned scenario, we are thrilled to present **The Vanella Group, Inc.**

The Vanella Group was formed to address a real need in the B2B pipeline development effort for enterprise technology companies. The typical model most companies followed was (and often still is) to put more junior level people on the front lines having initial discussions with prospects—maybe the goal is just getting an appointment or high-level air-coverage to find interest. This could be an actual FTE or outsourcing to a telemarketing company that has a call center staffed with people following a heavily scripted discussion track. The challenge with that is most executives aren’t going to take the time to have a discussion with someone that can’t answer questions, steer a discussion at their level to address meaningful topics and really understand the environment of an enterprise technology infrastructure. This causes a lot of deals to be missed, a lot of early engagement opportunities to not happen, and in the end, a complete blind spot of potential deals developing. The Vanella Group, Inc. designed a model to put very technically fluent staff on those front lines that and able to have peer level discussions with executives. The results speak for themselves with the depth of engagement out of the gate.

The company was founded in 2000 and is headquartered in San Jose, California.

**Mari Anne Vanella, The Vanella Group, Inc. Founder/CEO, spoke exclusively to The Silicon Review. Below is an excerpt.**

***What was the motivation to start the company and how did it all come together.***

I was on the other side of the fence being a VP in a tech company and looking to outsource lead





Mari Anne Vanella, CEO & founder

*“We engage as a peer with execs, gain access to opportunities with stakeholders to uncover critical, real-time sales intelligence that makes the difference that result in revenue.”*

**COVER STORY**

generation. The challenge was finding a partner to work with that had some predictability, and whose work aligned with the overall pipeline objectives. It was incredibly difficult to find a company with that capability. The activity-based nature of dials/man-hours/scripting etc. did not address the actual pipeline goal. The other advantage is that I previously was the founder of a marketing firm that offered teleservices to companies like State Farm Insurance, Waddell and Reid, and others in the financial space. Knowing how to structure an outbound model that contained the exact elements I knew would address a niche requirement was a very unique vantage point and was the foundation of the company.

### ***How did you create strong brand positioning in your market?***

The Vanella Group, Inc. brand is built on 'Excellence'. That is our overarching brand standard. We offer a very deliberately designed and effective methodology to engage with prospects and identify buy-cycles for our clients to engage with. We developed the Telesales 2.0<sup>®</sup> Methodology to address the need to have a very senior level early-engagement experience with prospects that uncovers meaningful details and advances the sales process for our clients. We have maintained the position of being very invested in our clients, very invested in their success, engaged with their teams, and we build the

workflow that ensures success for their specific team.

When it comes to leveraging platforms like LinkedIn, Salesforce, Marketo, Oracle, InsideView, and others...we are able to help our clients maximize their instances. We are users ourselves and help our clients leverage the sales and marketing technology stack they have already invested in.

### ***Please help us understand the current market landscape?***

Over the last decade, more and more vendors have entered the technology market. As a result, technology trends have had significant changes that includes intelligence, touchpoints, devices, distributed users and infrastructure.

Escalating security risk and the growing business stakeholder requirements and trends are accelerated due to a number of factors (staying competitive, address their customer requirements, etc.) Additionally, the vendors' offering solutions to this change have adopted sales and marketing technology that has increased the volume of outreach to prospects. Therefore, the IT market has grown exponentially, the number of vendors addresses those needs are increasing, and the volume of outreach prospects experience from sales teams is overwhelming.

The need to have very precise and effective outreach to be

able to rise above the "noise" of marketing stakeholders are exposed to on a daily basis is essential.

### ***What are the differentiating factors that set your company apart from its competitors?***

The fact that we have a solid technical background and understand enterprise technology trends is a huge element out of the gate. We are able to map discussions to really dig into details that make the difference in a successful engagement. We also don't recruit from the typical profile of outbound agents. We actually avoid that profile because we are looking for a very specific profile of characteristics that have proven to be successful. We worked with organizational psychologists to build our best profile; we have a character-based model which results in a low turnover, and very consistent success. It really takes a specific type of person that can execute on our model. The challenge in many organizations is if they want to address this requirement with an FTE, they are usually recruiting someone that is early in the career and this is a launch pad for them—so they may be smart and eager but lack the enterprise and executive level experience and fluency needed. There is also a 3-6 month learning curve and the turnover in that role can be more frequent. Outsourcing can lead to communication and workflow challenges and maybe recruiting

from the same profile as an FTE and still deal with turnover and limited executive discussion experience. The way we addressed it is to align our workflow to the organization we are working with. Everything we do is designed to meet our clients' requirement with the organization they have today. So each program is customized depending on what that client needs.

**Brief us about the products and services The Vanella Group offer:**

Our flagship Telesales 2.0<sup>®</sup> service is our outsourced lead gen/sales development solution.

