

ORACLE®



Do More With

Sales Enablement

ORACLE®
Marketing Cloud

Spark Series
13 MIN READ





To the Marketer Who Goes Nonstop.

You don't try. You do. And when you get that feeling, some might call it a spark of genius, you know anything's possible.

At Oracle, we know greatness comes from great inspiration. Packed with powerful info, the Spark Series will get you up to speed on pivotal marketing trends – like B2B content marketing – lightning fast.

Think of it as a catalyst that will put your strategy into motion. Because if anyone's going to stay one step ahead, it's going to be you.



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What's

Sales Enablement?

The ultimate goal of enablement is to help sales close more deals faster. (You may have noticed that B2B sales cycles are getting longer.) It's about delivering the right content to the right person at the right time. It's up to you to get your sales team ready by making it easy to access and use the following:

- ▶ A prioritized list of who to contact next based on lead quality and purchase intent.
- ▶ Behavioral data summarizing prospect interests and intent.
- ▶ Tools for tracking and alerting prospects as they advance through the buying process.
- ▶ A library of content aligned to specific stages of the buying process that helps build trust and rapport with the buyer to encourage a favorable purchase decision.



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Why Should My Business Care?

If your organization is like most, it spends a lot of money on sales. And, because it's making such a big investment, it wants to generate the best results from the sales team. Sales enablement lets your company do just that.



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Why Should Marketers Care?

Your success as a marketer depends on your ability to help the sales team sell. A number of factors play into this success. But disseminating knowledge and content is key. Many salespeople spend time researching prospects and creating content to facilitate the buying process. But those particular prospects may not be ready to move forward.

Help your sales reps communicate more intelligently about topics that resonate with prospects. And arm your reps with the tools and content they need to engage and keep in touch with hot prospects. Then, your salespeople can focus on building strong relationships and guiding prospects to a buying decision (in the process enhancing your own perceived value as a marketer).



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What's the Consumer Connection?

Let's face it: no one wants to be sold to, especially by a salesperson. When was the last time you even answered an unidentified call at work? Or listened patiently as an overeager sales rep fumbled through a script? The same is true for your prospects. That's why they avoid your salespeople until the last possible minute. Instead they educate themselves by accessing publicly available information and connecting with peers online until they've narrowed their options. (The buyer journey is nearly complete by the time a salesperson is even contacted.)

This shift places buyers in control of the sales cycle. And that forces changes in how your organization sells. The winning sales rep is not the person who can hunt down leads, arm prospects with content, and close the deal. It's the one who consults with prospects to simplify their decision-making process based on a keen understanding of buyer interest and behavior. When a prospect finally reaches out, your sales rep had better understand everything there is to know about the buyer and be prepared to deliver immediate value. That's where sales enablement comes into play.



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The Basics

Effective sales enablement helps your marketing team pass higher-quality leads to sales – allowing your sales reps to focus on higher-priority activities. This drives a steadier, more predictable pipeline. And, when sales reps reach or surpass quotas faster than ever before, they'll be eager to stay onboard. Just as important, your organization will better understand how marketing demand translates to pipeline. And how conversion rates impact revenue. This enables the holy grail of sales and marketing: better alignment.

It's easy to get overwhelmed by terminology and techniques. Here's all you really need to know: Sales enablement covers the sales side of the revenue cycle, including:

- ▶ Identifying prospects whose behaviors and company activities make them promising buyers.
- ▶ Providing sales with topics they should raise to engage each individual prospect in a high-value, relevant dialogue.
- ▶ Educating sales on available tools and techniques for tracking customer prospects throughout the buying cycle.
- ▶ Delivering information that sales can quickly access, customize, and send to prospects to help them navigate the buying process.



The Key to Success

Your marketing organization is in a unique position to help sales thrive. But your success depends on understanding how and when buyers interact with your website, content, and campaigns.

It's not enough to generate high-quality leads. You have to deliver the information sales needs to close business. And that means being able to understand prospect interest and intent based on what they are doing on your site. (Understanding prospect behavior is more powerful than knowing demographic information.)

Let's look at an example. A prospect might indicate interest in one of your solutions on a registration form. But a greater need might become apparent when you see what content the prospect downloads and the time he or she spends viewing your online demos and webinars. With this information, your sales rep can engage in a more targeted, relevant conversation with the prospect – and accelerate the close.



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Go Further with the Right Tools

Work together with reps to put sales enablement in motion. Here are some powerful tools and technologies you cannot afford to overlook.

CRM or Sales Force Automation (SFA)

Use these systems to manage sales activities. Think daily tasks, activity record-keeping, lead routing and disposition, and opportunity and forecast modeling.

Marketing Automation

Bridge your marketing and sales databases. And connect marketing activities to sales leads and opportunities in your CRM (and other favored tools).



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Pinch Hitters

Sales reps need systems that can help them quickly identify opportunities, communicate with prospects, and close deals. These can include functionality, such as:

Sending real-time email alerts directly to sales when hot prospects visit your website. That means visitor details like pages visited, length of visit, and search terms used.

Deciphering a prospect's online activities and behavior so that your salespeople can focus conversations on topics that resonate with buyers. Enabling sales to access and customize prebuilt templates and track recipient response directly through email.

