



DRIVING SALES AND CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT WITH REVENUE OPERATIONS & INTELLIGENCE IN B2B



Q-and-A

Featuring Forrester
Principal Analyst,
Seth Marrs

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Zilliant recently hosted a webinar featuring guest speaker Seth Marrs entitled, “Driving Sales & Customer Engagement with Revenue Operations & Intelligence.” Below is an extended Q-and-A with Seth based on the webinar where he answers key questions related to applying this solution in high-velocity B2B companies.

Zilliant: *What are the biggest challenges facing sales teams in hitting their growth and revenue targets?*

Seth Marrs:

I see two major challenges.

- Finding an efficient way to identify qualified net new, cross-sell and up sell opportunities for sellers to pursue. Sellers spend too much time trying to find these deals. There are more efficient channels to identify high potential opportunities like analyzing purchasing data along with account buying patterns and pursuing areas where there is value.
- Getting insights in front of sellers that are specific, actionable and digestible and being able to track if incremental revenue resulted from those actions.

Zilliant: *What data sets make sense for Revenue Operations & Intelligence in B2B, particularly high velocity businesses such as distribution?*

Seth Marrs:

- **Human interactions:** Examples would be emails, meetings, and phone calls.
- **Non-Human interactions:** Examples would be website visits, web searches, etc.
- **Fidelity of interactions:** This is all the data within each in person or digital interaction, like transcripts and full email conversations, along with transaction data like purchasing history, content utilization and customer product engagement.

High velocity businesses have a much higher volume of data so can better leverage this type of information to predict actions that increase future opportunities. Additionally, high velocity businesses can benefit from leveraging customer master, product master and order/invoice history data. These data sets can be used by applying data science to derive profiles of ideal customers and match those profiles to existing and prospective customers. This reveals areas for sales reps to pursue in recovering lost purchase volume, growing wallet share, winning back lost business, and identifying ideal products to sell whitespace or prospect accounts.

Other data sets – excess or stockout products, target product substitutions, and contract and volume agreements – can also be used to derive account-specific actions that grow revenue. These data sets can pinpoint which customers are best suited to purchase products in the case of supply chain disruption as well as flag when customers are not meeting contracted volume agreements.

Zilliant: *Which Revenue Operations & Intelligence use cases are most relevant in these businesses?*

Seth Marrs:

- **Share of Wallet Optimization:** Identify an account’s share of wallet and create opportunities to sell those products they need but have not purchased yet.
- **Cross Customer Optimization:** Identify potential opportunity in under-penetrated accounts.

- **New Customer Targeting:** Use the profile of current key customers' buying patterns to identify like customers not doing business with your organization, and which products they likely need.
- **Consumption Optimization:** Monitor consumption to identify and proactively intervene when patterns change.

Zilliant: *Which cross-functional teams should have a seat at the table when deploying Revenue Operations & Intelligence? How can they best collaborate?*

Seth Marrs:

We define revenue teams as sales, marketing and customer success. 90% of the companies we surveyed said they had a revenue operations structure. These are the parts of the organization that interact with customers, so will determine the success or failure of revenue initiatives. Revenue operations and intelligence tools also include support teams like finance, legal and operations to help ensure what they sold can be delivered in a compliant manner.

There are various forms of revenue alignment from virtually aligned to centrally aligned into one function. Several years ago, teams were largely virtually aligned but have now moved into more centralized alignment. In 2019, 40% of companies we surveyed said they were virtually aligned and 15% centralized. This flipped in our 2021 survey to where 40% were centralized and 22% virtually aligned.

Best way to collaborate is to integrate based on how the buyer wants to buy. Companies can then use the resources available in their revenue teams to build an optimized experience that leads to increased sales.

Zilliant: *How can Revenue Operations & Intelligence be applied with consistency across all sales channels? How should company leaders consider integration in its commercial systems?*

Seth Marrs:

Apply Revenue Operations & Intelligence consistently by:

- Eliminating seller input of interactions. This increases accuracy and removes admin work for the seller that can be redirected to sales programs.
- Integrate marketing and sales data and align that information at the opportunity level so everyone is working on the same set of insights. This also allows companies to look at patterns in deal execution which will help identify next best actions for future sales.
- Make use of transaction data as a key data source. This is typically the cleanest source of data in a business and holds a wealth of insight.
- Create a go to market where human and non-human interactions are aligned and coordinated in a way that they can be aligned across the entire buying cycle.
- Consider both in-person and digital channels and ensure that a consistent, tailored experience is presented to customers. For example, product recommendations offered by sales teams should match the products that customers see in self-service digital channels while keeping the recommendations specific to each account.

Commercial systems store the information needed to align sales performance to results. They are required to enable the data needed to identify high quality sales opportunities.