



FROM STRATEGY TO EXECUTION:

# Accelerating Sales Growth

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The executive team at SunGard recently faced the challenge of transforming the sales force to create a sustainable growth engine. This involved two steps. The first was to formulate a new approach to selling (branded internally as “Selling the SunGard Way”). The second was to create a culture to support the new approach, which included partnering with various vendors to introduce new tools and technologies that would help the sales team and the organization as a whole.

This report describes

- A) the SunGard way of selling,
- B) the sales-automation solutions deployed as part of the SunGard way of selling, and
- C) initial early results of the sales transformation.

Wherever possible, tips for success and best practices have been outlined for other sales leaders hoping to embark on a similar transformation journey.

## NEW TRENDS IN BUYER EXPECTATIONS

Buyers today have unique expectations. Customers, particularly global businesses with various cultural, regional, and regulatory considerations, aren’t attracted by a one-size-fits-all mentality and instead want a customized approach.

Today, most buying decisions are being made at the top by discerning business executives, such as chief financial officers. Rather than spend time poring over copious online information, many high-level decision makers would prefer to rely on a knowledgeable supplier for solutions and insight. When dealing with these exceptionally knowledgeable stakeholders, sales professionals must demonstrate exceptional business savvy and communication skills. Consider also these three major trends:

1. There is growing pressure on businesses throughout the globe to get more accomplished with tightened budgets and fewer resources. In fact, 48 percent of IT executives feel their current budget is not adequate to meet business demands.
2. While pricing does play a part in the decision to purchase, the success of the sales process is becoming more vital. Research estimates show that 53 percent of the overall decision to buy new solutions is based on the efficacy of the sales experience. Customers do not expect suppliers to offer just singular products; instead, they want suppliers to provide holistic solutions that address pervasive business needs.
3. Many buyers prefer to consolidate suppliers; not only does this typically make software systems integration easier, but it can also help contain costs, as vendors are more likely to provide discounts when customers rely on them for more than one solution. Furthermore, customers who elect to partner with just one or two suppliers, as opposed to several, can save the time and guesswork involved in evaluating new vendors.



**Learn more about the SunGard Sales Transformation.**

[Watch this video](#)

featuring Senior VP, Sales and Marketing Operations, SunGard Financial Systems, Jim Neve.

## FINDING SOLUTIONS TO COMMON SALES CHALLENGES

SunGard identified three key challenges and developed the following solutions.

### **Challenge 1: Lack of bundled solutions.**

**Solution:** In the past, SunGard placed a strong emphasis on product up-sells or encouraging license renewals year after year. In 2012, nearly 50 percent of SunGard's total sales were attributed to add-ons or up-sells to existing customers; 20 percent were renewals. Of total sales, 30 percent stemmed from new business (defined as either a brand new client using a new product or an existing client using other SunGard products).

While this approach was fine for sustaining revenue, it detracted from the potential to grow new business. Currently, SunGard sales reps reach out to customers to try to understand the other challenges they may be facing and offer additional SunGard solutions that may help. In addition, a strong emphasis is being placed on the powerful, innovative nature of SunGard technology, rather than on individual services, in an effort to foster business development and create new opportunities where possible.

### **Challenge 2: A reactive sales force.**

**Solution:** Customers would often come to SunGard with individual problems that they wanted solved. The SunGard salesperson would then present the product offering that perfectly addressed this one-off business concern. A better method, and one SunGard employs currently, is to understand a customer's primary concern but at the same time create opportunities by addressing other related areas that need improving. This strategy enables SunGard to position itself as a strategic partner rather than merely a product provider.

### **Challenge 3: A reliance on brand recognition of its company name to attract prospects.**

**Solution:** SunGard committed to ensuring that its sales force provides to customers unmatched perspective, expertise, and a suite of superior solutions. Sales enablement professionals at SunGard began to shift the focus of the sales-support content and training agendas from SunGard and its offerings to the specific types of buyers sales teams would encounter and the realities those customers deal with on a daily basis.

