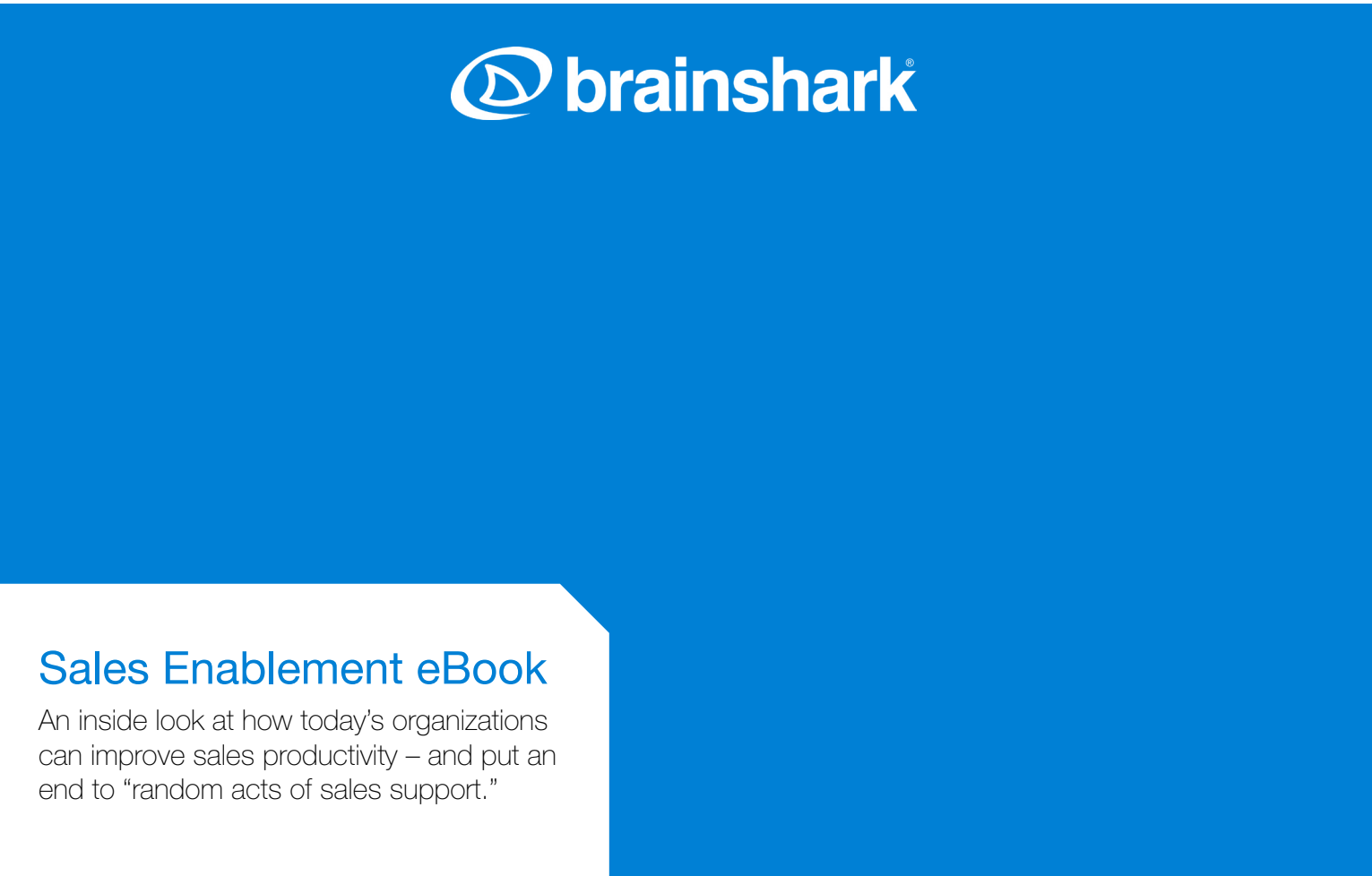




An inside look at how today's organizations can improve sales productivity – and put an end to “random acts of sales support.”

