Reprise

Presales Guide to

Showcasing Product Value Throughout the Enterprise Sales Cycle

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Introduction

For presales teams, it can be easy to get lost in the technical aspects of a product, rather than focusing on what's most valuable for the prospect. In reality, showcasing product value through storytelling can engage buyers more effectively and make a demo more memorable. This process can happen at any stage of the enterprise sales cycle, not just on the first call with a prospect.

In this eBook, we will cover tips and tricks for how to incorporate effective storytelling throughout every phase of your prospect's buying process, including how to:

- Establish an effective AE/SE collaboration
- Leverage product prequalification and discovery to improve demo storytelling
- Create a library of relevant customer stories that map to specific features
- Multi-thread deals with post-demo follow up
- And more

Building the ultimate AE/SE collaboration

A solid partnership between sales and presales is instrumental to success with a high-value prospect. Here are a few tips on how to practice effective team selling:

- **Align AEs and SEs in advance of the discovery meeting.** Even a quick call enables the team to ask the right questions of prospects, and ultimately deliver the most effective demo.
- **Send discovery results ASAP to SEs.** When AEs deliver prompt discovery results to SEs, they can more effectively prepare for the technical demo. Too often this step is left until the last minute, which isn't ideal since many SEs split their time supporting multiple reps or teams.
- **Review your strategy before a prospect demo.** Have a call pre-demo with relevant sales and presales team members to review your value-based sales strategy instead of simply asking, "What will we show in the demo?" Many teams like to use these meetings to determine roles (e.g. deciding when an AE will interject or add flavor so an SE isn't thrown off course during the demo.)
- **Debrief after the demo** to align on roles and responsibilities in the final stages of the deal.

Practical tips: Storytelling at each stage of the enterprise sales cycle

Telling the right story at each stage of your enterprise sales process has the power to persuade prospects and make your product stand out in a competitive field. What's more, pairing stories with an impressive demo can help your team show how a specific feature or product attribute met the needs of a customer with similar pain points. Here are some practical ways to incorporate storytelling at each deal stage.

Qualification and discovery

Inbound leads come to your website with purchase intent. Many want to self-qualify, yet find themselves frustrated with product experiences like free trials and freemium models. According to Gartner, uncertainty in navigating the decision process leads to a 30% decline in customers' ability to reach a purchase decision at all, and a 42% reduction in the likelihood of their purchasing a premium product.

Some of the downsides of a freemium-style model include:

1. **Complex enterprise products don't always translate well into freemium models.** A whopping 90% of customers believe the companies they buy from "could do better" when it comes to onboarding new users. After the onboarding process, customers still need to be guided through "aha" moments throughout the product experience, which they may miss if they're left to their own devices.

2. **Freemium experiences are difficult to maintain.** Upgrading and maintaining both free and paid products on the same release cycle can be a huge challenge for product teams. That means freemium customers often don't experience the latest features on the same timeline as paid customers.

3. **There are no natural conversion points.** For premium enterprise products, customers likely have their own definition of product value. Without knowing what customers find valuable, it's hard to direct them to the right part of the product experience that gets them to convert or explore further. In the absence of natural conversion points, self-discovery leaves many companies with disappointing results.

As an alternative to free trials, interactive demos are a great solution for guided self-discovery. An interactive demo allows a prospect to see your product story for themselves, while enabling your team to design the ideal demo. The goal is to lead customers directly to "wow" moments faster. As a result, prospects will be more open to discussing specifics about their pain points in the discovery process or next call. Embedding interactive, guided demos can also drive engagement and conversions on your website, by showing customers how your product solves specific problems.

Ultimately, your sales team can have better conversations with more qualified prospects when they've already seen key parts of your product. Using demo analytics, a sales rep can better understand the prospect's areas of interest, or parts of the demo the prospect may have skipped. In addition, interactive demos can help BDRs and SDRs further qualify leads, even if they're not equipped to have deep product conversations. Guided product tours and interactive demos as leave-behinds can generate interest to warm up leads, preparing them for the next level of engagement.

