



The Complete Guide to

Choosing the Right Sales Compensation Software





The Indispensable Role of a Sales Compensation Platform in Your Organization

Sales compensation is often seen as a cost center that chips away at revenue. But when done right, it becomes a strategic investment by directly aligning sales commissions with key business goals. This value is often overlooked due to the sheer administrative load of managing sales compensation. Admins spend countless hours on commission calculations and payout conciliation, leaving little time for high-impact growth strategies.

This is where a sales compensation solution becomes essential. It should allow admins to focus on impactful initiatives while giving payees the clarity they need to meet and exceed sales targets. Unfortunately, not all sales compensation solutions are created equally and the one you choose can be the difference between achieving or missing key business goals.

Weighing Your Sales Comp Management Options

We've analyzed four approaches to managing sales compensation: spreadsheets, custom-built solutions, traditional software, and modern platforms, outlining their strengths and challenges to help you choose the right fit for your needs.



OPTION 1

Spreadsheets

STRENGTHS

- ◆ Low cost and easy availability
- ◆ High flexibility for basic calculations
- ◆ Simple setup and customization for small teams

WEAKNESSES

- ◆ Error-prone manual data entry and complex formulas
- ◆ Lack of version control
- ◆ Limited scalability and lack of automation
- ◆ Minimal transparency into calculation logic and payout details
- ◆ Lack of essential security features

OPTION 2

Custom-Built Solutions

STRENGTHS

- ◆ Customization to meet the exact needs of the organization
- ◆ Direct integration with internal systems, reducing data silos

WEAKNESSES

- ◆ Significant investment of time and resources required for development and maintenance
- ◆ Heavy reliance on internal IT or development teams, resulting in longer turnaround times for updates
- ◆ Difficulty in adapting quickly to new compensation strategies without redevelopment

OPTION 3

Traditional Sales Compensation Software

STRENGTHS

- ◆ Ability to handle standard compensation tasks effectively
- ◆ Improved commission visibility for sales reps when compared to spreadsheets

WEAKNESSES

- ◆ Rigid and outdated infrastructure
- ◆ High maintenance costs, often making it costly to keep up as business needs grow
- ◆ Poor support structure, with slow response times



OPTION 4

Modern Sales Compensation Management Platform

Sales compensation platforms developed in recent years leverage modern architecture designed to address the complexities of today's business operations. Built with scalability and adaptability in mind, these platforms aim to align with enterprise needs where evolving compensation models and large data volumes are the norm.

However, the true value of a platform lies not just in its architecture but in its ability to deliver consistent performance and strategic functionality. Beyond automating repetitive tasks, effective platforms empower businesses to make data-driven decisions and align compensation strategies with broader organizational goals.



Key Features of a High-Performant Sales Compensation Platform

For Admins

An effective sales compensation platform should equip admins with robust tools for plan management, granular data control, and seamless integrations across systems. It should enable the creation of complex compensation plans without technical expertise, ensure traceability through detailed audit trails, and provide dashboards with actionable insights.

- ◆ Commission Data Management & Infrastructure
- ◆ Plan Design & Administration
- ◆ Advanced Analytics & Forecasting
- ◆ Security, Compliance & Governance



Commission Data Management & Infrastructure

INTEGRATION WITH COMMISSION DATA SOURCES

- ◆ Offers native integrations with Salesforce, Microsoft Dynamics 365, Hubspot and other major CRMs
- ◆ Provides integrations with HRIS, ERP, Invoicing Systems and Data Warehouses through native integrations and APIs
- ◆ Supports open APIs to develop or extend on top of the application

SCALABLE DATA INFRASTRUCTURE

- ◆ Handles increasing data volumes at scale ensuring consistent performance even during peak periods or as organizational needs expand
- ◆ Supports advanced processing that enables simultaneous calculations across multiple datasets
- ◆ Facilitates smart optimization of datasets to process only updated data eliminating redundant recalculations

COMPREHENSIVE DATA MANAGEMENT

- ◆ Facilitates robust data transformation to restructure data for calculations, reporting, and analysis
- ◆ Allows flexible structuring of data to cater to diverse compensation strategies and evolving business goals

Plan Design & Administration

FLEXIBLE PLAN BUILDING

- ◆ Provide an intuitive, no-code/syntax-free interface for admins to design and manage plans
- ◆ Support configuration of conditional rules, tiered incentives, and complex commission structures
- ◆ Facilitates configurable payout schedules, allowing for mixed timing such as monthly, quarterly, or annual disbursements
- ◆ Enables reusable plan components within and across compensation plans

ADVANCED PLAN SCENARIO MODELING AND BUDGETING

- ◆ Provides real-time forecasting and scenario modeling capabilities
- ◆ Offers access to historical performance data for trend analysis and optimization
- ◆ Facilitates comparison of multiple compensation plans or scenarios to identify the most effective approach

HIERARCHY MANAGEMENT

Supports the creation of unlimited hierarchies with multiple levels and relationships, including roll-ups to accommodate complex organizational needs

CENTRALIZED APPROVAL AND QUERY MANAGEMENT

- ◆ Supports multi-stage approvals with deadlines
- ◆ Provides structured query management for tracking and resolution

QUOTA MANAGEMENT AND CREDITING CAPABILITIES

- ◆ Supports user-defined quota periods (daily, weekly, monthly, or annually) and allows midyear quota reassignment at a granular, date-specific level
- ◆ Enables the creation of complex crediting rules, ensuring transparent distribution of credits across teams or individuals