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Introduction

Ultimately, sales enablement is about more than just enabling sales teams, it's about enabling sales – period.

Sales enablement is a challenge for today's organizations; everyone does it, but few can agree on exactly what it is. As a recent report by Sirius Decisions points out,¹ you could ask 10 B2B sales leaders for the definition of sales enablement and get 10 different answers.

This confusion is fueled by what Forrester Research describes² as “random acts of sales support”: a phenomenon that results from too many people trying to help the sales team perform, with no real strategy in place.

It's everyone's responsibility – especially marketing, sales and management – to help drive revenue so the business can grow. Of course, there's a difference between wanting to enable sales and knowing the best way to do it.

With that in mind, here's the best definition of sales enablement that we've found:

Sales enablement is a systematic approach to helping reps **prepare** for customer interactions, **engage** effectively with their audiences, and **advance** sales opportunities to close.

Now let's break this down and examine what organizations need to do to address these three distinct stages of sales enablement. And note that at the heart of each of these stages – and the common thread that holds the key components of sales enablement together – are content and communications.

#1. Prepare

Successful organizations need to...

- Quickly and easily generate quality content for marketing and sales use

- Deliver quality leads to sales
- Organize content so it can be easily found and used by reps
- Train reps on products, messaging, company processes and sales techniques
- Provide ongoing “just-in-time” training for reps on various topics

#2. Engage

Organizations also need to...

- Provide solutions for delivering high-impact sales presentations, both live and on-demand
- Ensure content can be shared and received on computers or mobile devices
- Encourage high levels of involvement from meeting attendees, whether they are in person or remote

#3. Advance

It's then important to...

- Provide post-meeting follow-up communications to keep up momentum throughout the selling cycle
- Utilize content viewing data for better lead qualification and more informed prospect follow-up
- Deliver analytics on content usage and consumption to maximize its effectiveness
- Access in-depth information for more accurate sales forecasting

In this eBook, you'll learn how each of these areas plays an essential role in sales enablement across business functions, including marketing, sales, training and management.



“There’s no denying that on-demand learning is an attractive option for organizations struggling with the costs and logistics of traditional, in-person training.”

*Liz Couchon,
Learning & Development,
Brainshark*

Read more →

<http://bit.ly/bsk-ondemand>

It’s no secret that today’s customers are more knowledgeable than ever before. Well guess what? That means business reps need to know ever more as well – and they need to learn it faster. Preparation is critical to increasing sales effectiveness and productivity, and it starts the moment a new hire walks through the door.

MANAGEMENT & TRAINING

It’s the responsibility of sales managers to put their reps in the best position for success, and this all begins with proper training. The goal is to get new hires ramped up quickly, then continue to educate and hone their skills without cutting into their productivity.

Unfortunately, the life of a sales rep can make scheduling live or in-person training sessions a challenge (and ultimately, impractical). For this reason, sales teams are ideal candidates for on-demand training programs.

Key elements of on-demand sales training include:

- The ability to quickly create and update training material for reps to review at their convenience
- Easy access – from computer or mobile device – to all training content via a centralized web portal and shareable web links
- Interactive components like quizzes, polls and surveys to keep learners engaged without the benefit of face-to-face interaction
- Training analytics that allow managers to monitor the progress of new hires and seasoned reps

In many cases, on-demand video has become the ideal format for training content, as the combination of audio and visual has proven to increase retention rates among learners.

By utilizing on-demand training strategies like these, sales managers can get their teams up to speed quickly while allowing them to spend more time in the field and on the phones.



Brainshark On-Demand™ empowers marketers and other team leaders to generate more professional video presentations quickly and easily.

Learn more →

<http://bit.ly/bsk-ondemand>

MARKETING

These days, buyers spend more time researching products and services before ever engaging with a sales rep. Because of this, it's more important than ever for marketers to create quality, useful content to help move potential customers through the buying cycle.

