



E-BOOK

# Equipping Your Sales Team with the Right Content to Close the Sale

Explore how life sciences companies can leverage sales enablement technology to drive success.



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## Life sciences companies have unique sales needs.

Every sales team has challenges when it comes to defining, understanding, and connecting with the buyer's journey. Life sciences organizations have even more unique needs when it comes to the process. One critical aspect is content that educates, supports, and cultivates trust. After all, sales interaction is declining in B2B sales, with buyers spending only [17 percent of their time with sales staff](#). Instead, they spend considerable time researching—and that requires content.

So how can sales teams take on new roles? By acting in a consultative manner instead of purely selling. They can make this transition by delivering content that moves the needle from an interested party to a sale.



### IN THIS E-BOOK, WE'LL REVIEW:

- The state of the life sciences market.
- How buyers learn and retain knowledge.
- The role of content in converting customers.
- Challenges with content in life sciences.
- How sales enablement technology facilitates this evolving model.

## The life sciences industry is competitive and complex.

Life science companies require higher sales results to compete in today's intense and highly saturated market.

### CONSIDER THE COMPETITIVE LANDSCAPE:

- There are approximately [6,500 medical device companies in the U.S.](#)
- Medical technology is expected to hit [\\$600 billion by 2024.](#)
- The global pharmaceutical industry was worth [\\$1.27 trillion in 2020.](#)

With more revenue at stake and new entrants into the market, companies have to adapt their sales enablement strategies to remain profitable, relevant, and differentiated from their competition. That adaptation starts with giving the sales team content that nurtures relationships with buyers, including sales presentations and ancillary information.





## It's a daily balance for sales teams to meet customer needs.

Sales reps have a full plate, and that's before factoring in the heightened pace and intensity of the market. On top of sales responsibilities, sales professionals also must balance the day-to-day tasks of meeting with customers, completing sales reports, attending training events, and more.

Personal work styles, habits, and skill sets also impact a salesperson's performance and results. With all the variables affecting a rep's ability to sell, you have to optimize the content, media, and meeting prep process to make the best use of their time.

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## Buyers learn in different ways; sales teams need tools to support retention.

Researchers have conducted many studies on how we learn, but the topic is complicated. Learning is unique, personal, and influenced by a number of factors.

### HERE'S WHAT WE KNOW FOR SURE:

- [Sixty-five percent of the population are visual learners.](#)
- There is a scientific concept called the “[forgetting curve](#),” hypothesized by Hermann Ebbinghaus in 1885. This concept states that memory retention is 100 percent at the time of learning, but quickly drops to 40 percent within a few days. However, this theory is not concrete. Factors such as the meaningfulness of the information, the way it is represented, and psychological actors (stress, lack of sleep, and so on) can impact the curve.

From these things, we can make assumptions. First, visually compelling content may influence most people’s ability to retain it. Second, if you want to stall the forgetting curve, your content must be memorable.

How can life sciences sales professionals execute on this to hold retention for longer?

## Optimizing sales content matters.

Companies have options in what content they use to drive buyers to a decision. In most cases, teams stick with the status quo, so their performance can be based on their talent, execution, and effort. However, this approach doesn't provide metrics to gauge how marketing content and sales presentations correlate to conversions.

This lack of metrics creates a massive disconnect between the content and its results. The bottom line is: How do you know if your sales enablement content is working without a data-driven approach?





## Life sciences sales teams face challenges regarding content.

To find out how your content performs, you have to look at the challenges facing organizations.

### Content management must be streamlined and secure.

One key issue that sales teams struggle with is content management. Content can live in many places, including file-sharing platforms such as Dropbox, Box, and Google Drive. Although these systems are good for storing files, they don't meet the needs of a strong sales team.

On these platforms, there are concerns regarding storage, organization, control, security, deployment, and more. However, building something from scratch isn't cost-effective and will cause delays. Additionally, you may need specialized talent to manage a homemade system.

