Essential Guide to Giving the Perfect Sales Demo

A Guide to Growth Through Leveraging Key Technologies

By Matt Behrend

consensus
Drive agreement. Drive sales.

ADAPT YOUR PRODUCT DEMOS TO FIT EACH PROSPECT

The Problem: One Size Doesn't Fit Anyone

Sales reps who don't adapt to the unique needs of each prospect leave both parties feeling dissatisfied, if not frustrated. A recent experience we had with a potential vendor illustrates this problem beautifully. (Can you relate?)

Someone we met at a recent tradeshow emailed Richard, our VP of Lead Gen, to see if we'd be interested in his company's B2B cloud marketing tool. After Richard said we might be interested, the sales rep sent a calendar appointment, requesting a 45-minute in-person meeting four days later. Since this was a warm introduction, Richard accepted the meeting invitation and went back to work.

Four days (and over a hundred completed to-do items) later, the sales rep walked into Richard's office and asked, "Is now still a good time?" Actually, "now" had become an extremely inconvenient time as Richard's priorities had changed in the interim, but Richard kept the appointment out of respect for the vendor.

During the presentation, which lasted for almost two hours, Richard found his mind wandering. The sales rep started out well enough by asking Richard questions about his role within the company and the challenges we face, but it quickly became apparent that the rep either had not heard Richard's answers or that he couldn't "present a script"? Richard clarified and restated our needs repeatedly—even going so far as to sketch out a diagram on a whiteboard—but the rep didn't answer Richard's specific questions.

Throughout the meeting, the sales rep tossed out a lot of jargon, including words and phrases like "B2B", "cloud", "play in that space", and "leverage", but the essence of the value proposition of his product was far from clear. The only defined take-away was that the rep's company was making a limited time offer available through December, giving Richard the impression that the rep cared more about making his numbers than solving our needs.

This interaction ended up being a waste of time for both Richard and the rep.

What can we learn from this experience to make our live product demos more effective? Here are some guidelines for preparing for and delivering effective live sales demos.

Focus on Solving Their Problems

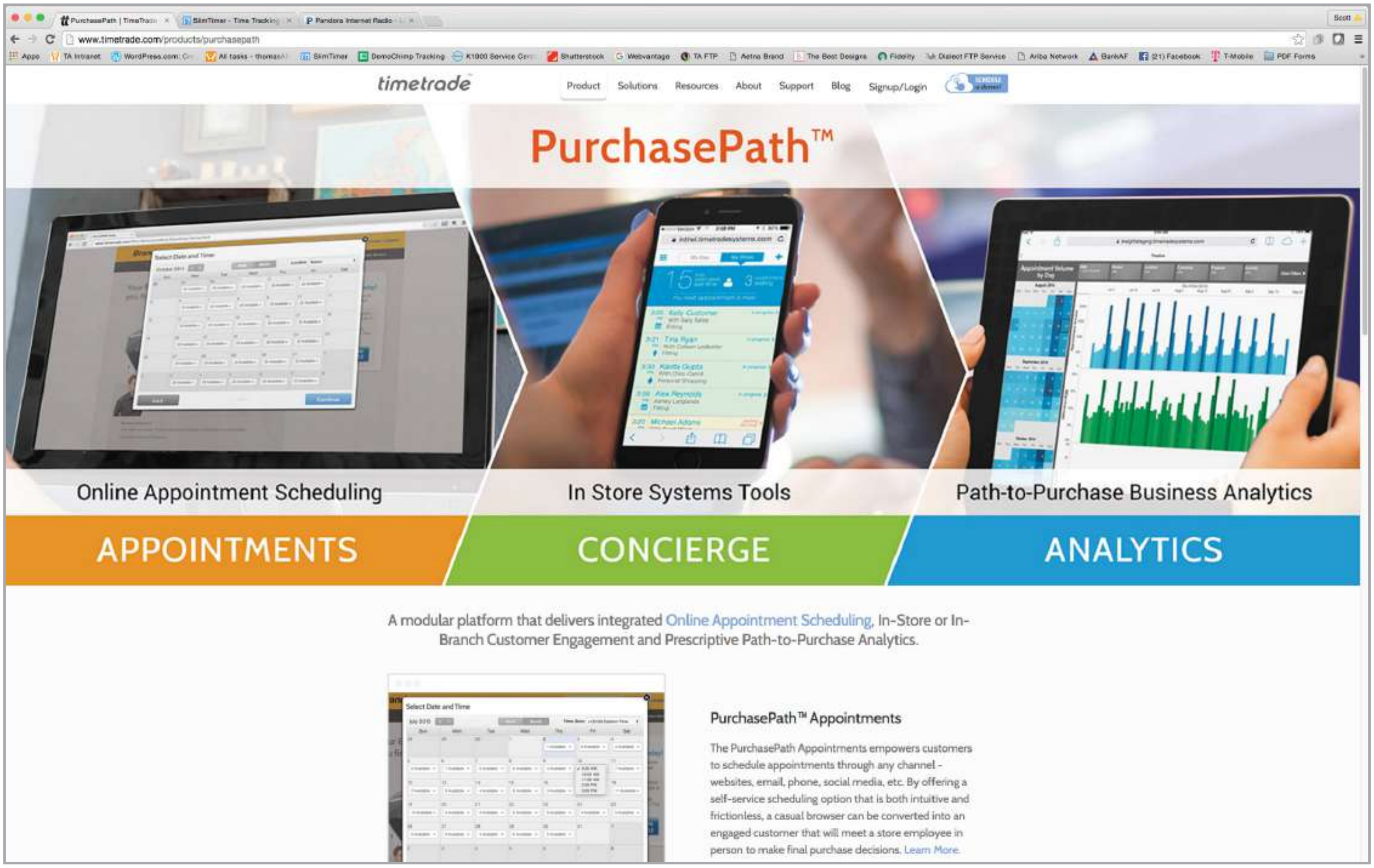
A successful product demo involves much more than asking your prospect to join you to experience economic nirvana, where supply and demand serendipitously embrace one other like a scene out of a love story. You've got to do your prep work—often a significant amount of it—to discuss the specific needs of a prospect and have a closing conversation.