Our full scope of services includes:

- Outbound Telemarketing/ Telesales
- Demand Gen
- Lead Follow-Up
- Inbound Coverage
- Campaign Management
- In-depth Reporting
- Multi-Channel Marketing Programs
- Channel Programs for OEM's
- SDR Training for FTE's
- Training for Remote Prospect Management for Teams
- Lead and Prospect Nurturing
- Appointment Setting
- New Market Penetration
- Market Testing
- Martech Related Services
- CRM Setup

**Who are some of your biggest clients? In which vertical do you see the most traction in?**

We work with companies like HP, Nokia, Hughes, and many large tech

firms. We also work with midsize firms and even startups that have a complex enterprise sales cycle.

**Testimonials: Elevating Client Relationships**

**Barbara Nichols, Director of Sales, kare:**

*"Working with The Vanella Group, Inc. is a completely different experience than what we've found in a traditional outsourced B2B Teleservices provider. They actually do a lot of up-front work to understand our solution and its various applications. Additionally, they are very much a partner, and have already connected us with other potential opportunities and are focused on adding value as a true partner and not just being a vendor.*

*The technical fluency they bring is superior and it enabled them to help design the right conversation flow for a meaningful dialog. They provided value to our pipeline right away, and we are looking forward to much success.*

*The process to begin working together is involved, and really demonstrates how they are looking for pipeline and real opportunities. They have a solid discovery stage to understand our selling landscape, and work closely with us to understand all the various capabilities of our platform.*

*The other piece we appreciate is helping us to manage the lifecycle of information discovery. The Vanella Group, Inc. is meaningfully aligned with our objectives: bringing us the*

*opportunities best suited for our business goals. Their model is most certainly not transactional in nature, but instead values a long-term business relationship.*

*They helped us build very precise lists to target; uncovered specific platform install bases we wanted to penetrate, and are always available for us."*

**What is the roadmap ahead?**

We have continued to add more relationship management services as the need to manage prospects in the pipeline has grown. The sales organization in technology companies has taken on more remote nature where more business is done over the phone, email, web-based meetings. Also, executive stakeholders are often distributed as well, so the nature of relationship management has become more complex due to the nature of geography.

The remote relationship management element of sales is a big part of what we are addressing in helping our clients become more effective in managing long sales cycles.

We have expanded and continue to expand our involvement in lead nurturing, as well as helping our clients implement our best-practices so they can also achieve the same results and have continuity with their prospect experiences.

We have recently partnered with companies like Balto Software



The Vanella Group, Inc.

Strategic Telesales 2.0<sup>™</sup> for High Tech

that is a real-time coaching platform for SDR's we offer for our clients. We have also partnered with AI platform 'kare' that makes it easier for companies to do business with their prospects.

We are heavily invested in our partner relationships with

Marketo, InsideView, and really want to bring a high-value ecosystem to our clients.

We do often help with campaign design and contribute to content development; we will continue to expand that.

We are also offering a "White Glove" level of outreach to develop and manage existing prospects as they progress through the timeline. It has been eagerly embraced by our clients as it helps them manage and maintain a much larger base of relationships more effectively.





## ***Mari Anne Vanella: A Brief Background***

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Mari Anne Vanella has over 25 years of sales and business management experience. As Founder/CEO of sales development firms in the Silicon Valley, her organizations have consistently delivered long-term, successful sales development programs to high tech and services industries across the United States.

Mari Anne's background includes successful performance as Vice President and Director at companies such as The EC Company (now ADX), PictureTalk, a subsidiary of Drake International (one of the world's largest IT solution and staffing firms), Global Knowledge, and at Skyline Computer Corporation, where she led the Cisco Training Products organization to a #5 position in the country within one year. Prior to these, she founded Procom, a sales development firm based in the Silicon Valley serving customers such as State Farm Insurance, Waddell & Reed, and many others.

Her executive leadership roles in enterprise technology sales organizations with field reps, sales engineers and customer service teams contribute to in-depth knowledge and hands-on experience which results in a solution that has unmatched results.

Her industry affiliations include being a Founding Member of Women in Technology International's (WITI) Global Executive Network. She is also a speaker for the Direct Marketing Association (DMA) of Northern California, and the Sales Lead Management Association.

Mari Anne is listed third in the *'40 Most Inspirational C-Level Leaders in Sales Lead Management'* in 2017 and is also listed in the *'20 Women to Watch in Sales Lead Management'* in 2017, 2016, 2015, and 2014. She was a speaker in featured sessions at Dreamforce on Social Selling and has been invited to speak several times in several sessions. She also represented the SMB CEO role at *'LinkedIn Live'* event which was co-sponsored by the regional Chamber of Commerce and focused on how SMB's can successfully leverage LinkedIn as The Vanella Group, Inc. has.

Recently, she has authored the best-selling and award-winning book *42 Rules of Cold Calling Executives* which is available on Amazon.com and other retail channels.

Her monthly radio program *"Outstanding Outbound,"* is available on podbean, and her podcast *Telesales 2.0<sup>®</sup>* and *B2B Sales* is available on all podcast platforms.

Mari Anne's graduate studies in Business Management were through the Edinburgh School of Business, Heriot-Watt University.

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