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Hot Vendors in Sales Enablement, 2017

Summary: *Digital Selling is the new way forward. Our 2017 Hot Vendors in Sales Enablement are helping Sales Teams to grow their pipeline with an "Office for Sales" work hub approach.*

Introduction

Sales Professionals need a strategic approach to selling digitally, and Sales Enablement is the answer. It has emerged as one of the fastest growing markets focused on equipping Sales Representatives, Sales Managers, and Marketers with the tools they need to engage with their prospects and customers better and faster, in an all-digital fashion.

This Research Note overviews the trends that are informing the Sales Enablement market and one of the vendors who is innovating in this market to help sales and marketing professionals excel.

Some of the 2017 Hot Vendors in Sales Enablement even take the next step and offer a complete Sales Engagement Platform, which streamlines and condenses Sales Enablement tools. These platforms are the new Digital Sales Suite for Sales Professionals, akin to an 'Office for Sales.' Currently a \$780M market, Aragon Research predicts Sales Engagement Platforms will grow to be worth U.S. \$5 Billion by 2021. Given Sales Enablement proliferation, the gradual shift to Sales Engagement Platforms has already begun.

Sales Enablement is Key

The macro shift to a more integrated approach to work tools, combined with the demand for Sales Enablement apps, has fueled the growth of many new Sales Enablement startups. At the heart of this growth, we have seen the rise of new apps, such as Sales Communications and Sales Content Management, beginning to fuel increased engagement and increased revenues for sales organizations.

Topic: Sales Technology

Issue: Who are the vendors making a difference in Sales Technology?



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Omni-Channel: Phone Calls and Emails Comprise Only Part of the Answer

Sales Professionals understand that today's customers are busy, and trying to schedule a sales appointment is difficult. Customers might not have time to review every email or return a missed phone call. When it comes to outreach, the efforts made must be omni-channel and take into account the technology that customers increasingly want to use – such as messaging and video.

Identifying how customers want to communicate is critical for sales teams to understand, in order to make the shift to a digital selling paradigm. Connecting with prospects often takes multiple communications channels. Phone calling and emailing are only part of the communications equation.

Face-to-Face Meetings and the Rise of Remote Live Pitches

In the early days of Sales, it was all about face time. Today, the fastest growing and most effective means to sell is with inside sales organizations. This makes it even more challenging to reach the right contact at the right time, and this is where Live Pitch comes in.

Being able to conduct a Live Pitch remotely is becoming much more popular, in part because it is frictionless (no scheduling) and just-in-time. While not all providers currently offer Live Pitch, it is an emerging trend; in less than one year, a number of providers have added this functionality to offer more than content management and analytics.

Tablets and Mobile First Sales Enablement Deliver Productivity

Mobile First isn't a debate for Sales. Tablets are making a comeback, in part because they are delivering on the promise of productivity. Mobile First Sales Enablement apps are about making complete functionality come together in a compelling app that allows Sales People to do more in less time. Increasingly, they are becoming critical as the need to access services remotely increases. Many users make the mistake of going the easy route by just offering a responsive browser app. The reality today is that sales professionals require Mobile Apps that are point and click simple, so that they can access data when on the go, such as before meeting with a customer.

Design and Usability will be the new normal when it comes to designing a Mobile First Sales Enablement app. Additionally, Sales Managers must take the time to understand how to use these apps in order to show their team the benefits of achieving a higher level of productivity.

The Impact of Video on Sales

Sharing videos with customers and prospects is key, as it can ensure higher levels of engagement, which often leads to higher sales. Video is now one of the most sought-after forms of content and today, more providers are making it easier to create and share videos with prospects.

Additionally, sales knowledge-capture and transfer has always been challenging. While it is difficult to ensure that people have the necessary information to do their jobs efficiently, video can fill in the gaps, and is a strategic way for sales people to learn. From taking video-based courses, to role-playing and getting feedback on their performance from their manager, video is one of the primary tools that all modern sales organizations need.