Preparing an effective sales demo requires taking precise care of the pertinent details, including scheduling and confirming the appointment. This includes making sure the right members of the buying panel will be in attendance. Make sure to spend time learning about the individual members of your audience, or, for presentations to larger groups, at least get a sense for the shared values and beliefs of the participants related to your product category.

Scheduling Tip: Don't call your demo a "demo". Instead, call it "[Solution Title] Consulting With [Your Company Name]". At Consensus we might call it "Sales Productivity Consulting With Consensus". When setting an appointment, instead of saying, "Can we find some time in the next few days to demonstrate our awesome product?", ask, "Let's meet to discuss your sales processes so we can help you significantly increase your sales productivity." Ultimately you are scheduling a meeting to solve their problems, not to demo your product. Some people won't want to see a "demo", but everyone wants their problems solved.

Develop a Scheduling Process

Getting on a prospect's schedule is the first major step to giving an effective live demo. There are entire companies and product offerings built around the art of scheduling and keeping appointments. For example, a company called TimeTrade advertises a sales appointment scheduling product that automatically does some groundwork for appointment-setting activities, allowing sales reps to focus more on preparing effective meetings and less on the scheduling aspects of holding those meetings.



TimeTrade touts that its Click-to-Schedule tool reduces the time wasted by 51% in "non-sales activities" by sales reps. Whether it's TimeTrade's solution or another tool, developing a smooth process for scheduling and confirming appointments will help you and your team invest more time on activities that matter most.

Savvy sales reps know there can be a big difference between an appointment set and an appointment kept. Confirming a live demo appointment is almost as crucial as setting up the appointment in the first place. Many salespeople skip the appointment confirmation step on purpose for fear that a confirmation phone call or email could become an opportunity for the prospect to cancel. However, tactfully reminding your prospects that they've scheduled an appointment with you can help them mentally prepare for the experience, creating a higher likelihood that they will keep it.

"Hi [name], I'm reaching out to remind you that we have a consulting appointment to discuss [solution title] on [date and time]. Can you please confirm this still works well for you? If not, can you please let me know another time that would work better?"

If they do postpone the meeting, at least you're not wasting your time waiting for a prospect who isn't going to show. It also gives them a sense of control over the situation, which helps to establish a greater sense of trust in the relationship and to position you as a helpful advisor, not a pushy salesperson.

Tips for confirming appointments include:

- Avoid scheduling appointments more than two weeks in advance.
- Be clear about the appointment details, restating the date and time of the appointment to the prospects along with the objective of the meeting.
- Send out a calendar invite as soon as the appointment is set, and include a reminder notification that seems appropriate to your prospects.
- Give a personalized reminder later in the afternoon of the day before the scheduled appointment. A quick text message that says something like, "Looking forward to our demo appointment tomorrow at 10am," works well for this.

Never Present to Empty Stomachs

Have you ever consciously observed the level of engagement and energy during workshops and presentations at a trade show?   You've probably noticed that the keynote speakers and presentations from industry thought leaders are not normally scheduled as one of the last sessions—especially not on the last day of the show. Why is that? Because attendees at a trade show typically lose their focus as the day wanes, especially as it gets closer to dinnertime. On the other hand, there are sweet spots during the day that provide optimal opportunities for presenting information and having an audience respond to it. The most prominent presentations are often given in the 9am - 11am time slot, and in the early afternoon.

What makes these time slots some of the best candidates for scheduling presentations? A recent study by Shai Danziger of Ben-Gurion University provides an explanation; his findings are instructive when selecting time slots for live demos with prospective clients.

Danzinger's study shows a high correlation between judges' tendencies to make more lenient decisions the closer it was to meal times. Inmates whose cases were presented to judges shortly after they had eaten breakfast or lunch had their parole requests granted 65% of the time. On the other hand, when it was time for lunch, judges almost always denied similar parole requests.

What's the takeaway from this study related to scheduling live product demos? Schedule them at high-energy times when your audience is more likely to give you their full attention.

