How to Develop a Successful Sales Engagement Strategy

Setting a framework to scale outreach at each stage of the buyer journey to increase deal velocity and improve revenue efficiency.

dialsource

Sales engagement has become an essential component for leading Sales organizations as the advent of digital technology, the internet, and artificial intelligence over the last two decades has disrupted the way customers buy. Thanks to the internet, buyers spend a majority of their time researching how their problem came to be and what product or solution can help solve their problem. A survey by Forrester Consulting, a leading analyst firm, found that 79% of buyers prefer to self-educate online before engaging with a sales rep.

Because of this trend, salespeople have to shift the way they sell and engage with B2B buyers. If the modern B2B buyer already knows a lot about a company's offering by the time a Sales rep begins engaging with them, the interactions must be personalized and add additional insight or value. Fortunately, the inception of sales engagement technology has helped Sales organizations shift to a digital-first sales model, and engage buyers in a personalized multi-channel approach.

Sales engagement technology has had a proven ROI for many leading enterprise Sales organizations. TOPO, a sales and marketing research and advisory firm, found that 90% of sales leaders plan to invest in sales engagement technology and methodology in the next year positioning sales engagement solutions on the forefront of digital transformation technology.

> **B2B organizations with tightly aligned sales, marketing & customer success operations achieved 24% faster growth and 27% faster profit growth over a three year period.**
>
> - SIRIUS DECISIONS

As more enterprises begin to adopt sales engagement technology, personalized sales engagement becomes critical at every stage of the buyer's journey. It is not solely a prospecting or lead generation strategy. A successful sales engagement strategy is accepted and adopted across the entire revenue organization meaning marketing, sales development, senior sales, customer success reps, and even service and support reps need to align on a single platform and engagement processes to give the modern B2B buyer the ultimate customer journey.

The Ultimate Goal of Sales Engagement is Revenue Efficiency

First, let's go over what revenue efficiency is. Revenue efficiency is a simple equation that is familiar to most of us. It is the calculation of expenses as a percentage of revenue (expenses/ revenue). Essentially, revenue efficiency indicates how much a company spends to make a dollar — in other words, doing more with less.

Increasing return without increasing resources is a goal for every business. In the world of Sales, sales engagement technology helps to do more with less; allowing you to scale sales efforts without increasing headcount. However, as your company grows, so does its complexity. Your organization probably has thousands of moving parts — siloed departments, technologies, strategies, processes, and people — each of these things must align and work in concert to fuel growth and ultimately increase revenue. So, how do you use sales engagement technology to help support this alignment, boost revenue efficiency, drive more sales, and retain and expand accounts to scale your business?
It starts with addressing common challenges your sales organization faces daily to lay the groundwork needed for a successful sales engagement strategy and solution.

Some of the obstacles Sales must overcome could be enabling teams with the right tools. You don't have to adopt a new tool or system each time a problem arises. Instead, reassess if your current systems can be optimized to solve for inefficiencies. Another challenge could be revenue team alignment to ensure efficiency, reduce costs, and drive results. Additionally, using data to gain greater insight into opportunities, track performance, and improve forecast accuracy can be a challenge when sales teams don't have clear, actionable objectives to measure. The purpose of overcoming these obstacles is to aim for the digital transformation of your sales organization so your team can establish a robust sales engagement approach to meet the demands of your sophisticated buyers. Consider the following actions to overcome common sales challenges:

1. Fix fractured systems

One of the main roadblocks to revenue efficiency at a company is fractured systems. Fractured systems that silo data or are unable to communicate with one another do not work well together. If you are using systems that are fractured or can identify breaks in your process, your company is probably loosing valuable efficiency and causing additional challenges for your individual reps as well as across departments. Have you ever heard the saying, "Do not use people to hold broken systems together." You can't merely rely on team members to step in and fix systems that don't work. Eliminate clicks and keystrokes. Take a look at your sales systems and identify where things are breaking down. Then, change and repair the system, don't make your employees work with a practice that isn't serving them.

2. Eliminate bottlenecks

Bottlenecks can stop the entire revenue engine from functioning. If you want to eliminate bottlenecks, take a step back, and assess the situation by looking closely at your sales process. Focus on each member as well as the team and do all you can to simplify, streamline, and improve each person's day. By eliminating bottlenecks for each person, you can create a system that runs smoothly and efficiently across an entire organization.

3. Understand Metrics

Organizations need to focus on measurement, data, and metrics to understand which areas of the process to improve and how to measure efficiency accurately. These metrics can include top-level numbers but also lesser-known metrics such as the number of touch points it takes to qualify a prospect, the amount of talk time a rep has within any given day, and the speed at which your team can complete all activities and sales workflows.

Once you've addressed the challenges above, the implementation of sales engagement methodology and technology should continuously support the improvement of these roadblocks as they arise, and will allow your Sales organization to achieve engagement at scale across the entire revenue team. An added benefit of implementing a sales engagement solution will be the increase in quality of engagement due to improved data capture, automation, and alignment between teams.

