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Improve DISTRIBUTION CHANNEL REVENUE in

5

EASY STEPS

A guide to increasing growth, competitive advantage, and buyer satisfaction with SALES ENABLEMENT

FORRESTER FOUND
By neglecting indirect sellers, companies inadvertently hinder their own sales performance, and as a result, business success.

In April 2018, Mediafly commissioned Forrester Consulting to explore how B2B companies support both direct and indirect sellers with sales enablement technologies. Through an online survey of 227 sales and marketing leaders, Forrester found that B2B enterprises prioritize providing tools and training for their direct sellers over indirect partner sellers. Forrester also found that by neglecting indirect sellers, companies inadvertently hinder their own sales performance, and as a result, business success. Meanwhile, companies that invest in sales enablement platforms that support sales execution through content management, interactive tools, and a seller-oriented user experience for partners enable sales growth.

Based on the findings in the Forrester Consulting paper, we at Mediafly have compiled five easy steps B2B companies can take to empower distribution channels for improved sales outcomes.

STEP 1:
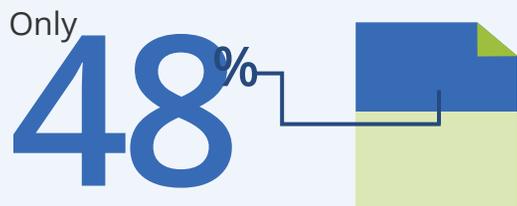## Stop Treating Your Distributors Like Second-Class Citizens

The first step in improving channel sales outcomes is to recognize how vital your indirect sales channels are to your success. Did you know nearly half (49%) of annual B2B revenue comes from partner sellers? Yet, 55% of B2B sales and marketing leaders are not confident in - or not aware of - their partners' abilities to deliver consistent and compelling sales experiences.

You wouldn't send a new sales rep into the field without proper onboarding, so why would you depend on partner sellers who lack training and knowledge to sell your products and services? They can't sell what they don't know. And if they're not selling your products, you're not meeting your revenue goals. Just like direct sellers, partner sales reps need the tools and technology to elevate sales conversations and truly differentiate your brand in a crowded marketplace.

Neglecting to enable partner sales reps can have adverse effects on your business, including:

- Disjointed customer or brand experiences that hurt sales outcomes

- Minimized visibility into the sales process, negatively impacting your ability to accurately forecast sales and your understanding of how your product is marketed and sold

- A perception that your company is difficult to partner or do business with

- Reduced mindshare with partners, putting you at a competitive disadvantage and stagnating business growth

55%

of B2B sales and marketing leaders are not confident in - or not aware of - their partners' abilities to deliver consistent and compelling sales experiences

STEP 2:
Implement The Same Sales Enablement Technology for Both Direct and Indirect Sellers

A sales enablement technology accessible to both direct and indirect sellers is an essential piece of any modern sales strategy. It's the number one way to ensure everyone who represents your brand can elevate the sales conversation for more interactive, engaging, and consistent buying experiences that drive revenue. Still, B2B companies provide sales employees with access to devices and software at rates 1.4x to 1.7x higher than they do partners. And while 68% of enterprises provide direct sellers with access to basic sales content resources like presentation templates, only 48% of these companies do the same for their indirect sales forces. With clear gaps in content, technology, and training resources, It's no wonder partners have more difficulty advancing the sales cycle than their direct sales counterparts.

B2B companies that elect to implement an interactive sales enablement technology for both direct and indirect sellers, find themselves well-positioned to:

- **IMPROVE THE CONSISTENCY OF BRAND AND BUYING EXPERIENCES**
  Implementing a sales enablement technology guarantees direct and indirect sellers always have access to new and updated content on any device, whether online or offline. By equipping reps with an intuitive sales application at their fingertips, you can minimize the risk of sellers saving outdated content to their local machines or creating their own off-brand content when a quick search through past emails doesn't surface what they need.