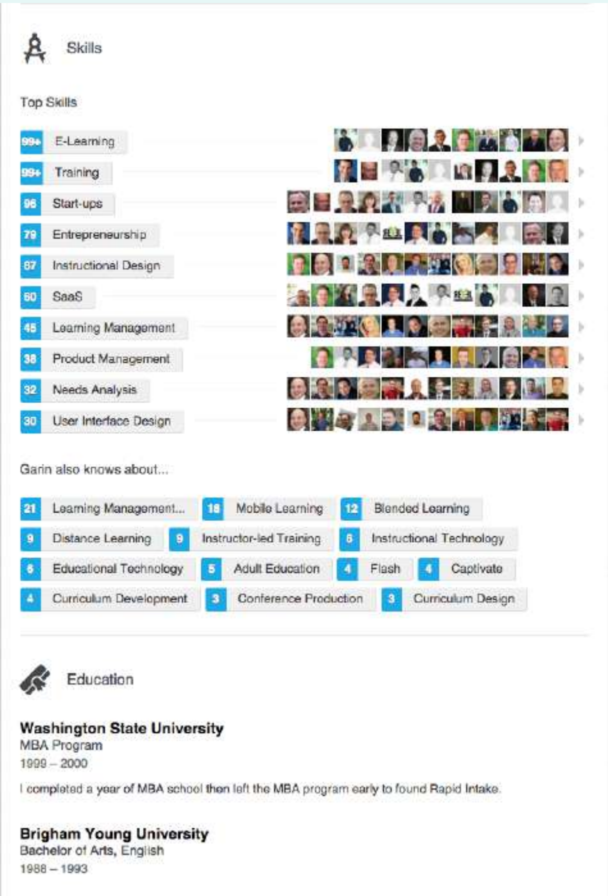
Make it Personal

Have you ever found yourself feeling like a stranger or an outsider while attending a presentation? Maybe the presenter's vocabulary is different. Or it could be that the presenter uses references and examples that are not familiar to you. You may have also seen a presenter try to break the ice by telling a joke that completely bombs and kills the mood of the presentation.

In scenarios like these, your attention quickly turns from the content of the presentation to figuring some way of slipping out of the meeting unnoticed. Reasons for this kind of presentation dissonance vary, but are usually linked to a breakdown in the communicator's understanding of the personal and career interests of the audience.

There are several ways to ensure that the content of your live product demo matches up with the interests of prospective customers. Connecting with audience members on LinkedIn in advance (Facebook friending could be awkward) can give you some keen insights that allow you to target specific areas that are of interest to them.

Researching individual profiles (especially in cases where it's a small enough group) can reveal opportunities to make strong connections between the benefits of your product and the issues they value. Imagine how impressed a prospect would be if you explained something about your product that directly addresses an issue that you know is a concern for them based upon their LinkedIn interests. Showing this kind of empathy for your prospects lets them know that you are genuinely concerned about their personal success rather than just trying to extract their money.



LinkedIn profiles can tell you a lot about your audience, including their career history, their skills, their education, and their personal interests. Using this information to personalize your demo presentation can make your conversation much more productive.

Of course, you can overdo the personal touch element. You probably don't want to come across as a stalker by congratulating one of your prospects on having such an attractive wife based upon the pictures you dug up of from their honeymoon photo album on Instagram. Stick to safe topics.

A more direct way of discerning the needs of your audience is to ask them specifically for the data you need, especially as it pertains to the product you're selling them. You might even prepare a short survey that helps you adapt your presentation to address the needs of each of those who will be attending the demo. Asking specific questions before the appointment about their business goals and the decision-making roles of those attending the demo will allow you to craft a play-by-play presentation strategy that will convert much better than the typical "Spray and Pray" approach.

If you don't prepare effectively, you may discover too late that what you've prepared is completely irrelevant to your prospect's needs.

Tip: Prepare by doing your research to find out what problems your prospects are trying to solve, or at least what topics they want to cover. Where possible, learn about their personal interests so you can engage them on a personal level.

Don't Pull a Kanye

Okay, so the time has come for you to deliver your live product demo. You've put in the work to be prepared. Now you're ready to work your magic: to educate your prospects on the critical reasons why they need what you offer.

Remember, don't be Kanye West! The famous rapper lost some serious face recently, getting some bad publicity after he singled out two disabled fans who were attending his concert in Australia. At one point in the show, West stopped performing and refused to continue until every last member of the audience stood. He made the mistake of overlooking the possibility that there were people in attendance who simply could not stand, and he was impatient and offensive in his approach.

(Your prospects may not condemn you to a place that's "worse than hell" on Twitter if you come across in the wrong way during your presentation, but you can learn something from his mistake by catering to your audience.)

Framing the discussion in context of your audience's needs will help you connect with them. Consider starting your presentation with an informal verbal survey, which will help you get an updated pulse on your prospects' attitudes and jumpstart their participation in your demo from the beginning. Take notes as they talk so you can remember important details. Keep in mind that your most important objective is to specifically address the existing problems faced by your audience. Look for ways to uncover those problems and address them in the course of your presentation.

Tip: Where possible, try to gather the needs of your audience ahead of the appointment and review their responses to your questions at the beginning of your presentation. Their willingness to respond to a survey ahead of time is a great indicator of their commitment to solving their problems. They're more qualified than unresponsive prospects.

Be Prepared to Audible (Omaha! Omaha!)

During your live demo, it's critical that you watch for and respond to audience feedback. Verbal cues and other feedback, such as closed body language, should serve as switches that you follow to the path of least resistance, thus increasing your chances of closing a sale.

In their explanation of how body language can be used to increase sales performance, Marketing Donut quotes independent body language expert Robert Phipps as saying, "It will help you know when to close a deal, for example, when to give more information and when to shut up. If you can improve your own body language and learn how to read your buyers, it will help you make more sales. It'll also tell you when to get out the door."