Due in part to these factors, it is becoming less important for salespeople to know their products inside and out and more crucial that they have the skills and knowledge necessary to address customers' diverse business struggles in individualized ways. During a presentation, buyers expect to receive insight, and successful salespeople enter meetings armed with an in-depth understanding of the prospect's business challenges.

## THE ERA OF INSIGHT-BASED SELLING

The SunGard sales transformation was fueled by a desire to accelerate growth. One of the world's leading software and technology services companies, SunGard was formed in 1982 and grew through acquisition (the company has made more than 160 acquisitions since 1986). As a result, SunGard's go-to-market approach was fragmented. The company decided to embark on a fundamental sales transformation.

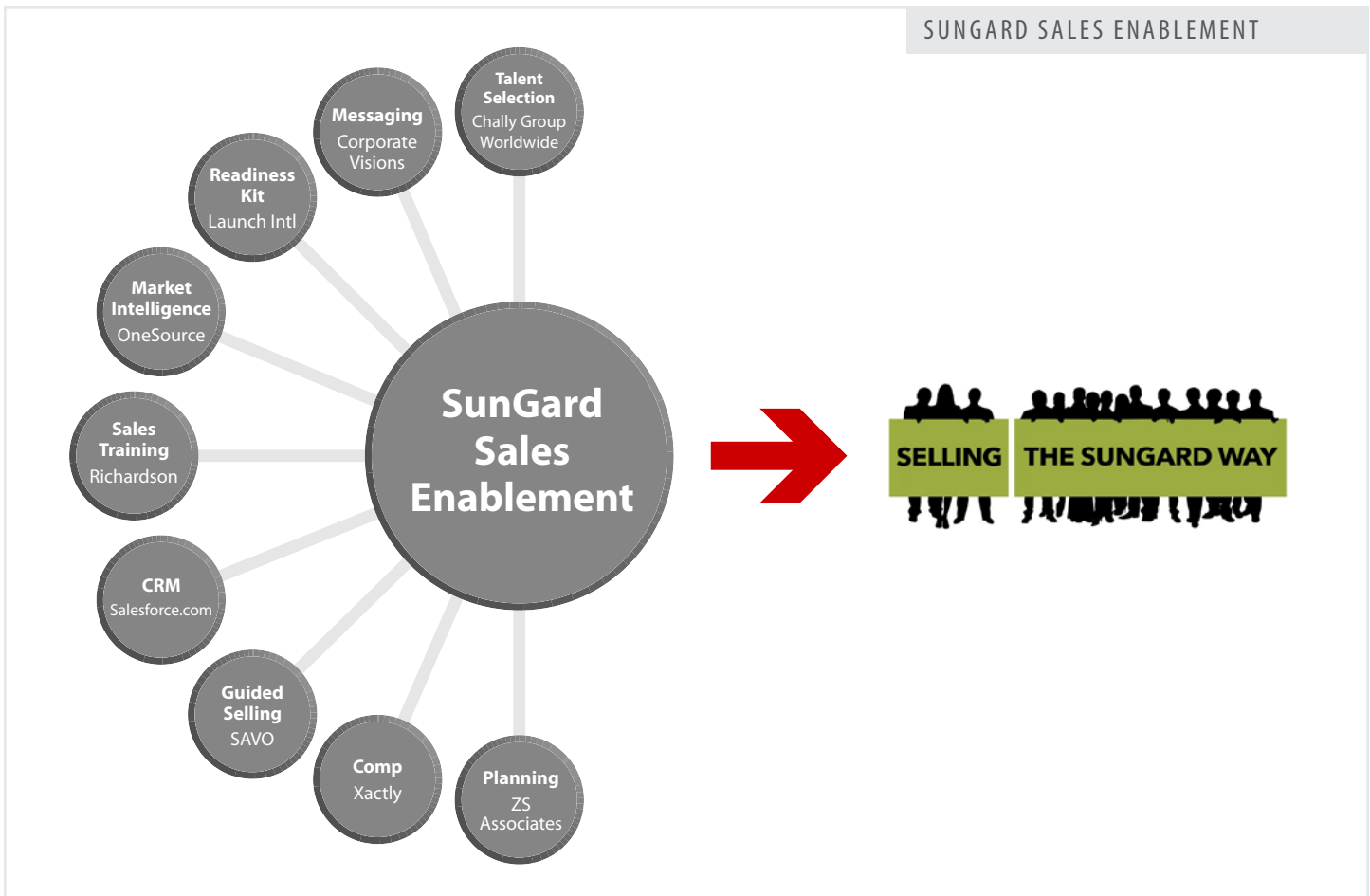
### **SunGard's transformation addressed the following key challenges:**

