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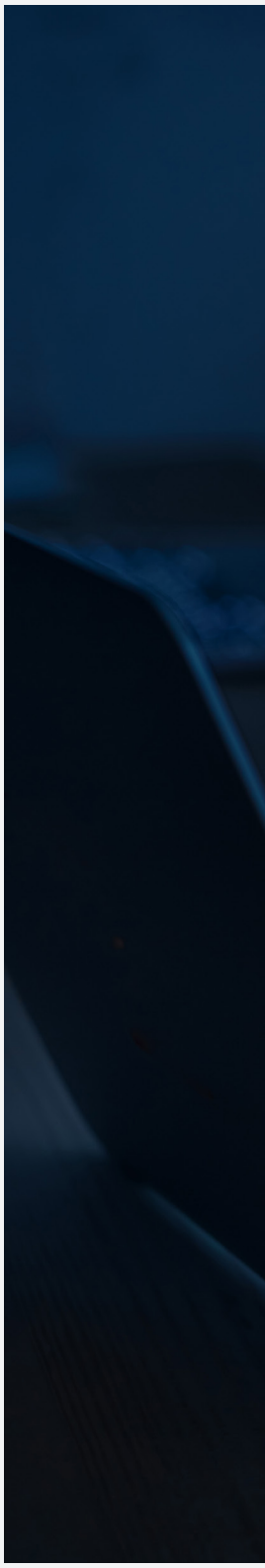


LEVERAGING DIGITAL TOOLS TO DRIVE EFFICIENCY

Guide to creating a repeatable sales cycle

A sales process progresses from identifying leads to cultivating prospects to finally converting them into customers. Throughout this journey, a company needs to consistently demonstrate its value by engaging in effective communication, attentive listening, and persuasive selling. Each stage must be approached methodically and in sequence to maximize success. For this reason, it is important to refrain from delving into product specifics until the underlying problem is understood. Similarly, it also important to hold off initiating contract discussions until all relevant decision makers are on board.

This guide offers insights and strategies to master each stage of the sales cycle, empowering you to navigate every deal towards a successful conclusion.



LOOKING AT THE SALES PROCESS

A sales process entails a sequence of consistent actions undertaken by a sales team to guide a prospect from an initial lead to becoming a satisfied customer. A robust process empowers representatives to consistently secure deals by providing them with a structured framework to navigate.

WHY THE SALES PROCESS MATTERS

Establishing a reliable sales process, particularly within a startup, is essential to ensure that, as your company expands, new sales team members can swiftly acclimate and thrive in their roles, ultimately delivering a timely return on investment. In essence, it is crucial to equip your salespeople for success. Without a structured, repeatable process, the sales environment can become unpredictable and chaotic.

THE IDEAL CUSTOMER

One significant error made by early-stage businesses is failing to accurately identify their ideal customers and aligning the sales process accordingly. It is common for the target audience initially envisioned for the product to differ from the individuals who truly benefit from it. This adjustment can be challenging, particularly if company leadership has been steadfastly focused on a non-ideal buyer since the company's inception.


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WHY YOU ARE STRUGGLING TO MAKE YOUR SALES CYCLE REPEATABLE

Even when targeting the right buyer, the sales process frequently encounters various obstacles.

Consider a scenario in which you recruited a superstar vice president of sales from a company you admire. This person might excel with abundant resources from a large organization; however, in the unpredictable landscape of a startup, you require someone adaptable. Individuals frequently fail to recognize the extent to which they depend on the support structures within large organizations until they leave.

Another common challenge companies face is frequently altering the sales process or shifting target buyers. This perpetual change prevents your sales team from establishing a solid foundation, making success elusive for both them and you.

BUILDING BEST PRACTICES INTO YOUR SALES CYCLE

The good news is that you do not need to recreate the sales cycle from scratch, as there are established best practices you can adhere to. These encompass analyzing and adjusting based on data, employing relationship-building methods, and consistently referring to your sales plan. Now, let us dive into these strategies!



1 SIMPLIFY PROSPECTING BY CULTIVATING YOUR PERSONAL BRAND

Establish yourself as an authority in your field and prospects will seek you out. This approach minimizes outreach efforts, significantly reducing the sales cycle. When executed effectively, this strategy generates a steady flow of inbound clients eager for further engagement.

To build your brand, begin by compiling a list of questions your target audience might have about your product or service. Then, publicly address these inquiries through platforms like LinkedIn, YouTube, podcasts, or blogs. This practice enhances your credibility and positions you as a thought leader. As prospects encounter your content, they will be inclined to reach out for more information, potentially converting into customers. A practical tip is to create a list of questions that your ideal customers may ask regarding the solution you offer. Then, dedicate a weekly social media post to answering one question from the list. This simple strategy provides you with a year's worth of content and you can address these questions in a short amount of time.

2 DEFINE YOUR SALES OBJECTIVE

The cornerstone of any effective sales strategy is a clearly defined vision of the desired outcome. Therefore, prior to establishing a repeatable sales process, it is essential to define your sales goals and objectives. This clarity will provide a specific path for your sales representatives to follow, streamlining the attainment of results.

These objectives may vary depending on factors such as your business' stage of development, workforce size, and revenue targets. For instance, a new business aiming to cultivate a strong customer base will pursue a different approach than an established company with a loyal clientele.