Advanced Analytics & Forecasting

CUSTOMIZABLE DASHBOARDS & BI-POWERED ANALYTICS

- ◆ Offers pre-built and custom dashboarding capabilities without reliance on external IT support
- ◆ Provides tailored reporting for diverse stakeholders, including payees, admins and leadership
- ◆ Employs RBAC to ensure stakeholders access only the data and reports relevant to their roles

Security, Compliance & Governance

SECURITY AND COMPLIANCE

- ◆ Offers built-in capabilities to manage compliance with ASC 606 revenue recognition standards
- ◆ Compliant with GDPR, SOC 1, SOC 2, and ISO 27001 certifications to ensure secure handling of sensitive data
- ◆ Captures all modifications with before/after details, timestamps, and user actions, while providing automated audit reports

ROLE-BASED ACCESS CONTROLS

- ◆ Enables administrators to define access levels with precision, tailoring user permissions to specific functionalities, reports, and data sets based on roles
- ◆ Supports the creation and management of custom roles

For Payees

Sales teams are driven by transparent, accessible insights into their earnings and progress toward goals. Here are some essential features that help sales teams stay informed on their payouts and focused on achieving their targets.



Payee Transparency

DETAILED EARNING STATEMENTS

Provides comprehensive statements with a breakdown of payout logic, calculations, conditions, and traceability to plan components for full clarity.

ACCESSIBLE AND DOWNLOADABLE STATEMENTS

Incorporates gamified elements such as leaderboards and achievement milestones to motivate payees, foster healthy competition, and drive performance alignment with organizational goals.

STREAMLINED DISPUTE RESOLUTION

Enables payees to directly initiate and manage disputes through structured workflows for faster and more efficient resolution.

ON-THE-GO COMMISSION ACCESS

- ◆ Delivers instant updates on commission-related changes through email, CRM, Slack, or Microsoft Teams
- ◆ Offers a user-friendly mobile app that provides payees with on-the-go visibility to their payouts and performance
- ◆ Integrates directly into Salesforce, allowing payees to get commission insights right from within Salesforce

Payee Motivation

PERFORMANCE DASHBOARDS

Provides interactive dashboards for tracking attainment, quotas, and progress in real-time, offering actionable insights for payees.

ADVANCED GAMIFICATION

Incorporates gamified elements such as leaderboards and achievement milestones to motivate payees, foster healthy competition, and drive performance alignment with organizational goals.



BEYOND COMMISSION AUTOMATION

Sales Compensation Platform as a Strategic Partner

Effective sales compensation management requires more than a solution that automates commissions. It calls for a strategic partner committed to your organization's success. A sales compensation solution must offer professional services that align compensation strategies with your business objectives.



The platform should adapt to your business's unique needs from day one, with personalized onboarding and guided implementation. As an added benefit, it may provide learning resources to enhance your expertise as a sales compensation professional, empowering you to drive success within your organization. Here are some critical aspects of professional services to consider when choosing a sales compensation partner:



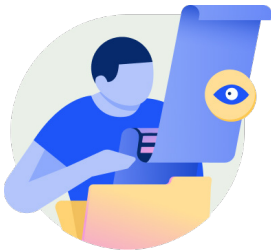
ONBOARDING AND IMPLEMENTATION

- ◆ Step-by-step onboarding to ensure teams understand the platform from day one.
- ◆ Dedicated CSMs to oversee implementation timelines, resources, and integrations to address specific business needs.
- ◆ Hands-on training customized for different user roles, helping teams make the most of relevant platform features.



STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP

- ◆ Regular analysis to help refine compensation plans, aligning incentives with revenue goals to drive growth
- ◆ Compensation optimization to reward high-value behaviors and minimize overpayment on low-impact activities
- ◆ Tailored recommendations to align compensation with long-term business objectives
- ◆ Ongoing sessions to ensure compensation strategies remain aligned with evolving business priorities



LEARNING RESOURCES

- ◆ Troubleshooting guides and FAQs to empower users to resolve issues independently.
- ◆ Industry trends and best practice resources to help teams align strategies with current standards.
- ◆ An exclusive sales compensation community

Evaluate sales compensation platforms with confidence with this customizable RFP template

[DOWNLOAD](#)

THE PATH FORWARD

Turning Sales Compensation into a Strategic Driver of Success

For modern businesses, the expectations from a sales compensation platform have never been greater. It's no longer enough to simply calculate and finalize payouts. Companies need a solution that empowers sales teams with transparency, evolves with shifting strategies and turns incentive programs into a strategic asset for growth.

Everstage combines enterprise-level functionality with an intuitive interface that both admins and sales reps find easy to use. Unlike rigid, one-size-fits-all platforms, Everstage allows you to model compensation plans, minimizing dependency on IT support and allowing teams to focus on high-impact strategic work.

Built for enterprises with ambitious plans, it scales organically as your team expands and compensation structures get more complex. Instead of straining under the pressure of growth, Everstage evolves alongside your business, letting you keep the integrity of your compensation strategy even as you reach for bigger goals.





About Everstage

Despite being a substantial business expense, sales commissions is a revenue lever that is not realized to its full potential. Everstage helps hypergrowth companies and enterprises derive pivotal insights from their incentive program to drive profitable growth, and build trust with their commissionable teams.

Trusted by enterprises
and hyper-growth companies worldwide



4.9

Gartner 4.9

Based on 2,000+ customer reviews



Everstage Featured in
Gartner's Market Guide
on Sales Performance
Management



Ready to shift to a strategic sales
compensation platform?

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