#### **Products and services were underleveraged.**

Although the company has thousands of consultants engaged in professional-services work, the SunGard sales team was focused almost exclusively on selling licensed software.

**The sales team worked in silos and lacked a collaborative culture.** Processes for sales reporting were inconsistent and unstructured. Multiple sales reps were paying visits to the same clients. Individual salespeople were focused on single products and missing opportunities to further relationships with existing customers.

**The sales team lacked consistent support and resources.** New sales reps were often allowed to start selling without first having a full understanding of their target market. Sales managers lacked visibility into the pipeline, as well as consistent, automated, and accurate reporting and metrics that could help them manage the team effectively and roll up more accurate sales forecasts.



### “SELLING THE SUNGARD WAY”

One of the biggest sources of competition suppliers face today is not other suppliers but a buyer’s decision not to act at all. In fact, Forrester research suggests that 65 percent of sales interactions end in no purchase. With budgets stretched thin, stakeholders need to be thoroughly convinced that there is a real business case for reinventing their processes or adopting new technology. For this reason, SunGard’s mission is to help buyers understand the benefits of enacting change and the repercussions of maintaining the status quo. To facilitate this understanding, SunGard poses three questions:

- Why should prospects change what they’re doing?
- Why change now?
- Why change to SunGard?



**Learn more about the SunGard Sales Transformation.**

[Watch this video](#)

featuring VP, Adaptive Sales, SunGard Capital Markets, John Needham.

To make its transformation a success, SunGard partnered with various vendors to improve in some major areas, including recruitment, onboarding, training, sales process, and sales compensation. Over a six-month span in 2012, SunGard was able to assemble a strategy, coordinate with a series of partners, and put plans into motion for a structured global launch of “Selling the SunGard Way.” The sales-technology applications blueprint illustrates how all solutions were integrated (and cross-integrated) with Salesforce. Here is a summary of the companies SunGard worked with and how their solutions worked in unison to transform the sales culture.

*“Every individual and every business unit and every group within [SunGard] had their own unique way of doing things. Now, with the SunGard Way of Selling, we are standardizing the message and the sales tools.”*

John Needham, Vice President, Adaptive Sales,  
SunGard Capital Markets

## INITIATING CHANGE AT YOUR COMPANY

For organizations that may consider following in the footsteps of SunGard’s reinvented sales strategy, here are some words of advice.

- 1) Be open to change. This isn’t always easy, particularly if a company has been doing things a certain way for many years. Gathering feedback from your sales representatives in the field is a good starting point.
- 2) Prioritize the project. A sales transformation is complex; pick your biggest priorities and lean into them accordingly. Don’t attempt to accomplish everything with your internal resources alone. Instead, bring in third-party sales and marketing partners who can provide a fresh perspective on your business operations and offer supporting methodologies and technology that will help you accomplish your goals.
- 3) Assemble a dedicated team to spearhead the initiative. This team should be charged with developing the change strategy, including how it will be executed and communicated to managers, employees, and other relevant stakeholders. Lastly, a common set of procedures, metrics, and processes need to be carefully developed. This step is key to having your change-management project go off without a hitch.

