

SALES ENABLEMENT SOLUTIONS FOR MANUFACTURING

marketveep
MARKETING MADE HUMAN

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THE CHANGING SALES PARADIGM

Digital disruption has rocked the manufacturing industry. In the old days, manufacturers often closed deals in person (perhaps over a few lunches or dinners), and a strong personal relationship was the tipping point in the sale. As communications, research, and time (both at work and home) have shifted into the virtual realm, the traditional sales process has started showing its age.

Channel exposure today is more fragmented, filterable, and user-centric. Companies that rely solely on trade shows, direct mail, cold calls, and other outbound marketing strategies are now at a disadvantage. New approaches are needed to impact a modern sale.

To illustrate this, let's consider a fictional scenario that's becoming extremely common in the manufacturing industry:

You're the head of purchasing at a mid-sized computer technology OEM. Your boss storms in one morning at wit's end about a production recall. A massive shipment of computer graphics cards has been called back because the cooling mechanism is letting the on-board CPU overheat.

He thinks it's being overtaxed by the quad-core processor from the last revision. It's time to find a stronger system, but there's one problem—he's already doing damage control on the recall and doesn't have a lot of wiggle room in the budget. You'll have to figure it out.

So, where do you start? Cooling mechanisms are made by dozens of suppliers with a wide range of specifications. Like most of today's buyers, you decide to fire up the internet and:

- Click through the websites of some reputable tier 2 suppliers
- Check out the going market price on an online RFP aggregator
- Browse some industry forums for purchasing pointers
- Read about cooling components on the blog of a company you saw at last year's trade show

Three vendors that meet your needs stick out in the research. You call each one in to present you with an offer and then go with the lowest bid—satisfying the tight budget. Your boss is thrilled. Problem solved.

The food for thought in this example is that a salesperson wasn't directly involved until the very end of the buying journey. This has become the new status quo. According to Google's survey of 1,500 business leaders, B2B buyers don't contact suppliers directly until nearly two-thirds of their purchasing process is already complete ¹. This is why manufacturers have to change the sales paradigm and empower their salesforce with tools that can impact the new buyer's journey.

WHAT IS SALES ENABLEMENT?

HubSpot provides a helpful, concise definition of sales enablement ²:

.....
: “SALES ENABLEMENT IS THE TECHNOLOGY, PROCESSES, AND CONTENT THAT EMPOWER SALES TEAMS TO SELL EFFICIENTLY AT A HIGHER VELOCITY.” :
.....

The kinds of resources that qualify as “sales enablement” can be broad. Here are just a few examples:

- Sales-focused informational content
- Digital training tools
- Sales automation software
- An SLA that builds sales and marketing alignment



Essentially, sales enablement is about creating a more integrated approach to selling that gives a marketing team high-impact ways to support their sales team. With the right tools, the sales team can become the research portion of the customer’s buying process.

HOW DOES IT HELP MANUFACTURERS?

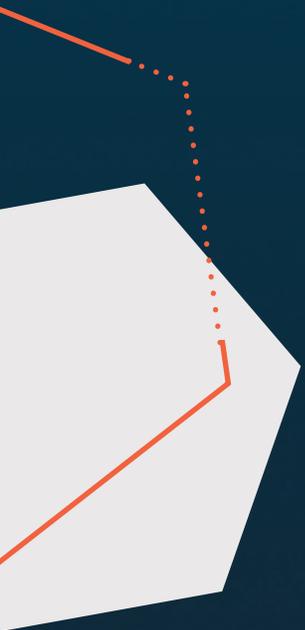
Buyers today are more informed, more selective, and ask a lot more of manufacturers than they used to. Sales enablement can address all of the prototypical pain points faced by the industry, such as:

| MANUFACTURER CHALLENGE | SALES ENABLEMENT SOLUTION |
|--|--|
| Rapidly expanding product portfolios | Digital libraries that provide easy access to product knowledge where and when reps need it |
| Customers do their own research—no need for sales reps | Helpful content that customers can find in internet searches; SEO to show up high in search results |
| Lengthy sales cycles | Automated lead nurturing email campaigns and email drips to reps about price changes and promotions |
| High stakes deals with significant revenue impact | Alerts and smart notifications that connect reps to the hottest leads and ensure neither side goes dark during negotiations |
| Multiple stakeholders in the closing process | Marketing insights into each persona that outline suggested language and tactics to resolve persona objections and pain points |