Outbound leads

Discovery

Rather than peppering a lead with questions, discovery can be a great opportunity to tie prospecting to a specific customer story. Creating persona segments aligned with customer stories is one effective way to organize this information so it's at the sales team's fingertips during discovery. Including examples before a question, such as, "Company X we work with had this problem, do you see something similar?" shows the prospect that you already work with companies in similar industries, or with similar pain points. Not to mention, examples can inspire a prospect to open up about issues they may share in common with their peers.

By prepping with AEs with these examples in advance, presales teams can empower AEs to run more fruitful discovery calls. The goal of this prep is to help them uncover the information that's needed for the best first-call demo.

First touch and technical demo

Prep

Creating a demo library based on real customer stories is a great way for presales teams to prep AEs for the first call. This demo library can serve as a sales enablement and training tool. Ideally, you'd align customer stories to specific verticals or pain points. Customer stories don't have to be presented as full case studies if you don't have them. You can target micro-demos toward features that meet a specific pain point or solve a certain type of prospect's problem.

Once your demo library is in place, practice these customer stories across both the sales and presales team so they become first hand knowledge. If necessary, speak with the reps who closed each deal to build out more effective, detail-oriented stories.

7 discovery questions that can expose prospect pain points

1. How is your team structured?
2. Can you tell me more about your existing technologies or processes?
3. What do you love about your current solution?
4. What would you change about your current solution if you could?
5. What is the root cause of your challenge/pain point? How is it affecting your business?
6. What would you lose by not adopting a new solution?
7. What would your world look like if your pain point did not exist anymore?

Use the information from discovery calls to quantify value in demos. An example statement to insert into your demo might be, "You told us before you are wasting 15 hours a week — that's 60 hours a month we will save you by doing x with our product."

Demo

Presales prep and enablement should empower AE to run first call demos solo. AEs and SEs ultimately have different skillsets, so should naturally gravitate toward different demo styles. An AE demo should get people excited. This demo is typically focused on features and storytelling, based on discovery.

SEs are often charged with securing the technical win. Once the prospect is interested in purchasing, they can align the product's features with a technical audience's pain points or problems. To set SEs up for success, bring technical people into the room (such as end users, people responsible for implementation, security, and more.) It's important to know what their day looks like and how your product fits. Rather than firing off a list of features, ask questions to engage the prospect. The goal is for the prospect to see themselves in the story you are telling.

Regardless of who is delivering the demo, technical messaging needs to be grounded in value. Does your solution fit into their environment? How will it make life easier? Express value even if it is a technical message you are delivering. Above all, it's critical to tailor your demo to your specific audience. Demo what prospects want to see vs. what you want to show.

When prospects want to go off-script during a demo

Keeping your demo flow flexible and your demo environment clean is essential. All too often, a messy demo environment can lead to unnecessary screenshots or even private customer data being exposed. Choosing a demo platform that's divorced from your product's backend can avoid some of the common failures that come with demoing from a live production environment.

Post-demo: debrief and follow up

The best way to make follow-up more effective is to listen to the "game tapes." Leverage conversation intelligence to understand how calls went and what can be improved in the future. In addition, debriefing with both the presales and sales team can ensure that all questions are covered in the follow-up process. Tag-team with AEs and SEs depending on the response's level of technical detail.

During follow-up, be sure to re-emphasize key points from your initial storytelling. People tend to retain and make decisions based on what's most recent in their memory. Even though it may sound redundant, resurface any key information or customer stories that can help you seal the deal.

Multi-threading and empowering champions

Buying committees are increasingly common. As a result, it's become even more important to empower your champions to advocate internally for your product among a field of alternatives. Instead of standing the standard, static PDF describing your product, personalizing an interactive demo as a leave-behind can better showcase product value and enable champions to to sell internally.

Your interactive demo leave-behinds can showcase features relevant to the pain points you previously discussed with your prospect. In the final stages of a deal, it's often best to limit the number of features to those that exhibit the most value for the prospect.