**Hiring and onboarding.** Currently, a major component of “Selling the SunGard Way” involves helping sales leaders hire better-suited candidates and develop stronger teams. **Chally Group Worldwide**, a global leadership and sales potential and performance measurement firm, helped SunGard develop assessment tools to help managers evaluate candidates and make better hiring decisions.

Managers also use the assessments as management tools to coach the team and develop talent. Direct reports now have a distinct picture of what is expected of them and how to go about attaining their goals. Sales leaders are becoming better coaches, and greater growth in the sales-opportunity pipeline is expected.

**Content assets and guided selling.** Strategy and services firm **Launch International** developed an interactive Sales Readiness Kit for SunGard. The kit, which was rolled out with a training video to drive adoption, contains a series of both buyer- and seller-facing content assets that follow a defined map of customer buying patterns. **SAVO** then helped automate the Sales Readiness Kit to make it available inside the Salesforce platform. Salespeople are now able to access such content as market data, case studies, presentations, and customer “leave-behind” assets (e.g., buyers’ guides and executive briefs) from a Salesforce opportunity record. The system automatically guides the rep to relevant materials based on such criteria as the buyer’s industry or pain points. This guided-selling approach helps save time that otherwise would be spent manually tracking down relevant content.

**Sales messaging.** In part by tapping relevant industry information and news provided by business-information provider **OneSource**, SunGard’s sales representatives have shifted their messaging and conversations to offer innovative solutions to both known and unanticipated challenges. In this respect, the sales force’s goal is to help the customer visualize the total risk of doing nothing (e.g., continuing with inefficiencies, wasteful spending, overstaffing, etc.) versus investing in a relationship with SunGard and overcoming these issues.



**Learn more about the SunGard Sales Transformation.**

[Watch this video](#) featuring Head of Marketing, SunGard Financial Systems, Lucia Marchese.



**Learn more about the SunGard Sales Transformation.**

[Watch this video](#) featuring VP, Global Sales Enablement & Learning, SunGard, Ken Powell.

**Sales and marketing collaboration.** To optimize the way sales and marketing engage customers, SunGard partnered with **Corporate Visions**, a company that specializes in developing new sales messages to help salespeople deliver key insight concerning unspoken or unidentified business challenges that SunGard is equipped to uniquely address.

**Segmentation strategy.** To develop a segmentation strategy, SunGard enlisted the support of **ZS Associates**, a global leader in sales and marketing consulting, which helped management gain a better understanding of the types of customers to whom they were selling, including potential at the account level and what additional products these customers might buy. By assimilating this information, SunGard achieved a significantly improved go-to-market strategy.

**Sales processes and sales training.** SunGard also wanted to introduce a common selling and buying process, align its selling approach with customers' typical purchasing patterns, and help reps anticipate the questions or concerns at different stages of the buying cycle. To accomplish these goals, leading sales-strategy consultant **Richardson** helped SunGard create a universal sales process. Now SunGard reps can identify key activities by sales stage and track the progress of deals based on verifiable, buyer-centric outcomes. Richardson supported this initiative with sales training to help reinforce new selling behaviors.

**Reporting and forecasting.** To help sales reps efficiently win more business, SunGard configured **Salesforce** to match its new, streamlined sales process. Thanks to these configurations, selling is more intuitive, and salespeople can better understand when and how to move deals forward. A series of online training courses helped the SunGard team learn how to leverage Salesforce's capabilities.

Prior to the transformation, sales forecasting had been a manual and inefficient process. Before being published, forecasts had to pass through multiple touch points and were vulnerable to errors during revisions. To correct this issue, SunGard used Salesforce to automate forecasting and reporting and now has a unified and consistent view of sales stages and categories. Sales forecasts are 95 percent accurate.