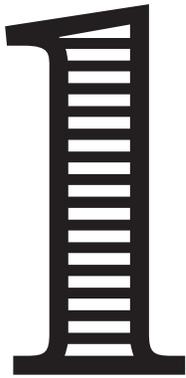
On top of these stumbling blocks, there's also more competition than ever before. Commoditization, mergers, acquisitions, and globalization have made it tough to differentiate yourself in a sea of manufacturing competitors.

Sales enablement can give back some of the power. CSO Insights³ says that companies that use dedicated sales enablement techniques will improve their quota attainment and win rates—by 22% and 14%, respectively—compared to companies that don't.

Legacy sales models (which were relationship-centered) have shifted to a more digital, bottom of the funnel, consultative approach. This shift provides your company with the perfect time to align its marketing and sales efforts. Marketing is the forge, and sales reps are the cavalry; when you equip knights with the armaments they need for every terrain and scenario, you're destined to achieve victory.



SOLUTIONS FOR MANUFACTURING



AUTOMATE LEAD NURTURING

Sales automation platforms are the highest impact software you can offer to your sales team. At a bare minimum, you'll want the capability to create personalized email templates and campaigns that are responsive to lead behavior.

HubSpot Sales Pro, for example, has tools for:

- Highly Customizable Workflows
- Easily Enrollable Sales Sequences
- "Smart" Emails (with automated suggestions to better personalize the message)

These nurturing emails are the perfect spot to drop educational content from the marketing team that helps buyers see your firm as a potential solution to their problem. This way, the sales team is primed for success from the first point of contact.

**Companies that excel
at lead nurturing
generate 50% more
sales-ready leads at
33% lower cost.**

On top of that, **nurtured leads make 47% larger purchases than non-nurtured leads.** The value added is astounding when you consider that many manufacturers are not doing this. **65% of B2B marketers have not established lead nurturing⁴.** It simply doesn't work to focus your sales reps' finite hours on leads that aren't ready to buy.

Lead nurturing bridges the gap.



GENERATE SALES-FOCUSED CONTENT

Valuable content drives traffic and converts leads at every step of the inbound buyer's journey. The proof is in the numbers: 87% of buyers are choosing vendors with relevant content for every stage of decision-making ⁵. In a well-integrated sales process, marketing content is not only qualifying leads for sales but also helping sales convert those leads into customers.

And it works.

Conversion rates are 73% higher when content is aligned to the specific stage of the buyer's decision-making process ⁶.

This means you'll need quality bottom-of-funnel assets like:

- Video Demos
- Webinars
- User Guides
- Pitch Decks
- Testimonials

And Don't Forget Case Studies!

Customer case studies are the biggest powerhouse in your sales content library. Nothing is as influential at the bottom of the funnel as a previous customer's endorsement and success story. These are often assembled in a text format, but 4x as many buyers prefer video to written content, so a video case study can be even more influential ⁷.

Try to produce at least two or three case studies a year to highlight some of your flagship products. CRMs can even track product usage to identify possible case study topics ⁸.

We're in the midst of a generational shift in the B2B manufacturing environment. More decision-makers are late-Gen-Xers and Millennials, who are very comfortable with—and often prefer—information technology over in-person communication. The challenge here is that younger buyers still expect a traditional sales journey but in a different and more relevant medium.

Your content and website can use interactive, conversational virtual experiences that will engage and educate today's business professionals through their preferred channels.



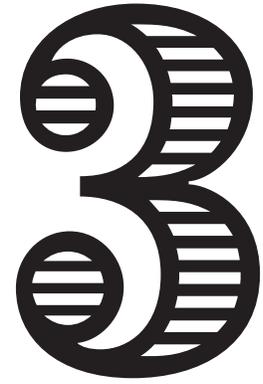
Show customers how you can meet their needs with:

QUIZZES that identify catered solutions for each kind of prospect

ONLINE QUOTE FORMS that are automated to accelerate conversions and on-boarding

ANIMATIONS that make complex concepts easy to grasp

EXPLAINER VIDEOS that deliver your value proposition in direct, conversational terms



**OFFER
INTERACTIVE
EXPERIENCES**



ALIGN PRODUCT MESSAGING

Research from Forrester has shown that more than **75% of prospects feel like sales reps don't understand their specific business, role, responsibilities, or the problem they need to solve** ⁹. Properly aligned messaging will show your prospects that you are in the 25% that do.