Staying flexible during your presentation, and molding the demo to fit each audience based upon their verbal and non-verbal communication is the best way to sell to them.

To be ready to respond to feedback, prepare modularized, variable versions of the information you intend to share so that you can dive deeply into the topics that seem most important to your audience and simply summarize concepts that aren't as compelling.

Making your demo flexible and knowing when to change topics can turn you into the sales equivalent of Tom Brady and Peyton Manning, two of the most successful pro quarterbacks ever. They complement their physical talents by using audibles: real-time adjustment to plays based on the types of defenses they see on the field.

Salespeople can use this same approach. If you sense that a topic you've broached feels boring and tired and that you're losing your audience, quickly summarize the idea and move on to other areas that are more appealing to them.

In using this modularized presentation approach, make sure that you weigh feedback cues according to what you know about who has decision-making influence among your audience. This can be especially important if someone tries to hijack or dominate the meeting by asking irrelevant questions, injecting uninformed opinions, or playing the part of the me-monster.

Tip: Later in this e-book we'll show you how to automatically personalize your demo to their unique interests of your audience. New technology can help!

Ask Good Questions—Especially on Web Conference Calls

The development of virtual meeting technologies such as GoToMeeting, WebEx, Google Hangouts, Skype, and other web conferencing tools can give salespeople economical alternatives to face-to-face meetings. However, web-based demos can make it difficult to gauge audience reactions. During a web conference call, presenters can't read the body language of their audiences; there's an entirely different set of signals for gathering feedback. Audio feedback becomes much more crucial in this situation. It's even more important to ask engaging questions and allowing space and silence for the answers to surface.

Most web conferencing tools allow participants to submit questions via chat. When giving web-based product demos to large audiences, encourage them to use this feature, especially during web meetings that take place in several different locations.

Tip: In an in-person demonstration, you might already ask lots of questions. In a web-based demonstration, be sure to ask even more questions! Try to ask a question at least every couple of minutes. It can be as simple as, "Were you able to follow that okay?" or "Does that make sense?" Or try something more complex and open ended, such as, "How do you think what I've shown you would impact productivity at your organization?" or "In what ways do you see this applying to your team?" Constantly asking questions ensures engagement and avoids the dreaded feeling that the audience has you on mental mute.

Demonstrate Your Expertise

In order to get your prospects to the closing conversation you want to have, where you work out the final details of the sale and sign a contract, you must win their confidence. It is imperative that your preparation and live demo delivery give the audience the impression that you are the expert at what you are selling, and that your company and product can be trusted to deliver based upon the expectations you are setting.

The people to whom your customers have entrusted purchasing power—the ones you're pitching—can see through superficial attempts to manipulate their trust. Truly winning their confidence requires that you've done your homework and can answer their questions with more insight than canned answers provide. You must understand enough of the details and nuances of your prospects' problems so you can speak their language and demonstrate a depth of understanding that will give you the authority to propose valid solutions to them.

Discover and Engage the Buying Panel

In B2B (Business to Business), sales prospects rarely make a purchasing decision solo. They almost always have colleagues, bosses, or leaders from other departments who will need to weigh in on the decision, too.

Of course, you should always try to get as many members of the buying panel to attend your sales presentations as possible. Asking questions like "Are there others who'll need to weigh in on this decision?" or "Are there others that might find this helpful?" will help you discover who the other members of the buying panel are. This can take extra time, but, if you don't ask these types of questions proactively, these additional members of the buying panel will weigh in on the decision without the benefit of hearing you address their questions and concerns.

> **Tip:** Look for tips later in this book on how to engage all members of the buying panel to shorten your sales cycle!

Automating This Process

We have reviewed multiple ways for improving the effectiveness of your live product demos.

Here's a quick question for you: What if you could automate your live demo process?

Getting your inside sales team to implement best practices for delivering live product demos via web conferencing will certainly boost your sales! That being said, new technology is available to help you achieve massive sales productivity gains and shorten sales cycles by using Intelligent Demo Automation.

In this chapter, we'll help you to not only understand what Intelligent Demo Automation is, but also to explore ways you can decide if it is right for your sales organization and your prospects.

Why Demo Automation?

Sales leaders throughout the B2B industry are facing the same problems with product demos:

- They are painfully repetitive and eat up valuable time with prospects who may never progress past the demo.
- Managing the demo effectiveness of an entire sales team is very difficult; the quality of product demos varies dramatically from rep to rep.
- Almost always you have to demo multiple times to close a B2B sale because every member of the buying panel will eventually need to see a product demo.
- There is a lot of valuable data that is not captured during most product demos. Very few organizations are measuring the effectiveness of demos and aggregating the data in a way that you can feed back to improve and increase chances for success.

Common Objections to Demo Automation

You might be asking, "How can I possibly automate our product demo? It's a key part of our sales process. We rely on a lot of cues and information that we get back from the customer during our demos to determine how to position the conversation moving forward."

This is among the most common objections to using technology to automate the product demo. Let's address this concern among others.

Objection #1: "I rely on that personal touch, so I would never automate my demo."

The most important thing to recognize about product demo automation is that the goal is not to replace the live conversations you're having with your prospects. Rather, to make those live conversations more effective, and to convert more of those live conversations into closing conversations.