All of these issues lead companies to seek out a sales enablement platform with the right balance of functionality and affordability. This alternative solution contains a mix of tools, processes, and metrics designed to empower sales teams.



## Storage and access must meet special requirements.

Marketing teams also should consider whether they can efficiently store, secure, and deploy the content they create. Storing and transferring rich media—such as HTML5, audio, and video files—is a challenge at best. At worst, it can require additional web development and implementation that delays sales processes, especially if content needs updated or revised for compliance or messaging. In addition, these large media files can take a longer time to download during a presentation if sales reps don't have the right platform and tools.

## You must know who owns the sales enablement process.

In many organizations, sales enablement falls in the middle of various silos: marketing, sales, and operations. Ideally, you want to achieve sales-marketing alignment when you introduce sales enablement technology.

Marketing teams will likely be the primary user base. They are the creators of the content, and they also establish the workflows that the technology enables. However, sales teams receive insights directly from the audience and use the technology during presentations and meetings, so they must also have a voice in the decision.

Content alone isn't going to drive results during the sales presentation, and a software platform is ineffective if it lacks the ability to securely deploy targeted, engaging media. With the right purpose-built platform, marketers can empower their sales teams and deliver measurable results.

## You must make the most of your time with the audience.

Years ago, sales reps had more access to clinicians and healthcare decision makers. That's not the case for today's reps. In fact, in-person meetings are few and far between. Interactions now primarily happen in virtual settings, meaning the content needs to be even more engaging. Unfortunately, research shows that [60-70 percent of content is wasted](#), primarily due to a lack of relevance or accessibility.

Marketers have to align their content development with what reps need to make sales. The marketing team must also consider how they can enable salespeople to leverage content within the restricted time frames.

Investing time up front to collaborate on which content is most relevant for prospects, where particular materials fit in the funnel, and what metrics are necessary to gauge content effectiveness must be part of the development process.

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# Time challenges don't just impact sales.



## SALES

- Accessing content
- Deploying content purposefully
- Engaging prospects



## MARKETING

- Creating relevant, engaging content
- Optimizing content access
- Understanding content usage during the presentation



## LEADERSHIP

- Getting visibility to make decisions regarding strategy, tactics, and personnel



## Data needs to fuel sales content strategies.

The executive suite can only make the best decisions regarding personnel and strategy when it has transparent data. Without the right metrics and data, executives have no visibility into how salespeople use their selling time. This lack of insight makes decision-making difficult because execs have no idea what is or isn't working, so ineffective sales tactics and content strategies will likely continue.

Reps can no longer tie their sales numbers to linear sales presentation tools. PowerPoints and print documents might be sufficient for communicating the details of a product, but they do little to keep a company or solution top of mind for a prospect. Engaging presentations are decidedly more effective.



## What makes a presentation engaging?

- ✓ Showcasing relevancy to the buyer's pain points
- ✓ Creating visual interest with data visualizations
- ✓ Inserting rich media, such as videos
- ✓ Using short and concise language
- ✓ Leading with benefits, not features
- ✓ Backing up assertions with data, case studies, and research

### Strategies for differentiation depend on data too.

Marketers have many elements to consider when strategizing how to differentiate content during the sales presentation, with content development and deployment tactics chief among them.



# What competition challenges exist?



## SALES

- Differentiating presentations from competitors
- Articulating products and solutions in a clear, engaging way
- Learning how to engage remotely and with different technology