Automatically emailing a report to your sales reps on prospect activities so they can track important contacts, companies, and hot leads.



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Best Practices

When it comes to dominating sales enablement, you can and you will. Just follow these proven best practices.

01 Share relevant information.

Provide insights into prospect activity when you send leads to sales. You'd be amazed at the amount of information marketers collect on websites and through campaigns but don't share with the sales team.

02 Incorporate a proven sales technique.

Focus on your top reps: What communication techniques do they use to engage prospects? How can you pass these on to all your sales reps?

03 Arm sales to engage.

Start with email templates on the following topics. They are easy to draft and will get used a lot:

- ▶ Link to a fact sheet or About Us page on the website. ("Get fast facts about the company.")
- ▶ Send customized messages that match the subsets of your prospect database. ("I understand your pain.")



- ▶ Use action-oriented messages that inspire prospects to further explore products or services. (“Check out this online demo.”)
- ▶ Make a big hit with newbies. (“I recently switched jobs and joined an exciting new company.”)

04 Test your sales enablement tools.

Get feedback from a small group of reps before rolling out tools to the entire sales organization. This helps develop sales champions for your initiative. And builds credibility for your efforts.

05 Make it easy.

Make prospect information and tools available in the environments that are familiar to your sales team, such as CRM, Microsoft Outlook, and mobile devices.

06 Don't force adoption.

Collaborate with salespeople to demonstrate the benefits of your tools. Then publicize successes to the rest of the team. Businesses that invest in sales tools to provide more insight about prospects see more accurate sales forecasts and more sales reps achieving quotas.



What's Next in Sales Enablement?

It's important to be up to speed on the here and now. But it's also smart to think ahead. Here's what's on the horizon for sales enablement.

Going Even More Mobile

On the road or grabbing lunch, sales reps want to respond to prospects as quickly as possible. Your sales team will need mobile access to opportunities and prospects' online behavior so they can do just that.

Integrating CRM with Social

More prospects turn to social media for input on buying decisions than ever before. Your sales force needs a way to tap into their activities. So, you can expect to see greater integration between sales tools like CRM and social media channels.

Getting Predictable

Sales reps are always looking for a way to shorten the sales cycle. Soon, they'll want you to predict the next best course of action with hot leads based on your analysis of how similar buyers responded to your content and website while still in research mode.



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Extending Marketing Dialogues

Much of the buying process is completed prior to sales engagement. So, it's crucial that your salespeople can step into the conversation seamlessly. If marketing has created buyer personas (and is mapping content across all states of the buying process to address relevant problem-to-solution scenarios) sales enablement becomes an extension of an already familiar dialogue for the prospect.

Prospects are looking to solve problems. Not buy products. Only a small percentage of executives say that their meetings with salespeople meet expectations. As a result, even fewer report scheduling follow-up meetings. Improving the information shared during hand-offs with the intention to extend marketing dialogues will help salespeople improve those odds.

This approach provides many benefits, including:

- ▶ Less time spent on research
- ▶ Reduced need for sales to customize content
- ▶ Improved ability to meet prospects' expectations
- ▶ Increased pipeline momentum



Effective hand-offs include:

- ▶ Overview of problem-to-solution scenario presented to the prospect
- ▶ Activity history detailing the scenario content viewed by the prospect
- ▶ Links to the remaining collateral in the scenario series with brief descriptions to expedite orientation (ensuring that your salesperson knows what to use next)
- ▶ Customer stories related to the problem, industry, and company size of the prospect – with key points highlighted
- ▶ Topics for conversation based on expressed interests and industry
- ▶ Slides addressing the problem from the prospect's perspective, based on helping them meet their business objectives

If marketing focuses its content strategy on the prospects' perspectives (and the entire buying process), this information should already be available. Everything can be prebundled and ready to go. (Except the prospect's activity history.)

Your marketing automation system should make including activity history an efficient process, with all the information you need readily available. Make sure to get feedback from salespeople about what works and what doesn't. That way you can continue to refine hand-off materials as patterns emerge and the sales activity that produces wins is evaluated.



THE PLAYBOOK

Want to be one of the content marketing greats?
We've got what you need.

Oracle Eloqua

is a marketing automation platform for B2B marketers. It features best-in-class lead and campaign management tools designed to engage the right audiences in the right channels at the right time – while providing real-time reporting and insights.

Oracle Content Marketing

is an editorial planning, sharing, and optimization platform. It simplifies the overwhelming process of creating, distributing, and promoting new content. From persona segmentation and editable workflows to version control and content analytics, Oracle Content Marketing makes brisk work of staying top of mind.

Oracle Marketing Cloud

B2B and B2C marketers use Oracle Marketing Cloud, an integrated portfolio of best-in-class applications, to drive sales, brand and customer loyalty. Oracle Marketing Cloud offers the industry's richest datasets and most adaptive intelligence so marketers can deliver irresistible, consistent and connected experiences to customers wherever they are and however they choose to engage.

READY TO COME OUT ON TOP?

Put your passion to work
at oracle.com/marketingcloud.

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