



Industry Leaders Join Forces To Radically Redefine The Sales Effectiveness Market

InfoMentis Joins the DealMaker® Partner Network

Joining Forces with Industry Leaders to Raise the Standard for Sales Performance Automation and Effectiveness

ATLANTA – September 29, 2009 - [InfoMentis, Inc.](#), the global leader in revenue through collaboration announced today their role as a founding Solution Partner in the DealMaker Partner Network (DPN). The DPN is an industry initiative to dramatically improve the benefit customers gain from their sales effectiveness investments. By using the best-in-class sales methodology, process and skills from the DPN Solution Partners InfoMentis, [Huthwaite](#), [Think! Inc.](#) and [The TAS Group](#), customers will have access to a comprehensive range of solutions, all delivered through the DealMaker Sales Performance Automation platform.

“The forecast is still a mystery. Sales manager’s burn countless hours with sales teams validating opportunities before committing to a number,” said Wendy Reed, CEO of InfoMentis. “The DealMaker platform takes the mystery out of forecasting by shifting deal inspection from sales management to the sales rep, requiring them to address sales methodology questions at the point of data entry. This is imperative as it ensures adoption, allowing sales management to coach, mentor and effectively strategize with reps on how to win key opportunities. And this is only one example of how the DPN will radically advance sales effectiveness.”

DealMaker is the premier sales performance automation solution, integrated with CRM, which combines proven sales methodology and processes with effective, on-demand sales training. As a founding Solution Partner for the DPN, InfoMentis offers new and existing clients the ability to leverage DealMaker, which is already in use by more than 15,000 sales professionals worldwide.

“Traditionally, adoption of sales best practices has required an enormous amount of management effort and discipline,” said Steve Maul, Chief Learning and Strategy Officer for InfoMentis. “The DealMaker platform addresses these issues head on by tightly integrating training and learning with sales execution”.

“We are excited to have InfoMentis, a highly respected performance improvement company, as a founding member of the DealMaker Partner Network. The Solution Partners are industry thought leaders and represent an unprecedented commitment to collaboration. Together we have just raised the bar for achieving sales effectiveness,” said Donal Daly, Chief Executive Officer of The TAS Group.

“A fresh model for driving sales effectiveness by automating proven ‘best of’ sales process, methodology and skills on one technology platform. This will significantly improve the productivity, performance and predictability of the B2B sales professionals,” said Joe Galvin, Vice President for [SiriusDecisions](#), the world’s leading source of sales and marketing best-practice research and data. “Process drives productivity and technology powers the process – combining both represents a new wave of sales performance automation.”

About InfoMentis

InfoMentis is a global training, consulting and performance improvement company providing configurable programs to help clients attract and retain customers. InfoMentis’ configurable courseware, e-Learning modules, web-based and on-premise instructor-led training, consulting, services and collaborative productivity tools are designed to be adapted for role-based behavioral change for anyone in marketing, sales, services, support and management that have contact with their customers and prospects throughout the entire customer lifecycle.

Headquartered in Alpharetta, Georgia, InfoMentis has helped industry leaders around the world understand and embrace the value of determining predictable revenue streams. Founded in 1996, InfoMentis has provided performance improvement strategy, consulting and coaching in 66 countries on six continents.

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InfoMentis Webinar: Sales Innovation Creates Competitive Advantage

Sales 2.0 is the successful blend of a collaborative sales process with enabling technologies to better align all parties involved in the buying process. For many organizations that are in the process of migrating from Sales 1.0 to Sales 2.0, this is a fundamental shift from selling solutions to customers to collaborating with customers to help them achieve business value from their solutions.

Join us on **Tuesday, October 27, 2009 at 3:30pm (EDT)** for **Sales Innovation Creates Competitive Advantage**. During this webinar, a panel of industry leaders will engage in a discussion about Sales 2.0 — which will provide you with insight and understanding on:

- **How the model is changing** from traditional sales to Sales 2.0 practices
- **What steps Oracle, a pioneer in Sales 2.0** took to implement and drive on-going adoption of Sales 2.0 practices successfully and profitably
- **A framework for implementing Sales 2.0** - along with some examples of what can go wrong and why; as well as how to avoid common pitfalls

[Register for Sales Innovation Creates Competitive Advantage](#)

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Inside Sales Enablement: Let Them Drink Coffee

Would you like to learn how Best-in-Class sales organizations achieve their numbers through the most effective use of their Inside Sales Teams?

By participating in this brief [survey](#), you will be able to see how your experiences in inside sales enablement compare with those of your peers, benchmark your performance, and see how you can achieve Best-in-Class results.