Predictive: Making Software Smarter and the Shift to Guided Selling

Knowing how and when to touch a sales lead can be challenging. Monitoring the website and handing off a lead is often a manual process that is tied to lead scoring by the marketing automation system. Over the last two years, Predictive Lead Scoring has emerged as a promising capability for automating the lead-monitoring process. Now, Predictive Forecasting is becoming another part of the predictive portfolio for sales; forecasting is one of the most challenging parts of running a business.

Aragon feels that with more real-time analytics and integration with CRM Platforms, Sales Enablement Providers will be able to offer real guided selling, i.e. coaching for both Sales Reps and Sales Managers. While we're still in the early days of this technology, today's enterprises should look carefully at the analytics capabilities available now, as well as what is in store for the future via providers' roadmaps.

The Shift to Sales Engagement Platforms

The reality today is that there are too many Sales Enablement Apps and too many app categories. Like all markets have in the past, they will gradually consolidate – this is already happening, as

Sales Engagement Platforms become better understood and defined. Best of breed capabilities are giving way to new integrated offerings that also work with third party applications.

Hot Vendors in Sales Enablement, 2017

This Hot Vendors research note is not intended to be a complete list of vendors in the Sales Enablement market. Rather, it highlights providers with interesting, cutting-edge products, services, or technology.

One of the Hot Vendors for Sales Enablement for 2017 includes:

- ***vablet***

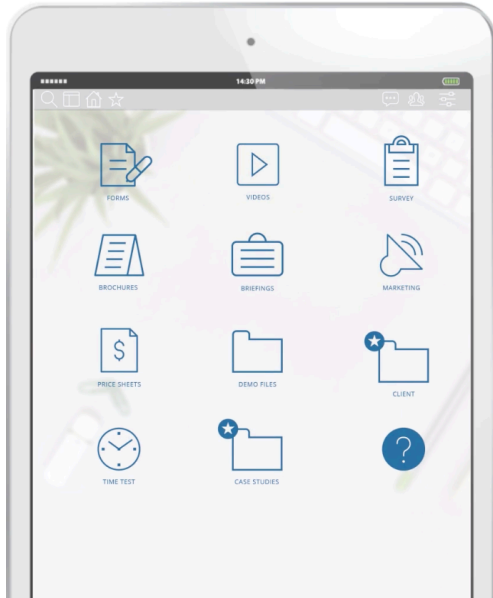
vablet

Figure 1: vablet offers a mobile enabled Sales Engagement Platform.

vablet, based in Irvine, CA, offers a mobile enabled Sales Engagement Platform that is gaining traction in the market (see Note 1). Mobility and Sales go hand in hand and as Sales organizations look to speed up engagement, vablet is well positioned to take advantage of this trend. vablet offers its core vablet offering as well as vablet for Salesforce, which is fully integrated into the Sales Cloud.

What makes vablet hot is how easy it is for Sales Professionals to engage with their prospects and customers via Smartphone or Tablet. vablet can automatically sync the latest versions of content with all of the Sales organization's mobile devices, eliminating the time consuming hunt for content. The ease of accessing and sharing content is one of the reasons that Sales organizations are evaluating vablet (see Figure 1).

Who Should Evaluate vablet?

Enterprises looking for an easy-to-use, mobile enabled Sales Engagement Platform should evaluate vablet. The need for Sales Organizations to sell digitally has never been greater, and vablet is one of the emerging providers to watch.

Note 1: vablet at a Glance

vablet offers a full Sales Engagement Platform that is mobile enabled.

Location: Headquarters in Irvine, California.

CEO: Paul Pacun

Key Offering: vablet

Availability: Available online

Website: <http://www.vablet.com>

Aragon Advisory

- Enterprises should look to reduce the number of Sales Enablement tools they use for their sales organization by evaluating what is working and what is not.
- Enterprises should evaluate these Hot Vendors and others to see how well they match the needs of their sales organization.
- Enterprises should focus on the ability to speed up the sales process by leveraging new ways to deliver content to prospects and customers.

Bottom Line

Sales Enablement is the new standard when it comes to selling digitally. Sales professionals need immediate insight on what is happening with deals and individuals, no matter where they are or what device they might be using. Enterprises should evaluate these providers and others to complement what they already have, and for the future, should look at moving toward a complete Sales Engagement Platform.