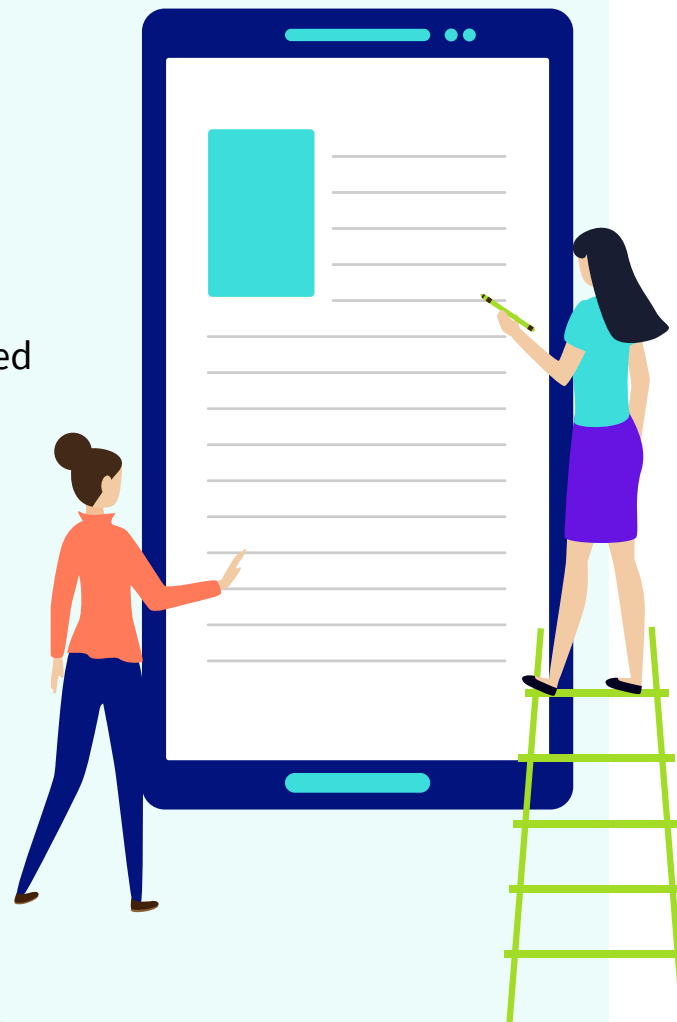
## MARKETING

- Creating content that stands out
- Matching content files with optimized deployment tools
- Establishing presentation metrics
- Getting quality feedback from the sales field



## LEADERSHIP

- Defining the most effective presentation metrics
- Advising strategies for differentiation with limited visibility





To arm salespeople with content that converts, marketing needs to know what resonates with prospects. Anecdotal feedback—combined with quantitative data on audience engagement during the sales pitch—can better inform content development, including which media types and messaging strategies to use. This feedback will also direct how marketing aligns its content with the pain points and buying behavior reps encounter in the field.

To get to this point, you need a sales enablement platform that tracks content usage in a granular way, allowing for correlation between content and sales.







## Compliance and regulations impact life sciences content.

Sales reps can't always control how compliant their marketing content is on the day of a presentation. However, they can decide to pitch a life science product or solution accurately and compliantly.

Failing to articulate a product accurately—including details such as side effects and proper utilization measures—puts companies at risk of fines, penalties, and lawsuits. To combat this risk, your sales team should engage with the content they're using throughout the sales process in more holistic ways. The better command they have over details of the solution they're pitching, the more informative their presentation will be, and the less chance they'll have of running into a compliance issue.

Marketers can help reps reduce compliance risk by equipping them with clear and substantive content that leaves little room for error in communicating the details of a product or solution.