[Aberdeen Group](#), in partnership with [InfoMentis](#) is conducting a survey that will help companies such as yours determine the Best-in-Class procedures for managing Inside Sales organizations. The resulting report will provide companies with a roadmap for leveraging best practices in selecting and managing enabling technologies and services, as evidenced by the most effective technologies and services across a variety of geographies and industry verticals. Your participation is a vital part of the report development, and serves as the foundation of Aberdeen's research. If your company is planning on implementing a sales training solution, or is simply evaluating the potential benefits, we would appreciate your feedback in this brief, [10-minute survey](#).

In appreciation for sharing your time and thoughts with us, we will provide complimentary access for you to the full benchmark report as soon as it is published (a \$399 value).

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Mindshare Minutes - Investing In Your Success

InfoMentis Mindshare Minutes - Web-Based Instructor-Led Training - Open Sessions

As the need for training increases and travel budgets decrease, InfoMentis is pleased to announce the launch of Mindshare Minutes, 90-Minute Web-Based Instructor Led Training Sessions. Web-Based Instructor Led Training is an Innovative and cost effective vehicle for delivering instructor led content - over the web. Packaged into easily digestible modules, it maintains the same standards as on-premise training.

[Review List of Open Sessions](#)

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Message From InfoMentis' CEO

While CRM systems continue to have a positive impact on sales efficiency (e.g. storage contact data, organizing sales information), they still allow sales reps to enter un-inspected data about each opportunity. This causes sales managers to spend an inordinate amount of time on inspecting, validating and testing opportunity information during reviews and forecast calls, leaving little time for high-value activities such as coaching their reps on a strategy to win. This sales effectiveness gap – between sales managers, the rep and CRM data - many times leads to unpredictable forecasts.

The Dealmaker Partner Network is an industry initiative established to leverage the best-in-class sales methodology, process and skills from each of the Solution Partners, InfoMentis, Huthwaite, Think! Inc. and The TAS Groups customers will have access to a comprehensive, integrated range of solutions, all delivered through the Dealmaker Sales Performance Automation platform (Dealmaker).

The Dealmaker Partner Network is in response to a compelling need in the marketplace, the demand for a higher level of sustained return on investment in sales effectiveness solutions. Currently integrated with Salesforce.com, Oracle CRM On-Demand, and Microsoft Dynamics CRM 4.0, the Dealmaker platform is highly complementary to your current SFA/CRM ensuring inspection is based on the best in class sales methodology.

I look forward to working with each you on a truly impressive solution.

Regards,
Wendy Reed
CEO, InfoMentis, Inc.

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Sleeping With The Enemy ... When Competitors Partner

Sleeping with the enemy—sounds a little mysterious, maybe exciting, dangerous, perhaps edgy? Absolutely! What is business anyway?" Predictable? Boring? Safe? Conservative? I don't know about you, but I haven't seen a business described like that in quite some time. Times are changing—which would explain the call I recently received from a very good friend of mine. I had to laugh when the first words out of her mouth were, "OMG Wendy, WHY ARE YOU SLEEPING WITH THE ENEMY?!" As this humorous, yet honest question rang through my head, I thought there are probably many people, like you thinking the same thing since the news about the newly formed DealMaker Partner Network hit the wire.

Sleeping with the enemy, something new? I hardly think so. As you look across the business community and take note as to what executives are sitting on what board or investing in a competitors companies to create competition or who's buying who or even who is now partner with who this week—you will find that sleeping with the enemy is a common occurrence.

Perhaps in the sales training space it may be considered a new phenomenon, but why is that? As industry leaders, I would think that our primary interest would be to solve the ever elusive promise of sales effectiveness. To my knowledge, in nearly 14 years of being in this space, I have yet to see a long term sustainable solution to sales effectiveness. AND ... There is no one vendor that can provide all the answers. So, let take a look at the two fundamental issues that need to be solved.

1. The massive human element of change management that is required to sustain sales training behaviors.
2. The breadth of sales procedures, skills and tools necessary to be an effective sales person or team.

Everyone in the sales training space has part of the answer, but no one has the total answer to achieving sales effectiveness. SO, WHO IS THE ENEMY? I would say that the enemy is:

- Anybody that is not interested in helping clients achieve long term sale effectiveness.
- Anybody who is comfortable with complacency.
- Drive by trainers that force clients figure out how to make training work while they move on to the next victim.