It is common to lose quality when scaling engagement is the objective, but with sales engagement technology and standard sales automation processes in place, providing quality and personalization at scale becomes easier to accomplish. The number of opportunities they can successfully manage also increases when sales reps can scale quality 1:1 and 1:many engagement, causing deal velocity to speed up.

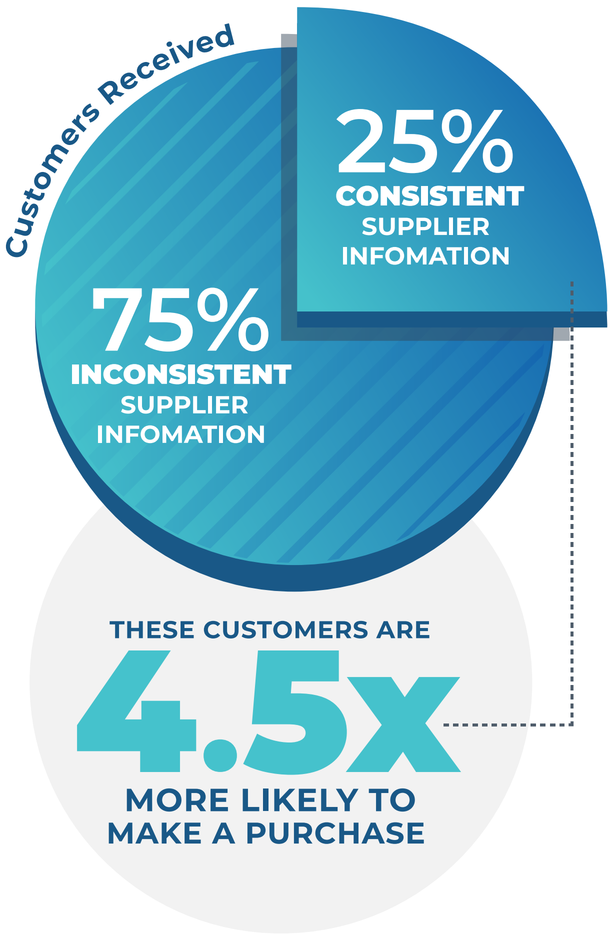
Deal Velocity Leads to Better Revenue Efficiency

Deal velocity determines how long it takes your sales reps to close an opportunity. Many factors go into calculating your deal velocity, but an established and automated sales process that the entire team is aligned on through a single sales engagement solution can help speed up larger, more complex deals from lead to revenue while simplifying the engagement process across smaller, more transactional engagements.

When revenue teams align on what data to capture at each touch point in your CRM, and automation is streamlining the entire sales engagement process, then the sales experience becomes a seamless journey for your reps and buyers. Having the correct insights provides enough valuable data for the next rep to leverage with the buyer or decision-making group successfully. You risk confusing your buyer with inconsistent engagement and messaging if reps are capturing the wrong data or not enough information at each buyer stage.

Gartner research states, "Only 25% of customers who rated the information they received from the supplier to be highly consistent across channels managed to successfully make a high-quality, low-regret purchase. This goes to show that the buying process is hard, but information consistency matters — those who report consistency are roughly 4.5x more likely to make the purchase."

An aligned data capture approach that continues through each buyer stage results in faster deal velocity due to the understanding and intimacy that is created, increasing the customers likelihood to buy from you. Consistent sales engagement is critical for deal velocity. If you feel your sales engagement processes can still be improved, consider reviewing and answering the following questions, found on the next page, with your sales team.



Healthcheck:

Does your current sales engagement strategy have room for improvement?

Questions to Ask

Notes

Sales Development Team

- [ ] How many touchpoints does it take to move between each stage and create an opportunity?
- [ ] Are you targeting the correct people?
- [ ] How many channels are you using to communicate with your prospects at any given time?
- [ ] What would be the benefits of increasing engagement in the SDR role?
- [ ] Are there any current gaps in resources, content, or sales training that is limiting you?

Senior Sales Team

- [ ] If you were to scale or do more in your current role, what would you do?
- [ ] Would you increase touch points, or channels and capture different information?
- [ ] Do you have all the information you need in CRM to engage decision makers with personalized insights?
- [ ] Are you focused on the right opportunities?
- [ ] Are there any current gaps in resources, content, or sales training that are holding you back?

Customer Success Team

- [ ] What customer information or data is missing?
- [ ] What are customers asking for?
- [ ] How fast does it take to onboard a new customer?
- [ ] Are there any gaps?
- [ ] How often do you engage with your customers?
- [ ] Once a month check-ins? Or tailored check-ins based on customer inquiries and feedback?