Consider this example. If you currently spend 60 minutes in a typical live product demo, you're probably spending 30-45 minutes demonstrating the product and 15-20 minutes answering questions. Instead, imagine what would happen if the prospect came to your first call having already seen your product demo and was ready with questions and ideas about how your product might help them solve their problems. Also, imagine having analytics that show you which of your product features were most important to them. Then you could focus a 25-30 minute conversation (instead of 45-60 minutes) on exactly each customer's needs and questions, getting to the close more quickly.

Intelligent Demo Automation can do that and much more, including a consistent message for prospects. Intelligent Demo Automation doesn't replace the personal touch; it simply enhances it by making your sales team's live personal conversations more meaningful and productive.

Objection #2: "Our product is so complex, I don't see how I could automate a product demo."

This objection makes sense at face value. As an expert salesperson, you typically find out from your clients what their needs are and then tailor your demo to their specific interests, leading with those things that are highly important to each prospect and touching lightly on those things that are less important. How can a video-based demo possibly provide the right content and the right message when your customers' needs are so different from one conversation to the next? You may feel that they're going to get a one-size-fits-all demo that will leave them bored and feeling like your solution can't meet their unique needs.

This is true of typical product marketing videos, but Intelligent Demo Automation uses flexible technology so each prospect can build a custom demo tailored to their unique interests. An Intelligent Demo Automation system stitches content together from a library of your own video segments that act like an expert salesperson. These reconfigured demos address each customer's most important questions first—and spends more time on them—then lightly touches on issues of less importance.

Intelligent Demo Automation gives each prospect a unique experience that meets their specific needs. And it tracks their progress through the demo with analytics that show you what they watched and how much time they spent, so when you do meet live, you can have the most productive conversation possible.

Intelligent Demo Automation is much more than a typical product video. It's like having an automated demo assistant that can think for itself, do custom demos for you, and then provide you with a new kind of visibility so that, when you meet, you can immediately move into closing conversations.

Why Sending YouTube Links or Recorded Webinars Doesn't Do the Job

To effectively automate your product demos, typical video hosting solutions like YouTube or Vimeo won't suffice. Sending your prospects links to demo videos can be helpful, but leaves you with several holes:

- The videos usually don't provide the personalized custom experience the prospects need
- You don't know if they watched the videos
- You don't know when they watched the videos
- You don't know which parts of the videos you shared with them are important and which parts aren't (without having to ask them)
- You don't know who they shared the videos with or whether their colleagues watched the videos

These are just a few of the problems from using video-only solutions. Intelligent Demo Automation solves these problems.

What Makes a Demo Intelligent and Automated?

"Intelligent" means that the demo leverages technology to make adjustments to the demo content, and messaging, to reflect the interests of the audience like an expert salespeople would—and more. It also notifies you when a prospect watches the demo, and when they share the demo with someone else. And it gives you a new brand of analytics that show you what interests them so you can be more effective in your follow up and close the sale.

"Automated" means the demo is self-directed, which means that users have the ability to interact with the demo at any time (once you send it to them). It also means that it automatically provides them with the right message for their specific needs.

Self-Directed

Your prospects go through your demo at their own pace and at a time that's most convenient for them.

Right Message

Your automated demo will deliver the right content to the right audience.

Right Sized Content (Video and Documents)

Your automated demo shouldn't spend time demonstrating things that aren't important to customers. Or, if they're only somewhat interested in a specific feature or benefit, it should summarize those topics and avoid going into too much detail.

It should also give customers access to documents related to their specific interests, such as whitepapers, case studies, PowerPoint decks, Excel spreadsheets, and so on.

Analytics

An Intelligent Demo Automation platform should provide you with granular and aggregate analytics that will help you better follow up and close the deal. For example, this screen shows you alignment and misalignment among the buying panel. This can help you know what to focus on in your closing conversations with them and help the members of the buying panel to move towards better alignment.

An intelligently automated demo system should also aggregate analytics that product marketing can use to get better insights across all of your prospects.

Team Management Dashboard

Using demos effectively as part of your sales strategy will increase the productivity of your sales team. Your Intelligent Demo Automation platform should provide a management console so that you can quickly see how your salespeople are using automated demos.

Encourage Sharing to Discover and Engage the Buying Panel

One of the biggest challenges in B2B sales is figuring out who is on the buying panel, who is making the decisions, and how you can engage them. Your demo automation platform should encourage sharing. It should be designed to make sharing easy and natural so that all members of the buying panel can engage more quickly in the product education process.

Integrations With Salesforce CRM or Other Sales and Marketing Platforms

Your demo automation platform should integrate with your Sales CRM and marketing automation system so you can send demos directly from within your existing workflows. It should have an API to allow you to make custom integrations, if needed.

Security

An intelligent automated demo should have some way of securing the demo for situations where tighter control of your demo makes sense. For example, it might include a feature that allows you to automatically disable the demo instance after so many views.

Notifications

An intelligent automated demo should also notify you when your prospect shares the demo so you get a sense for the engagement level inside the organization. Having the buying panel members engage early in the process helps shorten the sales cycle.

What About Demo Content?

Your automated demo is only as good as your content. We recommend a strong demo content partner that can both create excellent sales-ready content and maintain that content as your product changes over time.