So am I sleeping with the enemy? I don't think so. However, I am fending off the enemy of complacency. I have finally found people in the sales training space that are like me, interested in the success of their clients, taking risks and making a difference. In what has always been labeled a fragmented space—it will require partners who are specialists to unite in a formal way in order to drive change in our industry and deliver on the elusive promise of sales effectiveness.

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Debating Sales Operations Distribution

Students of American history are well aware of the debate that raged for many years between Alexander Hamilton (who advocated a powerful central government) and Thomas Jefferson (who believed in decentralization with strong regional authority). Though the debate still endures today, U.S. lawmakers as a whole have settled on something of a middle ground, where responsibility for a wide variety of tasks is diffused between state and federal authorities.

The b-to-b sales operations function compares well to such a scenario; as its responsibilities expand, debate occurs around to what degree those responsibilities should be centralized or diffused. In this brief, we will examine the evolution of sales operations, share considerations for allocation of resources between corporate and regional responsibilities, and discuss how operations budgets change as organizations grow.

Operations To Date

Desired/projected growth rates will dictate when sales operations-related functions become sufficiently affordable to offload responsibilities from field sales managers to a dedicated resource, while the complexity of how sales engages with clients and prospects influences the depth and type of support they need. As non-quota bearing headcount, sales operations resources are subject to intense financial scrutiny; without direct revenue contribution, its leaders must be able to justify productivity impact.

In our Mission Critical report titled "Sales Operations: The Backbone of Sales Productivity," we discussed how the general charter for the function has expanded from pure administration (measuring sales) to enablement and readiness (facilitating the process of selling). As organizations grow, they follow a similar trajectory toward this more comprehensive state. Centralizing sales operations functions carries benefits including cost control, greater resource leverage and process standardization. The drawbacks can include a lack of flexibility, speed and adaptation to local market conditions and needs. Decentralized sales operations provide maximum flexibility, allowing each local leader to direct resources to where they feel the most pain. However, this is accomplished at the cost of resource redundancy, multiple reinventions of the wheel and little consistency between regions, indirectly leading to a highly autonomous sales organization. With these countervailing forces in mind, it is our belief that the best way to approach sales operations is not embracing an either/or scenario, but rather breaking the function down into its natural components and discussing the virtues - and vices - of centralizing or decentralizing each component.

The Operations of Operations

We have parsed sales operations into five core areas of responsibility; each of these areas is different in terms of the degree to which they should be centralized or decentralized. These areas include:

- Sales technology (centralized 80-100 percent; decentralized 0-20 percent). Core sales systems such as CRM, sales force automation (SFA), sales information portals and sales productivity applications are all best centralized within a common infrastructure that integrates with marketing's technological backbone. The ability to effectively route leads from a marketing automation system into SFA demands both process and technology integration, the latter of which will require a close relationship with the corporate IT function. In organizations that prefer to operate more autonomously, local/rogue (and mainly software-as-a-service-based) versions of SFA applications allow adaptation to highly local requirements.
- Sales readiness (centralized 80-100 percent; decentralized 0-20 percent). The level of coordination with marketing (e.g. field, product, communications) required to ready the sales force in terms of next-generation demand creation and ongoing enablement/knowledge is significant. This coordination is best achieved when there is a central presence/function for marketing to work with on a day-to-day basis. Readiness resources share strategic initiatives and provide field requirements to marketing for lead definition(s), campaigns, content/collateral, product launches and access to a variety of knowledge resources. Communications out to sales is also better managed centrally, while program execution and field feedback gathering is best managed at the local level to ensure compliance and authenticity.
- Sales training (centralized 70-100 percent; decentralized 0-30 percent). Core sales training functions and curricula such as new hire onboarding, core sales processes and standard sales skills are best developed centrally to maintain consistency and leverage resources. High-quality content that is delivered by professional trainers greatly improve the learning environment and help to ensure that lessons learned in training are carried into the field. What's more, with the advent of virtual training and on-demand skills enhancement, the cost benefits of centralization in this category generally have increased. Localized sales training is usually more tactical in nature, adapting and applying the core curriculum to the realities of a specific region or vertical market.
- Sales planning and analytics (centralized 50 percent; decentralized 50 percent). With planning and analytics, the key mantra is that strategies should be developed centrally and implemented locally. The strategic coverage model, expense allocation, metrics, compensation plans and quota-setting strategy originate from a central resource and are forwarded to the regions for localized adjustments. Corporate-level reporting on expense-versus-revenue results is centralized and shared appropriately through the sales hierarchy. Local reporting on less structured metrics such as opportunities, forecast/pipeline, activity and productivity improves consistency, currency and accuracy. The ability of sales automation systems to capture and analyze sales data reduces the need for local sales force accounting resources to manage the data. Systems capabilities for territory management, compensation management and sales analytics also can speed the process.
- Sales programs/sales support (centralized 30-60 percent; decentralized 40-70 percent). Sales programs tend to be more localized due to the need to adapt to local market dynamics and customers. These programs will ideally be created centrally in concert with marketing, then implemented locally. Broad demand creation initiatives, executive briefing centers and RFP/RFI response teams are typically deployed centrally due to leverage concerns, while live events, specialized demos, product rollouts, customer events and other client-specific activities are best executed locally.