Whenever possible, use industry-specific customer logos and stories as social proof for committee decision-making. Use stories that go deep on certain pain points, or solve the right problems for the customer and you'll close that deal in no time.

The power of an interactive demo platform

The right interactive demo can showcase product value throughout the enterprise sales cycle. The great news is you can leverage one platform, like Reprise, for every deal stage. Here's how.

Prequalification

Quickly develop interactive product tours to use on your website or in marketing materials. Rather than using a free trial or freemium product, a guided demo can help prospects discover "aha" moments faster.

Prep/enablement

Leverage presales skills to build demo libraries. Showcase certain features that map to customer pain points or verticals. Use these demos for sales enablement and training, or as a baseline template to customize a live demo.

Live demo

Create a golden demo template to accelerate time to live demo creation for both sales and presales demo users. Your live demo should be:

Infinitely customizable
Easy-to-customize with find and replace, simple editing and anonymization of customer data.

Repeatable
Save time on demo creation, instead of reinventing the wheel in a roduction sandbox environment.

Extensible
Leverage plugins and integrations to add custom features and functionality to demos.

Reliable
Avoid common demo failures with a highly available, reliable platform that's divorced from your product's backend.

Data-driven
Tap into analytics from interactive product tours to inform changes to demo templates.

Secure
Choose a solution that cares about security with SOC 2 Type 2 compliance and enterprise security features like role-based access control.

Multi-threading/closing

Leverage same interactive demo functionality used for prequalification to create a customized demo leave-behind.

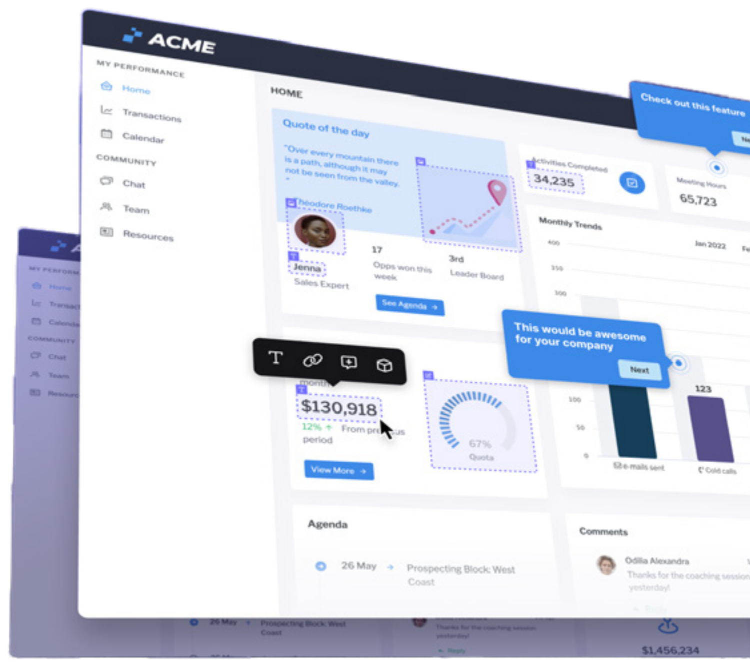
Showcasing product value with storytelling

When presales and sales teams work together in an effective partnership, it's much easier to create a cohesive story that demonstrates value and closes deals. Demos are the common thread that enables effective storytelling. They can be used throughout the enterprise sales cycle to support a value-based selling partnership between AEs and SEs.

Instead of relying on an unstable production environment to run demos, a demo creation platform can reduce time and toil for SEs when it comes to building and maintaining a demo environment. Using these solutions unlocks more time for your SEs to serve as active collaborators — enabling AEs, engaging technical buyers, and ultimately accelerating the sales cycle.

Demo creation in channel sales

Channel sales or partnership teams can apply a similar demo creation process to maximize success. Demo assets like customizable templates, leave-behinds, and guided product tours are essential enablement tools to arm your channel sales team to sell on your behalf.



Discover how the right demo creation platform can accelerate your deals.

Get a demo of Reprise

Reprise