Social Sales Enablement

Digitally Empowering Today’s Sales Force
Why Sales Enablement?

Successful sales strategies start long before buyers are ever contacted. Sales enablement—equipping your salesforce with tools, content, and information that they need to sell effectively—has become a key focus for businesses to maintain competitive positions in the marketplace.

For many companies, the unique challenge with enabling sales teams is that they are geographically distributed; handle an array of industries, clients, and products; and do business outside of office firewall access. Social sales enablement, powered by social business and collaboration platforms, can be a powerful approach to driving productive sales cycles. Successful platforms must be focused on enabling sales goals and objectives, be easy to use, and make resources easy to find and apply over and over again.

From our client experience and industry research, here are some best practices for successfully leveraging social business platforms and ways of working to enable sales:

Definition

Forrester defines sales enablement as “a strategic, ongoing process that equips all client-facing employees with the ability to consistently and systematically have a valuable conversation with the right set of customer stakeholders at each stage of the customer’s problem solving life cycle to optimize the return on investment of the selling system.”

Business Process Integration

Sales teams do not have time to log into a system that fails to help them achieve sales goals. When implementing a digital sales enablement strategy, ensure the social business platform integrates with essential business processes and systems. Ideally have social sales enablement platforms as part of necessary business processes that require regular access by sales teams.

A Central Location

Use your social sales enablement platform as a “one-stop shop” or central place containing critical news and information, access to frequently used resources, and expertise for sales teams. Having a central place for salespeople to visit helps streamline navigation and allows support teams to post important information where salespeople will regularly see it.

Focus On Utility

The key for implementation of a social sales enablement platform to drive sales is showing the sales team how the platform will help them have better meetings, reach more prospects, and win more business. To ensure sustained adoption, sales teams need to have a reason to visit—so they need to understand how the system will help them get their daily work done.
Enabling A Mobile Workforce

Today’s sales force is always on-the-go, meeting with clients or cultivating new relationships, so social sales enablement platforms need to be accessed from anywhere on mobile devices, including tablets and phones. Provide up-to-date, relevant content and easy to find information with a seamless, simple to navigate user experience on all operating systems.

Leadership Participation

Executive participation creates a sense of permissibility while underscoring the importance and effectiveness of the tool to the sales cycle process. When sales teams see senior leaders interacting on social platforms, they will be motivated to participate and share as well. Having executives recognize top performers helps engage employees and reinforce desired collaborative behaviors that drive sales results.

Governance Plan

To ensure that social sales enablement platform is relevant, useful, and simple to use, governance needs to be in place. Before launch, establish how information will be categorized or tagged to organize content for faster search. Decide if groups or communities will be open or closed for creation by salespeople and how they will be aligned to industries or functions.

Advocacy Networks

Creating a network of internal advocates will increase sales team adoption. Before launching a social sales enablement platform, identify a group of sales champions in different regions or groups to reach more field representatives. Provide clear roles and responsibilities and specialized training for these advocates on both the technology and the ways of working. Ask them to be the go-to resource in their local region or group. Advocates can set the example of participation and aid with engaging others in new groups and communities.

Training

As part of a comprehensive social sales enablement strategy, create a variety of training materials for sales teams. Provide live online training, self-guided training, and short FAQs and handouts to satisfy a variety of learning styles. Training techniques leveraging the social sales enablement platform mean that sales training can extend beyond traditional training and create opportunities for sustained learning as well as learning from peers across the organization.

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Sales Enablement Case Study

Client Profile
Name: Marsh Insurance (A Division Of Marsh & McLennan)
Industry: Risk & Insurance
# Of Employees: 26,000+ Employees
# Of Countries: 100+

Problem
The social and digital environment at Marsh had become overwhelming and confusing for sales teams. Marsh wanted to transform the company culture to a more sales-driven environment, focused on reaching new clients and opening new business accounts, and engage sales teams. Specifically, the corporation wanted to:

- Provide knowledge of and access to what all sales teams were doing across the firm
- Help sales teams quickly find answers to complex client questions or issues.
- Make the entire knowledge of the firm available to all employees

Process
- Analyzed findings from employee interviews (including sales teams), real-time platform usage, and external research to create Colleague Social and Digital Strategy, reviewed and approved by CEO
- Recommended and guided the implementation of a groundbreaking intranet based on the Salesforce CRM and internal social network Chatter, enabling decentralized and dynamic content management
- Trained sales teams with customized materials, including live recorded training sessions, quick reference guides, and use case based illustrations, to show how Chatter would enable them to get more work done
- Led an executive mentoring program to guide senior leaders on how to best leverage Chatter to increase sales and engage sales teams

“"We started with the goal of creating a better internal social and digital environment for our colleagues that would ultimately help drive sales and increase client satisfaction. Enterprise Strategies delivered the comprehensive strategy we needed and then worked alongside us to make it happen.”

Doug Dundas
Chief Marketing Officer

Results
- All projects completed on time and on budget
- Marsh social intranet design lauded as “Intranet of the Future” at Dreamforce
- Increased adoption and business usage of Marsh Chatter tenfold in 6 months

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