Sales and marketing can establish consistent, personalized language up and down the funnel through collaboration and sharing of insights.

Sales are more effective when it speaks the prospects' language, but it goes both ways:

Salespeople hear the language prospects are actually using—their struggles, feedback, motives.

Marketers can use these insights to develop effective messaging that encourages prospects through the sales funnel.

On the other side of the coin:

Marketers have done the research needed to craft detailed personas and profiles for their company's ideal buyers.

Salespeople can use this data to learn where to find prospects, understand how they want to be engaged, and better target their conversations to close a sale.

This consistency is easier to achieve if your teams have access to a shared CRM that packages the entire history of a customer's interactions with your firm, from the initial website visit to post-sale service calls.

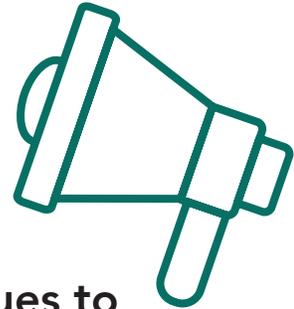


Your sales reps are people too.

If lead nurturing works for the goose, it works for the gander. The same automation tools and strategies that marketing uses to facilitate consistent, continuous, valuable communication with buyers can work wonders for in-house alignment. Try thinking of your sales team as the internal audience for the marketing team.

NURTURE THE SALES TEAM

(LIKE YOU NURTURE LEADS)



Personalize your communication, tools, and techniques to the unique needs of each team. You might build out:

| | |
|-----------------------------|---|
| Buyer personas | ...for sales reps (motivations, struggles, goals, how they operate) so that you're better able to arm them with the targeted solutions they need to solve consumer problems |
| Drip campaigns | ...with fresh training or enablement resources every week |
| Newsletters | ...with motivating statistics and company or product updates |
| Alerts | ...about new sales or promotions |
| Onboarding sequences | ...("welcome" drips) that introduce new reps to your company and processes at a comfortable pace |
| Email surveys | ...to learn which marketing collateral has been most effective in sales |



PUT A CONVENIENT DEVICE IN YOUR SALES REP'S HANDS

A portable touch-screen like a tablet or iPad can do triple the work of those old product catalogs in a lighter, faster, sleeker design. It's the 21st century—time to ditch the heavy binders with hundreds of pages to flip through.

Reps can have ready access to your full range of content, product literature, comparison sheets—anything they need to answer questions and assist customers on the phone or in person, right when they need it. Buyers will appreciate your reps' ability to suddenly pull up informative infographics and demo videos during in-person meetings or on the go.

You can also use a knowledge base that's accessible from the cloud (like HubSpot's "Service Hub") to make it even easier to answer common internal or external questions. There's no need to download or store the needed resources on the device, because the rep can access it from any device.

Content is king, and it matters at every stage of the sales funnel. There's no reason to leave the details entirely up to marketing. Your sales team is directly in touch with B2B clients, prospects, and leads—they know what your target audience wants, in their own words.

These insights can then help marketing write FAQs, manuals, blogs, custom email templates (for pre-and-post-sale sequences), and other content for sales to wield while nurturing SQLs and closing deals. Make sure that marketing has a central, accessible hub for all sales-influenced or sales-requested content in an easily accessible location so that it's quick to access at a critical moment.

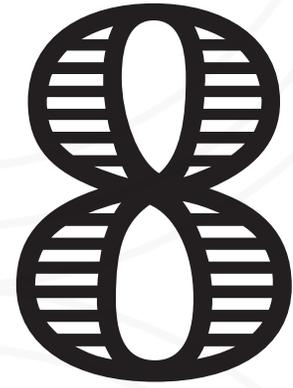


GIVE SALES A VOICE IN CONTENT

Recent research has proven that you're **100 times more likely to contact a lead if your response time is within 5 minutes (versus 30 minutes)** ¹⁰.