Content Marketing Institute reports that creating enough content was the number one challenge for B2B marketing organizations in 2012.³ To keep up with demands, deliver timely sales tools and help generate more sales opportunities, today's marketers need a process in place for rapid content creation.

Marketing teams can prepare different types of content for each stage of the B2B sales cycle, for example:

- **Awareness** – Attract new potential customers (non-promotional tips and how-tos)
- **Interest** – Further the conversation (event invites, webinar teasers, intro presentations)
- **Consideration** – Highlight business value (customer testimonials, product demos)
- **Close** – Empower new customers (meeting follow-ups, FAQs)
- **Renew** – Keep customers informed and supported (product updates, executive announcements)

Marketing teams use multiple formats to deliver these messages, from blog posts and eBooks to webinars and podcasts.

Online video presentations have also become one of the most popular tools for content marketers. Millions of people access online videos every day, and mobile devices like tablets have made it even more convenient for potential customers to view video content anytime, anywhere.

DEMAND GENERATION

Perhaps the most direct way marketers use content to enable sales is through demand generation, as these are the programs that better prepare sales reps with new leads and opportunities. Marketers can leverage content to drive more inbound traffic and attract new audiences, encouraging visitors to engage in activities such as:

- Downloading a whitepaper, eBook or report
- Registering for a demo or event
- Viewing an on-demand video presentation

With the help of compelling calls to action and specialized landing pages, marketers can gather contact information from visitors via web forms, guest books or marketing automation software. Those contacts can then be nurtured and qualified through the sales funnel or sent directly to the sales teams, enabling reps to better prepare their communications for the next stages of the selling process.

PROSPECTING

In addition to relying on demand generation efforts from marketing, sales reps also need to prospect for new opportunities on their own, typically through personalized email outreach. Depending on the content being used, contacts can engage with these resources in multiple ways, similar to how new leads are established via demand generation.

From a sales perspective, more compelling, personalized content typically leads to more qualified conversations with potential customers. Sales teams can help encourage more activity from contacts by preparing the right resources ahead of time. For this reason, reps now require fast, easy access to marketing-approved content for most prospect communications.

Did You Know?

Today, 70% of the buying cycle is already complete before B2B customers ever engage with a sales rep.

Sirius Decisions



Marketers and managers can use Brainshark to create engaging video presentations to share with prospects, then enable sales reps to personalize that content for specific audiences.

Learn more →

<http://bit.ly/bsk-enrich>



SALES

Successful sales presentations often come down to proper preparation as well. Before a rep can walk through the door for a customer meeting or dial in to a sales call, they need to be very knowledgeable on the relevant subject matter and armed with the right messaging and resources.

For instance, salespeople need to be up-to-date and informed on the latest product releases, pricing schedules and services. As sales reps are notorious “just-in-time” learners with hectic schedules, it’s typically more practical for them to access training resources at their own convenience, right before they put this new learning to use.

These on-demand resources should be available for reps to access conveniently and review before their next sales meeting. As a result, meeting preparation depends heavily on a sales rep’s ability to access the content they need, right when they need it. Valuable sales tools include:

- A mobile-ready portal that helps reps find and organize targeted content that’s most relevant for the sales situation
- On-demand video training modules that are easy to search, find and consume – from any device
- Management-approved PowerPoint slides that can be personalized for specific audiences while maintaining the consistency of the organization’s message
- Content resources such as client testimonials, customer examples and product demonstrations that can be shared before, during and after a scheduled meeting

Believe it or not, the CMO Council has reported that 40% of a salesperson’s time is spent searching for and/or creating content for customer communications.⁴ By arming reps with the tools they need and providing easy access to those resources, organizations can help keep their teams better prepared and more productive.



The Brainshark Sales Enablement Portal is designed to help audiences access the most up-to-date and approved sales content quickly and easily – all from one location.