- **INCREASE SALES VISIBILITY**
  Implementing a sales enablement technology and making the platform accessible to both direct and indirect sellers gives management and marketers insight into what content is being used at various stages of the buying cycle, which reps are utilizing the assets provided, and what content drives revenue. Sales enablement technologies that incorporate artificial intelligence and machine learning automate the process of capturing meeting notes, customer data, and content presented in both the sales application and CRM. This ensures management can forecast more accurately and marketers can focus on producing content that propels deals forward.

- **BOLSTER COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE**
  Sales enablement technologies elevate your sellers' sophistication and success. Enable your direct and indirect sellers to ditch their static sales pitch decks and lead personalized sales discussions that address how your solution will solve for business challenges and help the buyer reach their financial goals.

Only
48%

of B2B Enterprises provide the same collateral to their indirect or partner sellers

STEP 3:
Consider Your Sales Enablement Solution Carefully

B2B buyers have changed. In fact, 62% of B2B buyers say they can develop selection criteria or finalize a vendor list based on digital content alone. In a digital-first world, buyers look to sellers to complement or amplify the information they've found online. Your static pitch deck touting the features and functionality of your product won't work. Buyers want interactive discussions that teach them something new, while effectively communicating the value your solution will bring to their business.

While basic Sales Asset Management (SAM) or Digital Content Management for Sales (DCMS) systems are a great vehicle for content distribution, they have little impact on the buyer experience. Modern buyers are more likely to make a purchase if their decision is backed by data and insights. Sales enablement platforms that incorporate interactive value-selling tools like ROI or TCO calculators and health or value assessments, give both direct and indirect sellers a leg up on the competition by allowing them to capture real-time customer data and use the information to guide more consultative and value-driven sales discussions. In fact, the Forrester study found indirect sellers with access to interactive sales tools have an easier time differentiating themselves from the competition, with survey respondents reporting they find it 1.8x easier to engage high-level stakeholders in sales conversations and twice as easy to accelerate deal closure.

ACCORDING TO THE FORRESTER STUDY
These investments will not only help partners advance the sales process, they will also differentiate your brands and gain you mindshare with your partners.

Consider Your Sales Enablement Solution Carefully

In addition to selecting a platform that incorporates interactive sales tools, here are some other things to consider:

- **TIME TO VALUE**
  Can the solution be deployed quickly? Does the vendor take a partnership approach to deployment to ensure the implementation runs smoothly?

- **EASE OF USE**
  Can users be onboarded quickly? Are the admin and user interfaces simplistic enough to guarantee adoption?

- **ACCESSIBILITY**
  Is the application device agnostic and available anywhere, both online and offline? Can the solution be rolled out to both direct and indirect sales reps?

- **ROBUST REPORTING AND ANALYTICS**
  Can you correlate content with revenue? Can the application push and pull data from other sales systems for a holistic view of sales performance?

- **FLEXIBILITY**
  Can you easily integrate the technology with other solutions in your sales tech ecosystem (e.g. CRM, LMS, CMS)? Is it scalable enough to grow with your business?
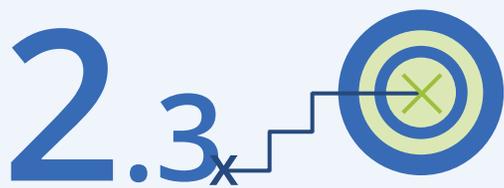
- **CUSTOMIZATION**
  Does the platform check all of your boxes? If it doesn't, can the vendor extend the platform to meet your unique business requirements?

- **SECURITY**
  Does the platform meet your company's security requirements? Does the vendor follow industry standard best practices to protect data?