Operational Waves

An analysis of our sales operations benchmark data shows that as companies grow, their investment in the functions grows until the scale and maturity of platforms, programs and processes allows the investment to begin to tail off as a percentage of revenue. Growth also drives increased affordability of local resources, which opens up the discussion around the possibility of greater decentralization. The breakdown of sales operations spend by company

size follows:

- Band one (\$0-\$100 million). Companies initially invest in the sales operations function to offload responsibilities from the vice president of sales and/or field managers. Early tasks are skewed toward managing expense and opportunity data as well as development of the SFA tool; as such, the lion's share of spend occurs here. Sales training - typically in the areas of new hire and sales methodology in specific - tends to focus on standardizing processes in core areas.
- Band two (\$101 million-\$500 million). After our first break point of \$100 million in annual revenues, sales operations spend increases, extracting greater centralization benefits and further offloading duties from field management that is expected to focus on driving deals. With a foundation in place, sales planning and analytics begins to migrate back to the region while technology remains centralized. Incremental investments as a whole target sales training, necessary to support a larger sales population and the beginnings of a sales readiness function in line with the expansion of marketing. Larger companies also tend to broaden their product footprint, further building the need for marketing integration.
- Band three (\$501 million-\$1 billion). Companies begin to reach the point of critical mass where decentralization begins. Sales planning and analytics is the first component to separate as each region takes on responsibilities for their unique metrics while still utilizing the standards at a corporate level. Sales training assets may reside in the region, but they likely still report and roll up to a central function. Sales programs take direction from corporate, but are heavily weighted toward the needs of the region.
- Band four (\$1 billion or greater). Larger companies see the strategic importance of all functions and reap the benefits of scale, resulting in a lower expense-to-revenue ratio. However, some of that cost is pushed back to regions as they take responsibility for the localization of programs and readiness initiatives. Globalization plays a major factor as well with cultural and local language considerations that must be addressed.

The Sirius Decision

Optimizing the impact of sales operations on performance begins with a benchmark assessment of responsibilities, costs and resources, and whether they are aligned with sales strategy. With this in hand, decisions can be made as to where the best place - or places - that responsibility for individual tasks should sit. In the end, operations leaders must seek the proper balance based on the requirements of sales leadership, the sales coverage model, go-to-market strategy and expense structure.

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Measuring Success - An After Thought

In a research brief by [SiriusDecisions](#), they stated that "Measuring sales is easy; it's measuring selling that presents a challenge." With few tools available that truly measure selling, we often resort to measuring success after an opportunity is decided versus measuring it along the way when action can be taken.

As you are aware, selling is becoming increasingly difficult, and customers are demanding more and more from salespeople. Furthermore, research shows that one of the main reasons customers don't buy is because they do not think those selling to them really understand their business.

If asked, how would you rate your sales teams understanding of a potential customer's business? More importantly, how would your potential customer rate your sales team?

Your sales team's ability to understand and articulate your customer's business will be what helps them reduce time to close, improve win rates and ultimately achieve more predictable revenue.

Today's complex sales environment requires sales leaders to focus more closely on the act of selling rather than the end result. But first you must define sales productivity as something more than the measurement of revenue – this requires you to have a clear understanding of what it takes for your sales professionals to identify, execute and close an opportunity.

While knowledge, skills and process are critical to any sales opportunity, improving sales productivity and measuring success throughout the process can only take place when your sales professionals have been armed with the tools necessary to improve their customer-facing effectiveness and execution efficiency. Sales productivity tools can help you and your team:

- Demonstrate your understanding of your customer's business
- Show linkage between your products and/or services and the customer's business goals and issues
- Gain insight to the "health" and status of your opportunities
- Strengthen your customer relationship and elevate your status to trusted advisor

Remember, sales productivity requires focus. If you're truly committed to improving sales productivity, you must measure the health and fitness of your opportunities along the way, so you can take action to ensure success versus measuring

success after all is done.

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