Service and Support Team

- [ ] Do you have enough visibility in CRM to address customer issues quickly?
- [ ] Do you always have to ask account managers/ customer success for more information?
- [ ] What would make your day or process easier?
- [ ] How fast can you respond to inquiries?

It's also important to perform health checks with your customer success and support teams. The likelihood your customers will fall in love with you is high when engagement is personalized and relevant to your customer's needs. It's easy for reps to provide a high level of personalization in each touch point when prospect and customer information is consistently captured and stored in one place like your CRM. In the age of SaaS and subscription-model businesses, customers will become loyal fans if treated with the same effort and care as prospective buyers.

Salesforce Research found that 78% of business buyers seek trusted advisors versus traditional salespeople to provide value for them. Customer intimacy empowers companies to develop products their business clients need, through intimate knowledge of their operations. The result is a holistic and profitable model that elevates the customer to the center of the sales process. Intimacy in sales is about the way you reach out to your target, as well as what you have to offer. A sales engagement solution allows customer intimacy to reach its maximum benefits; to speak to your customers, listen to them, and gather essential data about their product preferences.

How to Scale Outreach at Each Stage of the Buyer Journey

The key to scaling engagement is to create a well-defined process and the appropriate resources (i.e., training/enablement, marketing content, playbooks, documentation, tools) for reps to be able to engage as many prospects as possible in a meaningful manner at every stage of the sales journey.

It behooves revenue leaders to ensure their teams have the tools they need to succeed while working together to align engagement strategies at each buyer stage. Here are a few actionable ways to do that:

1. Set Clear and Actionable Objectives that Help Revenue Teams Grow

If reps are going to succeed, they must have clear and actionable objectives to help guide them through the process. Think of it as a roadmap that informs the entire journey. Improve their experience by opening more time in their schedules and ensuring they have what they need to keep striving.

Having clear goals and analytics in place to measure them helps them keep their communication clear and their expectations well-defined so that they know what to aim for and see what the outcome will be if they achieve it or don't. A big part of clear KPI's is also in the transparency of reports and the ability for a rep to monitor their progress and success as they work toward reaching their goals.

2. Supply the Fundamental Needs

What are the fundamental needs? Easy: Development, Compensation, Network, and Enjoyment. These things are similar, in importance, to clothing, water, food, and shelter for human life. They're necessary and non-negotiable. If your reps are underperforming or churning through the system too quickly, it's worth checking in again to make sure you are meeting these primary needs. If not, now is the time to flip your approach and start offering them in spades.

3. Simplify the Process and the Tools

Take proactive steps to make daily life easier and better for your reps. Today, nearly two-thirds (64.8%) of reps' time, on average, is spent in non-revenue-generating activities, leaving only 35.2% for functions related to selling. Your CRM is the central hub where each revenue team stores essential data points and insights about your buyers and customers. Why not put your CRM investment to work, and transform it into a sales engagement powerhouse?

The CRM must be your central platform for all of your processes and revenue teams. Native sales engagement solutions transform your CRM from a data platform to an engagement platform streamlining touchpoints of communication, improving efficiency, and creating a more exact central point of truth for all departments. To boost revenue efficiency, you need your reps working inside CRM and not moving back and forth across several different tools, windows, and platforms. The goal of CRM information is to provide an accurate "central point of truth" to ensure that your processes are functioning effectively.

The Takeaway

The issues that stall successful sales engagement are mainly the burden of data entry, overly complex or disconnected processes, a lack of visibility, manual tasks, and inadequate tools. So instead of pursuing leads, sales reps are distracted by these time-consuming tasks. DialSource takes all of those tasks and eliminates busy work. The software takes tasks like updating a record, scheduling follow-ups, and sending emails, and automates the whole process through the CRM. After a call, a rep clicks a customizable pre-set button (disposition) that manages all follow-up tasks, so they are free to move onto the next call. One click saves them time, boosts the number of leads they can pursue and ensures that the data is 100% complete and accurate.

The primary use case for sales engagement technology is to adapt your sales organization to the needs of the modern business buyer without increasing your headcount. By leveraging the sales force you currently have, setting a proper foundation, and scaling sales engagement across the buyer journey, you can lead your sales organization towards a successful sales engagement strategy. The result will be faster deal velocity and ultimately revenue efficiency to help your company drive more sales, and retain and improve customer intimacy.

About DialSource

DialSource is the driving force in the digital transformation of enterprise sales and service organizations. DialSource helps increase customer intimacy while supporting engagement throughout the entire customer lifecycle at scale. DialSource Denali, our native CRM application and global tier-one carrier telephony solution, optimizes the power of your CRM to accelerate opportunities from lead to revenue by automating the tasks that take time away from selling. Manual tasks and data entry such as managing emails, logging activities, inputting notes and finding the right person to contact become automated within your CRM with DialSource. We are here to simplify and change the way businesses communicate and engage with customers. We are DialSource. To learn more, visit DialSource.com.

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