**Automated sales compensation.** **Xactly** provided SunGard with an automated sales-compensation platform, which allowed SunGard to move away from cumbersome, manual spreadsheets to determine incentive payouts and commissions. Xactly allows salespeople to quickly and easily grasp what they have sold and how they will be paid for those sales. Sales employees are also able to perform what-if scenarios, aiding them in determining potential earnings based on different situations.

[Click here](#) to learn more about these companies' solutions.



*“When I’m selecting a partner to work with, it comes down to who’s easiest to do business with, who brings me expertise or insight...I want to know someone who’s doing research, **who’s modernizing their applications or their approach**, who’s really being thoughtful at integrating the customer’s feedback.”*

Ken Powell, Vice President, Global Sales Enablement & Learning, SunGard

## DEVELOPING ONBOARDING AND HIRING BEST PRACTICES

Recruiting and training first-year sales representatives was a major aspect of SunGard’s successful sales transformation. In 2012, one-fourth of the entire sales force (about 120 associates) were in their initial year of selling at SunGard. Of those associates, the average annual productivity was nearly \$400,000. Through the intensive and structured training plan and transparent metrics that the company has put into place, the goal is to double the first-year sales representative average to \$800,000 and thereby initiate a growth of \$30–40 million in annual sales.

Another component of SunGard’s enhanced plan to drive revenue has been to hire a small team of sales-development executives dedicated to first-year representatives across all business segments. This new role is structured to help assist the frontline sales manager. For example, time-consuming (but important) tasks, such as navigating the company, reviewing product and sales training, leveraging sales tools, and putting together business plans, are examples of tasks that sales-development executives handle.

This gives frontline sales managers more time to focus on opportunity development, support the sales process, and close more business. To ensure that the new role is aligned with SunGard’s targets, part of sales-development executives’ compensation is based on the sales results of first-year representatives. SunGard anticipates that the combination of hiring the best talent, additional management support, and incorporating new-hire training programs will help improve first-year sales productivity and thereby boost overall profitability.

## INITIAL RESULTS

Since introducing its revised approach to selling, SunGard is already experiencing numerous benefits in the form of reduced turnover, increased sales, and improved market receptivity. Specifically, having more structured processes in place is helping members of the sales organization stay focused on their core competency—selling—rather than expend time on non-value-added administrative tasks, such as locating buried sales contracts, etc.

Having a common set of standards, procedures, and metrics that apply to all SunGard business lines is helping to better unify the company and increase morale among employees throughout the organization. Marketing and sales departments are now better aligned in approach, and this is helping SunGard as an organization become more agile in anticipating and addressing marketplace shifts.

Thus far, SunGard is on target for significant growth on a billion-dollar sales plan, with a pipeline that signals a favorable future. Some unprecedented and significant deals have already begun to close.

## CONCLUSION

The “Selling the SunGard Way” initiative has increased productivity, driven higher sales, and improved customer satisfaction. By placing an increased emphasis on the needs and demands of today’s customers, SunGard is creating a more agile organization and fostering a culture that is better able to adapt to business changes in real time. It is through this innovative approach that the company is working to build a world-class sales force, generate greater business opportunities, and position itself as a world leader in financial-technology solutions.

## RESOURCES

### **Xactly**

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With Xactly, companies unleash the motivational power of their incentive-compensation programs. Despite most leaders' desire to pay for performance, their incentive-compensation plans have become inefficient, unpredictable, and disconnected from objectives. Xactly delivers accurate, rapid, and impactful solutions on a secure, completely cloud-based platform. By streamlining and automating the how, when, and why of what they pay, Xactly's customers reduce costs, gain visibility, save time, and eliminate risk. Xactly helps customers take control of their incentive processes and inspire performance.

[www.xactlycorp.com](http://www.xactlycorp.com)

### **Launch International**

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Launch International is a strategy and services firm that helps companies build and execute high-performance, integrated marketing and sales-enablement programs.