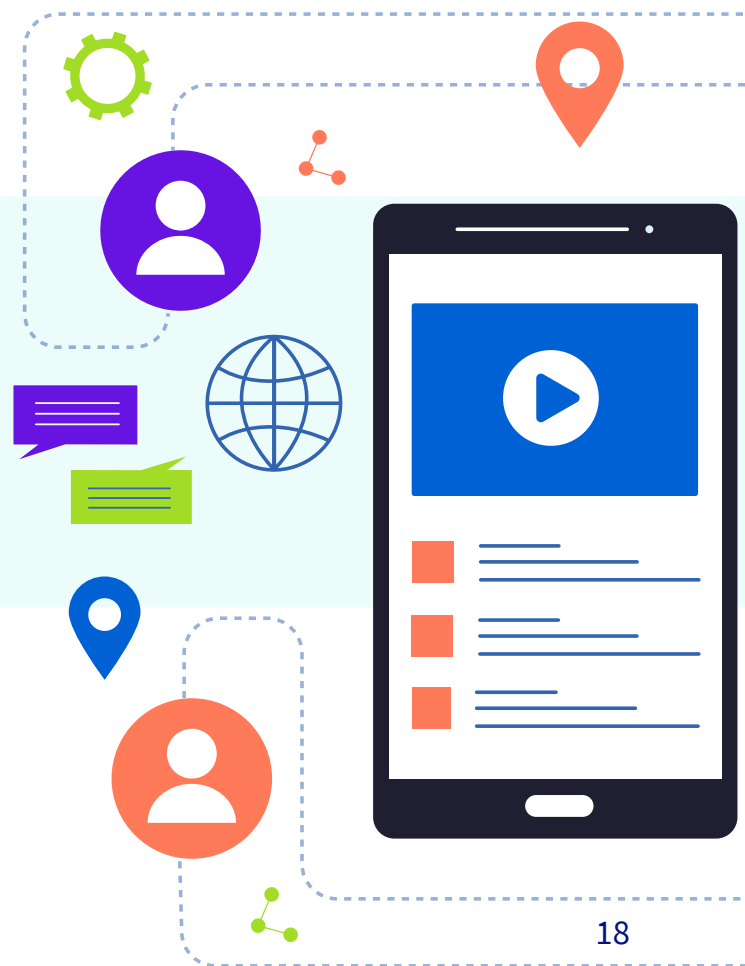
Although marketing teams are responsible for driving engagement and differentiation during sales presentations, they cannot sacrifice compliance for branding or customization. Linear, standardized content might not boost sales numbers, but it will prevent their company from receiving a Food and Drug Administration violation.



Sales and marketing teams might be responsible for compliance violations, but the executive suite will end up paying for them. To mitigate such risks, an organization needs robust monitoring of compliance in conjunction with leadership, legal, marketing, and sales. To execute this, companies need to create open, collaborative, and transparent sales enablement processes that provide all stakeholders the insight required to address compliance issues before they happen.

With the right sales enablement tools, executives can sleep at night knowing they have the ability to track compliance. The industry demands control of the content environment, and the right platform enables this, eliminating the chance that salespeople will create content on their own.

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# What are the federal regulations and compliance challenges?



## SALES

- Communicating products and solutions accurately
- Using presentation content in the right, in intended ways
- Developing consultative and predictive sales skills



## MARKETING

- Finding the balance between customization, branding, and compliance
- Updating and redeploying content on the fly to maintain compliance
- Limiting “gray areas” in content to help reps avoid presenting solutions inaccurately



## LEADERSHIP

- Difficulty in monitoring compliance measures



## Challenge breeds opportunity.

There are many moving parts to selling in today's life sciences marketplace. Limited access to content and competition in the field will continue to prevent companies from hitting sales numbers if sales, marketing, and leadership teams work in silos. Through collaboration and transparency, companies can find the right solution for optimizing the sales enablement process. The right platform will break down the siloed walls and make the process transparent.

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# What to consider when looking for a solution.

## Format

Technology advancements mean a more comprehensive range of content formats are available in the sales field, from standard PDFs and print collateral to dynamic audio and video media.

### What to Consider When Choosing Content Formats

- ✓ Will it boost engagement during the sales presentation?
- ✓ Is it easy for reps to organize, access, and transport?
- ✓ What are its storage and security requirements?

One-dimensional presentation tools—such as PowerPoints, PDFs, and print sheets—might articulate the details of a life science solution, but they lack the punch needed to differentiate it in the mind of a specialist.

Rich media formats that include video tutorials, calculators, and forms are a great way for reps to improve engagement during the sales presentation. With dynamic audio and visual cues, prospects are likely to retain at least half the information presented.