[Learn more →](#)

<http://bit.ly/bsk-salesenablementportal>

Engage

All the preparation in the world won't matter if your teams can't communicate that information effectively. To truly engage with customers and prospects, you need to arm your reps with the tools to get those messages across, beginning with your most powerful content.

MARKETING

Marketers have multiple options when it comes to how they deliver content to prospective buyers. Each marketing channel has different goals and benefits, such as:

- **SEO** – Optimize web content to drive more inbound traffic and accelerate lead generation
- **Social media** – Share content socially to increase brand awareness and generate buzz
- **Email marketing** – Deliver content to contacts directly for lead qualification
- **Webinars and events** – Deliver content live to deepen the engagement with key audiences
- **Sales tools** – Provide material for sales reps to use for more effective conversations with customers and prospects

Different people consume content in different ways, so various content formats and delivery channels are used to attract and engage with more potential buyers. Marketers can use all of these resources to draw attention to calls to action and web forms to collect new leads.

SALES

When it comes time for the actual sales meeting, reps need to be armed with the right tools for success – and those tools have gone mobile. Many companies today have begun to provide company-issued tablets (notably the iPad) for sales reps to use in the field when engaging with prospects.

When it comes to live sales presentations, tablet devices benefit mobile reps in a



number of ways, such as:

- Lightweight design that makes it easier to travel with than laptops
- Added flexibility for both impromptu sales presentations with small audiences or large sales meetings conducted via projector
- Instant-on capabilities that help start the conversation quickly

There's also the "wow" factor that sets tablet-using reps apart from their laptop-toting counterparts.

Of course, tablets have more to offer reps than simple design benefits. They also feature larger screen sizes that are ideal for showing content (like PowerPoint slides and on-demand video presentations) or performing more PC-related tasks when compared to smartphone devices. These capabilities make it easier for reps to not only present sales content in a compelling, professional way, but also access and share information more easily with prospects in the room.

SHARK TIPS

With the SlideShark™ Broadcasting feature, sales reps can share PowerPoint slides with virtual attendees, then control the presentation live – straight from their iPad or iPhone devices.

Learn more →

<http://bit.ly/ss-forbusiness>

Video Makes Email Marketing BETTER

In a 2012 study, Experian Marketing Services reported that simply including the word "video" in an email subject line increased click-through rates by 7%-13%.

Read More →

<http://bit.ly/bsk-videoemailmktg>



Did You Know?

59% of senior executives prefer watching online video over reading text.

We Capture



SHARK TIPS

Tracking and reporting with Brainshark On-Demand makes it easy to learn more about how prospects are engaging with your content. Learn who viewed, what they viewed, when they viewed, and even where they viewed your Brainshark presentations.

Learn more →

<http://bit.ly/bsk-track>

The more team members know about your customers, the more prepared they'll be to identify key opportunities and move the sales conversation forward. With data and analytics, you can unlock a treasure trove of information about who your audience is and how you can help them as they move further down the sales funnel.

MARKETING

As audiences engage with different content assets, marketers can use content analytics to gain a deeper understanding of buyer interests and viewing behavior. While basic web and marketing analytics can shed light on which content and messages are most popular in general, automation parameters can be used to learn more about individual contacts as well.

Key metrics include:

- **Opens** – Who accessed content via email and how many times they did so
- **Click-throughs** – Which specific content

items and resources a person viewed

- **Retention rates** – How long visitors engaged with a specific piece of content (especially useful for video and PowerPoint content)

By digging deeper into the behaviors of potential buyers, marketers can not only learn more about the content that is having the greatest impact on target audiences, but also use that data to advance the most promising opportunities to the sales team for prospecting.

DEMAND GENERATION & PROSPECTING

Once content has been prepared and shared with the appropriate leads, marketing and sales teams can then use analytics to measure engagement and identify the best prospecting opportunities to pursue. For example:

- Marketing analytics can provide data on which leads have opened emails

and clicked through to view the content included.