According to Dr. James Oldroyd, who conducted the study, quick responses boost sales for three reasons:

- 1. They're Available:** If they submitted a web form, they're probably still near a computer or phone.
- 2. You're Top of Mind:** The customer hasn't had any time to move on to other priorities.
- 3. The "Wow Effect":** Because of your hustle, surveys have shown that customers feel like "Wow! That is probably the way they are going to service my account."



INTEGRATE TOOLS TO ACCELERATE RESPONSE TIMES

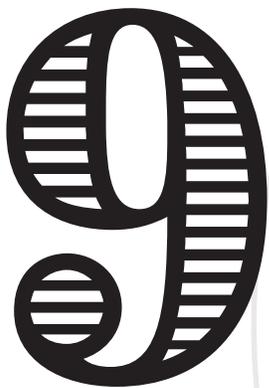
That said, 5 minutes can seem like lightspeed. If you manage contact within an hour, you're still at least seven times more likely to convert them ¹¹.

**THE AVERAGE CALL BACK TIME, HOWEVER, IS
46 HOURS AND 53 MINUTES — NOT GOOD.**

New technologies (discussed in the Forbes article on Oldroyd's research) are hitting the scene to facilitate near-instantaneous response times.

Take a hard look at:

- Live chat prompts on your website
- Chatbots that engage immediately and loop in humans as needed
- Autodialers that start a customer/rep call immediately upon contact form submission



SUPPORT YOUR RESELLERS



Manufacturing doesn't operate in a vacuum. By and large, businesses in this industry work in multi-tiered supply chains that are ultimately dependent upon one another's mutual success to source materials, create components, assemble products, and distribute them to the market.

It will help your sales team to grow existing accounts if you can drive more business to current partners down the supply chain. Have marketing generate leads or run joint marketing campaigns with downstream allies to give them more buying power and increase B2B demand for your products. This not only encourages repeat business—it also boosts customer loyalty and satisfaction.

HELP FIRST, SELL SECOND

The right tools will empower your reps to provide superior service, build relationships, and close deals. Sales enablement borrows heavily from the inbound marketing methodology in this regard.

Modern sales—in which the buyer comes to the table armed with their own research—asks the sales team to do much more “upserving” than “upselling” with your customers. It’s no different within the company.

An empathetic, consultative approach to training and equipping the sales team has well-documented, tangible ROI:

84% of sales reps achieve quotas when their employer offers best-in-class sales enablement strategies ¹².

The average salesperson spends **440 hours** each year searching for the right content to share with customers. **90%** of B2B sellers don’t even use their sales materials because they’re too hard to customize, outdated, or irrelevant to their needs ¹³.

More than half of C-level executives say sales enablement solutions are the top technology investment necessary to boost sales productivity ¹⁴.

Companies are **96%** more likely to achieve a competitive level of sales sophistication when they use sales enablement to align and support their process ¹⁵.

The research is clear—help your sales team first, and they’ll generate revenue second. With the right resources, you can beat digital disruption and re-imagine your manufacturing sales process for the information age.

ABOUT US

Market Veep is a marketing consulting firm serving small and mid-size clients that want to grow. We made a simple observation when speaking to businesses: there was a gap between marketing strategy and marketing tasks. Small and medium size businesses needed marketing but didn't need a full time CMO and similarly were doing the "marketing tasks" but not seeing results.

SO WE SET OUT ON A MISSION TO BRIDGE THE GAP.

Our services combine marketing strategies and marketing tasks to help businesses formulate a measurable marketing strategy. Our marketing programs combine real time and virtual marketing consulting as well as a marketing mix that is custom to each business.

MARKET VEEP WAS FOUNDED AND DESIGNED AROUND *creating marketing that people love.*

We believe in data-driven growth strategies. By using data, analytics, research, and real user engagements we develop measurable marketing strategies and then put that plan into action. Our activities are mapped to KPIs to make sure long and short term goals stay on track and sales and marketing teams remain aligned.

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