Storage and security also play a crucial role in choosing content formats. Print and linear documents are expensive and cumbersome to manage in the field. With more sophisticated content formats, companies must have the technology to store and secure large files—or at least the web development resources to do so. Deploying sophisticated content through mobile is also a challenge.

## Substance

The detailed content in a product guide varies from the straightforward text of a data sheet—not to mention that it all has to be positioned and articulated in a way that maintains compliance.

### What to Consider When Developing Substantive Content

- ✓ Will it make it easier for reps to articulate products?
- ✓ Does it meet compliance requirements?
- ✓ Does it meet brand standards?





Engaging content not only gives reps an advantage, but also looks more professional. Also, the clearer content is, the easier it is for reps to retain the information and deliver more knowledgeable, informative presentations in the future. With these attributes, newer salespeople have more confidence, and seasoned ones have more context to emphasize important points.”

To minimize the risk of compliance violations and the fines, lawsuits, and damaged company reputations that go along with them, marketers must work closely with their legal departments during the content development process.

## Relevance

What matters to one specialist might not matter to the next. Several variables factor into creating relevant content, and sales and marketing need alignment on all of them.

### What to Consider When Developing Relevant Content

- ✓ Does it align with the reps’ audience?
- ✓ Have the marketing and sales teams collaborated during the content development process?

All the customization, branding, and rich media in the world won’t help reps make sales if the content isn’t relevant. Marketing and sales teams need to collaborate in the development process to align content with the audience’s pain points, concerns, and unmet needs.

It can't be generic because healthcare is complex. Different buyers have different needs. Additionally, it's a rapidly changing market that has just experienced an accelerated digital transformation and a host of new challenges.

The earlier marketing and sales align themselves on how to position and articulate solutions, the more time they'll save in the sales process and the better return they'll get from their content development investment.

## Deployment

Content deployment involves the presentation of marketing material and how accessible it is for the sales and marketing teams.

### What to Consider When Deploying Content

- ✓ Do reps have instant access to content?
- ✓ Is the deployment targeted and controlled?
- ✓ Can the content be deployed and transferred securely?

Reps need immediate, real-time access to content to make sales with limited selling time. They need to have it at their fingertips and the ability to share it online and offline.







If marketing relies on reps to organize and deploy content in silos with disparate tools, they lose visibility and control over the presentation. Reps can quickly deploy content and pitch solutions in unintended ways that risk compliance violations. Having a centralized means for accessing and deploying content mitigates these risks by giving companies greater control over content usage in the field.

## Metrics

Companies can no longer rely on observations and inputs from the rep to enhance the presentation. Defining the right metrics means gaining greater visibility into how content is driving sales results.

### What to Consider When Implementing Content Metrics

- ✓ How will content effectiveness be measured?
- ✓ Has marketing received feedback from the sales team?
- ✓ Is there a way to capture quantitative data from the presentation?

Marketers can't refine and optimize content for the sales presentation without understanding consumption. Therefore, you should define content metrics at the beginning of the development process, and they should align with sales goals.

Qualitative and quantitative metrics can gauge content effectiveness. That's why sales reps need to provide anecdotal feedback to the marketing team about what they notice during the presentation. This feedback should answer the following questions:

- ✓ What content has the best response?
- ✓ What content is unused?
- ✓ What content is lacking?

In addition, data such as file opens, form submissions, and presentation length gives marketers great insight into optimizing content to drive conversions.



## Content and sales enablement intersect.

Content is only one part of the sales enablement process. But with an understanding of what content their reps need to sell, marketers, sales teams, and business leaders can align content requirements with the right sales enablement solution. The good news is that companies have a variety of options when it comes to finding what works.