It is crucial to identify key metrics to monitor the success of your sales process from the outset. Additionally, conducting a budget audit ensures the implementation of a cost-effective strategy.

Lastly, evaluating your current sales process to uncover any deficiencies is imperative. This allows for a more accurate determination of objectives. Businesses can analyze competitors' sales processes and outcomes to gain insights into their market position. Through precise benchmarking, your salespeople can align their individual goals with your company's overarching vision and mission.

3 DEFINE YOUR TOTAL ADDRESSABLE MARKET (TAM)

Your total addressable market (TAM) represents the complete revenue potential available to a product or service if it were to capture 100% of the market share. Essentially, it signifies the maximum revenue achievable for your business in an ideal scenario. Determining this figure can assist you in identifying which vertical or persona to pursue.

Traditionally, TAM is calculating a formula such as:

TAM = (Total number of customers) x (Annual contract value)

However, a more straightforward approach is to define the total market size by considering:

- The problem your product or service addresses
- The target audience for this solution
- The number of individuals or companies within this target audience

List every industry experiencing the problem your product or service solves. Next to each industry, specify the number of companies operating within the region you are targeting. This will give you a foundation to work from with a defined path to move forward.

4 OUTLINE THE ACTION THAT MOVES PROSPECTS TO THE NEXT STAGE

A sales process is a structured journey, consisting of stages delineated by specific actions. To ensure your sales process is smooth, efficient, and predictable, it is imperative to understand precisely what these actions entail.

Identify the triggers that prompt a prospect's transition from one stage to another within your sales process. Ideally, these actions should be driven by the prospect's behaviors and responses, rather than relying solely on the intuition or perception of a sales representative.

PRO TIP: Pose the following inquires to understand the actions that propel prospects through each stage:

- During initial outreach, did a representative address a particular pain point that prompted the prospect to schedule a discovery call?
- Throughout the demonstration, were there objections that hindered the progress of the deal or features that facilitated its advancement?
- When a representative delivered a pitch, did the customer immediately respond with a 'yes'? If so, carefully consider the reasons behind this reaction. How did they lead up to the pitch?



5 INCORPORATE INDUSTRY-LEADING SALES CYCLE MANAGEMENT SOFTWARE

Sales cycle management relies heavily on technology for effective execution. With today's advanced tools, your workload can be significantly eased. This includes a customer relationship management (CRM) system to centralize customer data, sales automation to streamline non-selling tasks, and AI to provide insights and support throughout the sales process.

Here is what to look for as you explore sales cycle management software:

CRM: A customer relationship management platform consolidates and facilitates actions on custom data from a single source. By continuously updating and storing vital customer information, it ensures that you have access to relevant data at all times, enabling seamless continuation of conversations.

Salesforce is a top customer relationship management (CRM) software. It has an extensive feature set and is utilized by many organizations to drive revenue generation through automated marketing, customer portals, sales team management, and services management.

Automation: Sales professionals dedicate a significant portion of their time to non-selling activities. **Automation tools can handle these tasks**, allowing you to focus more on sales. For instance, an activity management tool can automatically capture emails, events, and other forms of engagement, directly integrating them into the CRM system.

AI: Once considered complex jargon, AI has become accessible and invaluable in sales. From predictive AI that identifies promising leads to generative AI that aids in crafting emails and sales pitches, there are various AI tools built into Salesforce that are available to accelerate and enrich customer relationships.

Citrin Cooperman's value-added services go beyond selling licenses — we customize Salesforce to fit your specific needs, leveraging AI-driven insights to maximize your investment. From predictive lead scoring to personalized marketing campaigns, our solutions are guided by intelligent algorithms. We resolve customer inquiries promptly using AI-powered case routing and provide consistent service across channels with the assistance of intelligent chatbots powered by Salesforce Einstein.

How Citrin Cooperman and Salesforce Reinforces a Strong Sales Cycle

Crafting a clear sales cycle empowers you to navigate winning deals efficiently, advancing them towards success. Combine this with a deep understanding of data, a dedication to nurturing relationships, and leveraging tools and technology for support. When you integrate these elements with the power of a solution like Salesforce, you pave the way for numerous successful quarters ahead. Citrin Cooperman's dedicated Salesforce Practice delivers tailored solutions designed to empower midsized and emerging enterprise organizations.

READY TO REINFORCE YOUR SALES CYCLE WITH SALESFORCE?
CONTACT OUR DIGITAL SERVICES PRACTICE TO LEARN MORE ABOUT HOW WE CAN HELP YOUR BUSINESS MAXIMIZE ITS SALES POTENTIAL.

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About Our Digital Services Practice: *At Citrin Cooperman, we think of digital services differently. Our comprehensive approach takes your entire business into consideration, taking the most advantage of accelerating technology and business processes to help you achieve your strategic vision. Data management and security are critical as we move into processes augmented by artificial intelligence (AI). Deploying data collected by both back office and frontline workers demands strategic integration across platforms while keeping a keen eye on compliance and cybersecurity. Our team is well-equipped to help businesses leverage customized technologies to streamline efficiencies, maximize performance, and achieve their organizational goals.*



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