1.8x

Channel sellers who utilize interactive tools find it 1.8x as easy to get high-level stakeholders involved in sales discussions

STEP 4:
Ensure High Adoption Rates

Empowering your direct and indirect sellers with a robust sales enablement platform can drive incredible business outcomes only if sales reps understand its value and commit to using it. For easy onboarding and increased adoption, incorporate the following into your sales enablement deployment strategy:

- **TRAINING**
  In addition to lacking technology and content resources, indirect sellers report lower access to sales training. If you commit to deploying a sales enablement platform to empower both direct sales reps and partner sellers, ensure you have a plan in place to train all users across your entire sales ecosystem on the technology. If sellers don't understand how to use the application or how it will positively impact their ability to meet sales quotas, your adoption rates will suffer.
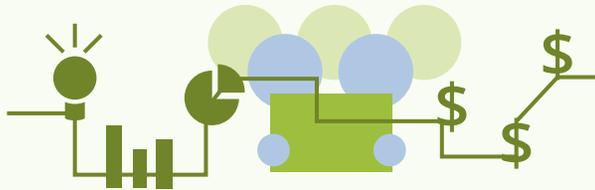
- **PILOT OR PHASED ROLLOUT**
  Choosing to pilot your sales enablement technology with specific teams or business units before rolling it out to the rest of your organization reduces risk, increases control, and improves product usability for higher adoption. A phased rollout simplifies acceptance testing, offering deeper insight into how the tools will actually be used and allows for user-led optimization before releasing the technology to the wider organization.

- **INTEGRATION WITH EXISTING SALES TECH STACK**
  Fully integrating your sales enablement technology with the other core components of your sales tech ecosystem ensures you don't disrupt existing sales behaviors and increases adoption of your sales application. Platforms that incorporate AI-driven automation enable the push and pull of data between systems, automating day-to-day sales tasks like data entry and creating a new efficiency for sales reps.

2.3x

Companies that have already deployed Sales Enablement platforms to their partners are up to 2.3x more effective at achieving their sales goals

STEP 5:
Reap the Benefits of Improved Sales Outcomes

Recognizing detrimental gaps in sales enablement resources for partners, many B2B companies are shifting partner enablement budgets away from traditional methods like entertainment, incentives, and co-marketing and instead using those resources to enable partners with digital sales tools and training. In fact, 90% of B2B enterprises surveyed by Forrester expressed interest in, plan to adopt, or currently use sales enablement platforms for both their direct and indirect sales organizations - and for good reason.

Companies that implement sales enablement technologies for their partners:

- Are up to 2.3x more effective at achieving their sales goals

- Drive 1.4x higher revenue growth

- Are 1.4x more likely to report an increase in average order values

- Are 2.1x more likely to report an increase in customer references

- Are 1.5x more likely to report an increase in customer lifetime value

- Are 2.1x more likely to report double-digit revenue growth

According to Forrester, "Winning high consideration business deals now requires sophisticated, consultative, and technology-enabled salespeople." B2B companies need to empower everyone responsible for communicating their value propositions, including both direct and partner sellers, with resources to elevate sales conversations from transactional to strategic to stay competitive and drive business growth.

Winning high consideration business deals now requires sophisticated, consultative, and technology-enabled salespeople

Contact Mediafly today for more tips to empower your direct and indirect sellers for improved sales outcomes and higher annual revenues.

Source:
"It's Time to Enable Your Channel Sellers for Evolved Selling", a commissioned study conducted by Forrester Consulting on behalf of Mediafly, July 2018.

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The Evolved Selling™ Solution

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About Mediafly
Mediafly is a mobile sales enablement solution that enhances how brands engage prospective buyers. By using Mediafly's technology, marketing and sales teams at companies including PepsiCo, Disney, GE Healthcare, MillerCoors and Charles Schwab, are able to deliver custom, dynamic sales presentations quickly and efficiently, engaging customers with insights that are relevant to them. Mediafly's Evolved Selling™ solution enables sellers to be more flexible, insightful and interactive in their sales interactions, resulting in increased sales and stronger customer relationships. Visit **Mediafly.com** or follow **@Mediafly** for more information.