### Compare sales enablement solutions by need.

	Status Quo	File Hosting Technology	Custom Technology	Purpose-Built Sales Enablement Technology
<b>Format</b>	<p>“What you see is what you get”</p> <p>Little control</p>	<p>Wi-Fi required for media access</p> <p>Limits on the size and type of files</p>	<p>Stores any format necessary</p> <p>Expensive to implement and maintain</p>	<p>Combines the benefits of a hosting service and proprietary solution</p> <p>Flexible</p> <p>Cost-effective</p>
<b>Substance</b>	<p>Same limitations as “Format”</p>	<p>Connectivity issues could impact</p> <p>Time intensive to update files</p>	<p>Content optimization functionality</p> <p>Cost-prohibitive in most cases</p>	<p>Centralized access enables quick updates for accuracy</p>



<b>Relevance</b>	Depends on the alignment between marketing and sales teams	Reliant on reps to retrieve and present relevant content to a prospect	Technical issues in the field could compromise  Investment in development is likely	Safeguards relevant content in a centralized, backed-up platform  Keeps files organized according to groups and audiences
<b>Deployment</b>	Only works if reps are able to get the right content when they need it	Reps have direct access  Network connectivity creates limits	Due to constant changes, the cost of customizing and maintaining a solution will be significant	Complete control over how reps use and deploy content  Easy-click platform access  Connectivity is not necessary
<b>Metrics</b>	Data and metrics are hard to get  Little transparency	Dependent on word-of-mouth insight from the sales team	Qualitative and quantitative data  Modification of these will be expensive	Full transparency for all without forcing companies to adjust the platform  Built-in metrics and user-friendly interfaces simplify the process

Leveraging the right tools so sales reps can close more deals isn't a plug-and-play process.

## What you need to create content sales can actually use.

To empower your sales teams, you need a sales enablement solution that delivers the right content in the sales process.

### Rich Media Capabilities

Equip your reps with content that helps them stand out. To do this, you need an integrated platform that allows them to store and deploy rich media files such as surveys, videos, and pricing calculators.

An integrated sales enablement solution also safeguards a company's investment. Instead of budgeting to integrate multiple sales enablement technologies or investing in additional back-end enhancements, companies get scalable technology built for changes in content and market trends.

### Real-Time Content Access

Salespeople spend too much time searching for content when it doesn't live in a central hub. A sales enablement platform simplifies content access for the rep. Marketing can upload files directly to the platform, enabling salespeople to retrieve files and download media wherever they're giving the presentation, independent of Wi-Fi or network connectivity.



## Security and Compliance Friendliness

An intelligent sales enablement platform mitigates security and compliance risks by taking storage, filing, and deployment tasks off the sales rep's plate. Companies can organize, store, back up, and secure content more efficiently and safely if it's in one place. The chances of reps misplacing documents decreases, and companies don't have to worry about who is accessing their proprietary material. Marketers can also remove and replace old content that no longer meets compliance requirements.

## Targeted Metrics

Companies will be in the dark about what their reps need to close without visibility of content usage during the sales presentation. The right technology sheds light on what presentations may be lacking and decreases a company's dependence on anecdotal feedback and reporting from the sales rep.

Content usage statistics—which track downloads, form submissions, and presentation length—give marketers the insight needed to make informed content development decisions. These valuable metrics also make it easier to get new strategies and investments green lit by the executive suite. Data gives enhanced credibility to proposals for content or sales enablement strategies.



## Content is just the start of the sales presentation. Sales enablement technology delivers opportunity.

Giving sales reps the content to make a presentation and empowering them with the tools to make a sale are two different things. Status-quo practices and existing sales enablement tools might be enough to help reps meet quotas, but companies need to evaluate whether they're enough to move the needle on the sales front.

By using the right integrated solution to optimize and simplify the sales process, companies can hit the field with sales enablement built to close deals. There's too much money and market share at stake for life sciences companies to remain fixed and fitted to their sales processes. Rather than sticking to what works for their internal teams, companies should be considering what will work in the field.

The challenges of limited selling time, increased competition, and necessary compliance place new demands on how reps approach the sales presentation. Salespeople already have so much to manage in the field, so optimizing content needs to be a data-based, collaborative effort. With this approach, marketers can create content that turns a sales pitch into a conversation.