Consensus As Your Intelligent Demo Automation Partner

No matter how complex your product, Consensus' professional implementation team can get your demo ready in just a few weeks, and it's included in the price of your subscription. To find out how that process works, contact us and we'll set up a complimentary project planning call and answer any questions you have.

Consensus also works closely with you to update your demo content to reflect changes to your product.

Problem and Solution Oriented Content

An automated demo isn't much good without good content. Your demo automation content should be solution oriented, meaning that it should focus on the problems a prospect has and then demonstrate how it solves those problems. Your product demo should not simply say, "Here's how it works", but more importantly, "Here is how it solves your problems."

Professionally Produced Content

There are a variety of ways to produce professional content within different budgets, but the effort required to produce content at any level of quality should be thought through carefully before work begins. Since your content is part of your customer-facing 'store front', having professionally-produced material adds credibility to your product and your brand.

You Need to Maintain Your Content

One of the biggest challenges with content is keeping it fresh so that it's relevant to your prospects' changing needs at the time they interact with it. If you are a software company, your product may change significantly in just a few months. You'll need to update your demo as new features become available and refresh any screen shots or branding as needed.

How Do You Know if Intelligent Demo Automation is Right For You?

So how do you know if you should invest in demo automation? Answering these questions can help:

- Could our sales conversations be improved if prospects came to the conversation having already seen at least the fundamentals of the product?
- Could our salespeople manage a bigger pipeline if some parts of the product demo were automated?
- Do we need better ways to discover and engage the buying panel inside our prospects' organizations?
- Do we have a high-volume deal flow to manage?
- Do we have to choose between who gets a product demo and who doesn't?
- Are we focused on growth and getting the most productivity out of our sales reps?
- Do we need to shorten our average sales cycle?

If you've answered **YES** to any of these questions, you are a good candidate for getting strong results from Intelligent Demo Automation.

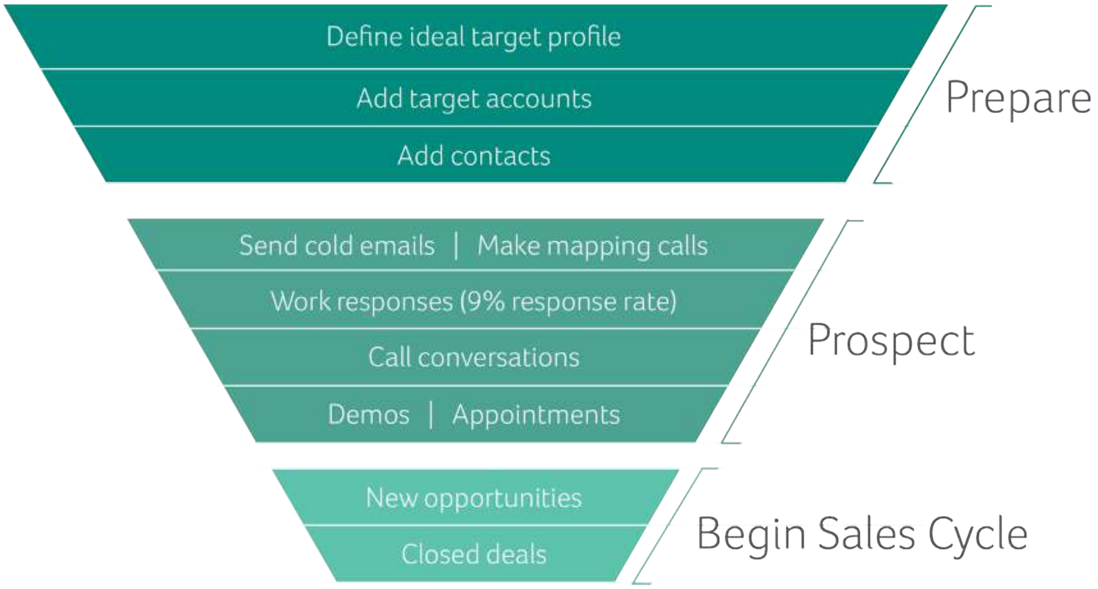
About Consensus

Consensus is an intelligent demo automation service that helps salespeople close more deals by creating, personalizing and tracking video-enabled demos for prospective customers' buying panels. Consensus personalizes the demo video experience by allowing prospects to select segments to watch that match their unique needs. Our patent-pending Demolytics™ system captures new insights into who opens your demo, what they watch, the time they spend and who they share it with, giving unprecedented visibility into buying panel behavior. Reducing the repetitive educational part of the sales process focuses live sales conversations on the specific needs of prospects and shortens the sales cycle.

Live Demos Are Stifling Your Sales Productivity

You know that guy on your sales team, Dave? The one who seems to be working his tail off, but always struggles to meet quota? It's certainly not entirely his fault. He has read the popular sales advice books, everything from Garr Reynolds' Presentation Zen to Tom Hopkins' How to Master the Art of Selling. You've listened in on some of his conversations with prospects on the phone. He's pretty solid there. In fact, you've even borrowed some of his messaging tactics. You've witnessed him give compelling pitches to audiences that seemed captivated by his approach, only to hear stories of disappointment about many of those prospects went lukewarm—or completely dark.

Dave is working in an outmoded sales model that has been around far too long. It's a system that attempts to aggressively move prospects through the sales cycle by educating them on the merits of the product and trying to remove stumbling blocks that inevitably surface when members of the buying panel miss Dave's presentation—the one where he completely owned it.