- Contacts who engage with product-oriented content could be considered more promising than those who have reviewed thought leadership material.
- Video analytics can be used to dig deeper into audience engagement, allowing sales teams to see not only who has viewed certain content, but how long they viewed for and even which specific parts of a presentation were of most interest.

Collectively, this type of data is incredibly valuable when enabling sales reps to move leads further down the sales funnel and identify the prospects that are ready for live or face-to-face meetings.

SALES

After a sales presentation is finished, sales teams can once again turn to analytics to make more informed follow-ups. For example, reps can share PowerPoint slides and other content resources before leaving the meeting, then monitor prospect engagement to more effectively gauge their levels of interest.

Valuable data includes:

- How many times presentation slides have been reviewed following the sales meeting
- Who opened those presentations and the specific slides they viewed
- Whether other resources like video testimonials or product demos have been viewed by prospects, as well as when and how long they viewed for

Armed with this information, sales reps are enabled to not only make smarter communications, but also more timely follow-ups when your products or services are at the front of the prospect's mind. This information also lets reps determine which prospects are the most engaged and

interested, so they can allocate more time to the best opportunities, speed up sales cycles and improve win rates.

MANAGEMENT & TRAINING

Sales managers can also leverage content analytics to gain deeper insight into the sales processes of their reps. For instance, with the right data, managers can:

- Monitor prospect engagement for more accurate sales forecasting
- Track presentations and content resources that are most popular
- Identify resources and communication tactics used by top-selling reps and encourage other team members to do the same

The more data a sales manager has at his or her disposal, the easier it is for them to identify new opportunities to arm their teams with the tools needed to close more deals. Of course, analytics also plays a critical role at the very beginning with sales training, particularly for on-demand learning programs. Managers and trainers need to be able to monitor progress and set completion criteria to ensure all team members have completed the required training. This is especially important for compliance, as organizations need to make special efforts to reduce the risk of non-compliant communications by reps in the field (particularly for those working in regulated industries).

In regards to sales training, it's important to track that all reps have not only viewed the required training courses, but have also retained and understood the information. Things like quiz and survey responses should be tracked and evaluated based on predetermined completion criteria. This allows trainers to keep a watchful eye on how team members are progressing through the training program, as well as identify ways to improve learning content and resources.



With Brainshark Rapid Learning™, organizations can deliver formal training to improve sales productivity, accelerate onboarding, ensure compliance, and generally increase the knowledge levels of reps and other employees.

[Learn more →](#)

<http://bit.ly/bsk-rapidlearning>

Conclusion ▲



From marketing to training, sales reps to sales managers, the sales enablement process involves collaboration from many parts of an organization.

With a disciplined approach to content and communication, today's companies

can drive more business by consistently employing best practices for preparing and training sales, engaging more effectively with customers and prospects, advancing the sales process from multiple angles... and ultimately putting an end to "random acts of sales support" once and for all.

About Brainshark▲

Brainshark provides the leading [cloud-based platform for sales enablement](#), helping companies more effectively prepare and train employees, engage with key audiences and advance business opportunities. Brainshark's easy-to-use solutions enable static documents to be transformed into dynamic, mobile-ready content that can be accessed quickly and viewed as [on-demand video presentations](#) or [presented live](#) – anytime, anywhere. Customers can also measure the effectiveness of their communications in ways never thought possible and use these insights to take action. [Thousands of companies](#) – including half of the Fortune 100 and millions of individuals – rely on Brainshark to increase the impact and reduce the cost of their sales, marketing, training and HR communications. For more information, visit www.brainshark.com.

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¹ Sirius Decisions, The SiriusDecisions Sales Enablement Model, 2012.

² Forrester Research, Uncovering the Hidden Cost of the Random Acts of Sales Support, April 2011.

³ Content Marketing Institute, 2013 B2B Content Marketing Benchmarks, Budgets and Trends, October 2012.

⁴ Lenskold Group, What's My ROI on Sales Tools?, 2013.