Launch helps clients rethink the way they approach interactions with buyers to make sure they are insight-based, customer-centric, aligned to the audience and need, and synchronized across both marketing and sales activities. The result is a more predictable path to revenue.

Launch International enables clients

- to arm sales with best-in-class tools,
- to better synchronize campaign and conversation activity,
- to ensure alignment with customer needs and goals,
- to architect sales conversations that are better aligned to buyer types,
- to benefit from Launch's 20-plus years of experience and hundreds of engagements.

Launch serves technology-driven clients across a wide spectrum of industries, including technology, financial services, and healthcare IT and serves corporate, alliance, channel, and vertical marketing organizations, as well as distributors, independent software vendors, and resellers.

[www.launchinternational.com](http://www.launchinternational.com)

### **Richardson**

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Richardson is a global sales-training and performance-improvement company with more than 30 years of experience creating customized solutions that build organizational ability and improve the individual skill necessary to grow profitable sales.

The Richardson team works with some of the largest and most sophisticated companies in the world to create solutions that fit clients' unique culture and situation, helping them execute strategy through their sales force.

Richardson offers a fully integrated, level-by-level curriculum for all sales and sales-management ranks to help ensure development and ongoing reinforcement. Its proven curriculum of more than 250 modules covers the necessary tools, skills, dialogues, processes, and strategy needed for every phase of the selling cycle, from prospecting to Richardson's core framework of Consultative Selling to ensure a consistency of learning that is supported throughout the company.

[www.richardson.com](http://www.richardson.com)



## ZS Associates

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ZS Associates is a global leader in sales and marketing consulting, outsourcing, and technology. For 30 years, ZS has helped companies across a range of industries transform sales and marketing from art into science. From 20 offices worldwide, ZS leverages analytics and deep expertise to create data-driven strategies that its clients can implement rapidly and cost effectively, often building capabilities and running sales and marketing operations to make ZS's clients more competitive. ZS's sales solutions help companies design, deploy, recruit, coach, manage, motivate, and measure their sales organizations. ZS's SFE Navigator™ is a rigorous approach for evaluating sales force effectiveness (SFE) and prioritizing the high-impact areas on which to focus to drive profitable, organic growth.

[www.zsassociates.com](http://www.zsassociates.com)

## OneSource

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OneSource is a global leader in business-information and sales-enablement solutions that deliver unparalleled company, executive, and industry intelligence to make business professionals more effective and productive.

Only the OneSource multichannel platform intercepts relevant business signals and alerts you to opportunities and threats in the ever-changing marketplace. OneSource automatically determines which companies are involved and delivers to your team the best business information profiles available, assembled through OneSource's exclusive real-time fusion of data provided by more than 60 data partners. OneSource world-class solutions empower professionals to leverage actionable insights to drive company growth.

[www.onesource.com](http://www.onesource.com)

## Chally Group Worldwide

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A talent-measurement firm, Chally Group Worldwide provides industry-leading research, predictive analytics, and advisory services to help select, align, and develop talent. Chally measures ability (Can they do the job?) and motivation (Will they do the job?), utilizing its unparalleled database of sales and leadership characteristics and competencies.

[www.chally.com](http://www.chally.com)

## Salesforce.com

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Customer companies listen to every customer, engage on every channel, and deliver great customer service everywhere. They sell as a team, create communities, connect products to the network, and deliver apps on any device. By connecting everything with salesforce – customers, employees, partners, and products – customer companies revolutionize the way they sell, service, market, and innovate.

[www.salesforce.com](http://www.salesforce.com)

[Click here](#) to learn more about these companies' solutions.

## ABOUT SELLING POWER

In addition to *Selling Power* magazine, the leading periodical for sales managers and sales VPs since 1981, Selling Power Inc. produces the Sales Management Digest and Daily Boost of Positivity online newsletters, as well as a five-minute video series featuring interviews with top executives. Selling Power is a regular media sponsor of the [Sales 2.0 Conference](#).