So what's wrong with this approach? What's causing Dave to lose sleep, sacrifice family time, and develop him grey hair as he diligently works to qualify for this month's bonus? It's probably the same thing that's holding back the other reps on your sales team: your sales process needs to move more bits than atoms.

What does that mean? In the book, "How Digital Is Your Business", this concept of supercharging productivity by replacing manual work with automated digital technology is expressed this way: "Shifting to digital business design involves turning many of your company's conventional processes into digital processes."

Here's the solution for Dave's situation: spend less time on less effective activities like qualifying prospects, scheduling and planning live demos, and spend more time engaged in closing conversations. Dave needs to cut out the activities in his schedule that don't make use of his core skill set.

Dave shouldn't have to spend so much of his time troubleshooting audio problems during conference calls. He shouldn't have to devote his energy trying to figure out why his prospect's version of Internet Explorer won't let him access the GoToMeeting presentation he's giving—a frustrating experience that ultimately caused the lead to fizzle.

It's also an ineffective use of Dave's time filtering through his prospect's organization to find out who is ultimately responsible for signing off on a purchase, an activity that often leads to more time spent creating a fragmented presentation strategy that attempts to address every potential concern or interest that members of the buying panel could have individually and collectively.

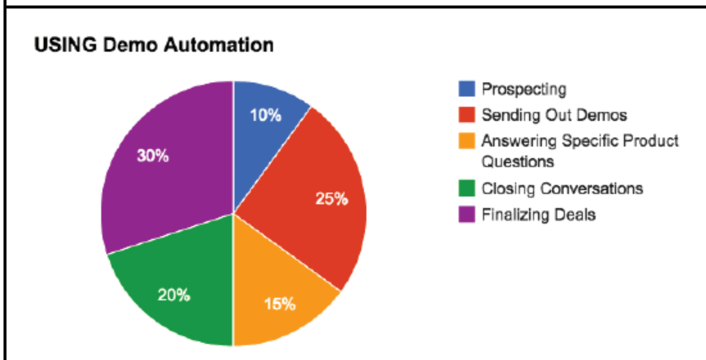
Dave's skillset as a salesperson needs to be decoupled from the distracting details involved in educating his prospects and their colleagues about the features of the product in a way that's relevant to them. Instead, Dave should be spending the majority of his time responding to the specific questions, objections, or final details that typically come up at the end of the sales cycle.

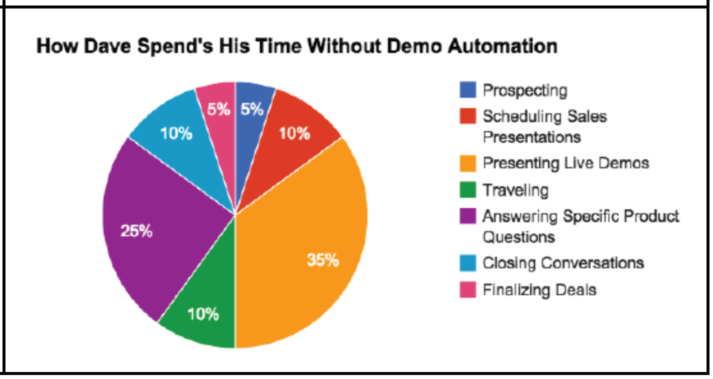
This is where Intelligent Demo Automation can help. It minimizes the tedious, repetitive elements of the educational part of product demos, including scheduling, repeating demos for different members of the buying panel, and attempting to gather feedback about what level of understanding decision makers have about a product. Intelligent Demo Automation replaces this labor-intensive process with an intelligent product demo that configures itself to each prospect's unique interests, helps salespeople discover and engage the buying panel, and feeds data and analytics back to the salesperson. Intelligent Demo Automation can be a huge productivity magnifier for a salesperson.

As you can see in the charts below, when a sales rep uses demo automation, much more of his time is spent having closing conversation and finalizing deals. The time he would have been spending with overhead related to giving live demos is drastically reduced, increasing productivity and ultimately revenue.

Dave's Time

With Demo Automation	Without Demo Automation





This idea of using technology to improve sales efficiency is certainly not a new concept. It's been around at least since Paul Bunyan lost a tree-chopping contest to a little guy with a chainsaw.

What is new is this: digital automation is now finally integrated into the sales cycle specifically as a sales and marketing automation tool that allows salespeople to multiply their productivity. Screen shares, explainer videos and other elements of the evolution from told methods had their day in the sun, but each of these tools has simply been a building block for a more modern and revolutionary approach to sales automation: the intelligently automated product demo.

Characteristics of Intelligent Demo Automation include the following:

- Effective product education built on a 'persuasion methodology'
- Compelling, professional videos that actually demonstrate the product in action
- An intelligent personalization engine that delivers right-sized content, customized to fit the prospect's unique needs
- A notification system that alerts the salesperson when the prospect engages with the demo
- The ability for prospects to share the demo with colleagues on the buying panel and for salespeople to receive notifications as to when the demo is shared and with whom
- A single view that shows the buying panel and how they are engaging (or not) with the content
- Analytics gathered from data tracking about how the prospect engages with the demo
- Integration with CRM (i.e. Salesforce.com) to allow salespeople to inject the demo into their processes with as little disruption as possible

Consensus' Intelligent Demo Automation platform was created as a comprehensive solution that includes each of these critical elements.

Increase Productivity by As Much As 300%

Let's look at a typical scenario inside a B2B software company where John, the VP of Sales, is wrestling with typical challenges related to live product demos.

Their average deal size is small to moderate, so they need to process a lot of leads; he and his team are swamped because everyone wants a product demo; and they are constantly hopping on the phone and WebEx, routinely spending 45 minutes to an hour with each prospect.

John and his reps each manage to do 4 demos a day, but they have to demo 3x on average per prospect because every member of the buying panel wants to see the demo before making a purchasing decision.

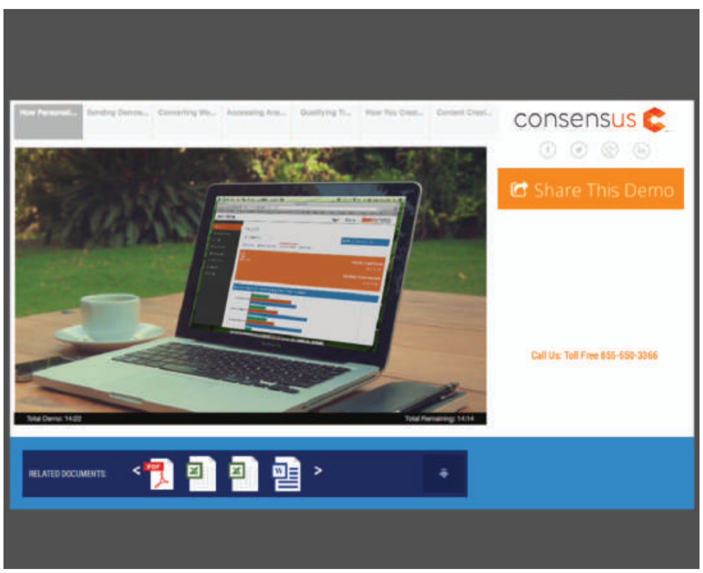
Given these constraints, John and his team can handle a caseload of just 28 prospects per day per rep.

John is spending too much time demoing and not enough time closing. As a result the sales cycle is too long.

Let's take a look at how John's life is WITH Consensus. John gets a lead from someone named Sarah from the website. John calls Sarah and asks for an appointment to discuss her interest. They set an appointment for a few days later on Friday. In the meantime John sends Sarah the demo and asks her to watch it before their appointment.

Sarah opens the demo and selects the topics that are most important to her.

Consensus' intelligent personalization engine configures the demo to her unique interests.



Consensus notifies John that Sarah started watching the product demo. John calls Sarah and reaches her at her desk, —in the moment when John's solution is at the forefront of her mind. John asks Sarah how she likes the demo. "I think it might be what we need" she says, "but I really need my manager, COO and another colleague to see it." "You can just share this demo with them," John suggests.

Sarah clicks the Share button and sends the demo to her team members. Consensus automatically shares the demo with them, and Consensus notifies John as soon as THEY watch the demo.

John still has his appointment coming up on Friday with Sarah, so he checks the demo analytics, what we call Demolytics™, to see how each member of the buying panel has interacted with the demo.

He is able to see who viewed the demo, who didn't view it, how much time they spent viewing it, and what was most important to them. With this intelligence, John positions his follow-up accordingly. His Friday phone call with Sarah, which is the first real conversation they've had, shifts from being a rote, general demo to a productive conversation that's focused on pertinent questions, drilling down on specifics, and closing interactions.

In this scenario, demo automation reduces the time required for each appointment from 45 minutes to 25 minutes, allowing John to have twice as many 'demo' conversations in a day; but instead of demos, they are nurturing and closing conversations. Because Sarah already shared the demo with several of the members of the extended buying panel, John needs one less appointment per prospect on average. Combining these efficiencies, John is now able to handle a caseload of 84 prospects instead of 28. That's a 3X increase in sales productivity!

Consensus allows you to scale your sales impact. We help you spend less time demoing and more time closing so you can shorten the sales cycle.

Not only that, but John can check aggregate data from our proprietary Demolytics system to see what might be trending across all of his prospects.

How Much More Could You Sell?

If your sales reps were having more closing conversations and fewer repetitive product education discussions, how many more deals could each rep close? This simple ROI calculator gives you an example of how the ROI might look for a company that has fifteen sales reps, even if they have a very small deal size. Of course, the ROI can increase dramatically with larger deal sizes and more reps.

Demo Automation ROI Calculator

Assumptions	
# of Sales Reps	15
Deal Size APR	$730
# of Deals Close per Rep each Quarter	75
Additional Deals per Rep Using Demo Automation	2
Cost of Demo Automation Software	$18,600
Projected Return on Investment (ROI)	**$69,000**

	With Demo Automation	Without Demo Automation	Difference
# Deals per Quarter	1125	1155	**30**
Revenue per Quarter	$821,250	$843.150	**$21,900**
# Deals per Year	4500	4620	**120**
Revenue per Year	$3,285,000	$3,372,600	**$87,600**

Conclusion

Intelligent Demo Automation does not replace sales reps, but it does make them more efficient and more effective. Implementing Intelligent Demo Automation in your sales process automatically converts product education conversations into closing conversations.