



## Enterprise Account Planning: Mastering the Customer-First Approach

00:03

I'll go ahead and start the webinar

00:18

and we'll begin in just a moment. Thank you all for attending

00:32

and sharing, we'll edit this part of the video. I take it people are coming in. They are fantastic. Welcome. Everyone will begin in just a moment

01:02

all right, we'll give it one more moment. Thank you all for being on time. Good morning. Good afternoon and possibly Good evening. So we appreciate you joining us.

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All right, as people are coming in, Dave, are you warmed up and ready to go?

01:28

I'm ready to go.

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All right, well, listen again. Good morning. Good afternoon. Good evening. Welcome to the Finn listings Level Up series. And our topic today will be customer first account planning. What we like to do in our Level Up series, you'll be seeing other topics around level up is take if you're an individual sales executive or sales manager, account manager or even a revenue enablement, professional. Our goal is to help you take your skills, your capabilities for driving revenue, and relating the customers up to the next level. So that's what's behind our great branding there. But the day let's begin with some introductions. I'll kick it off. My name is Ben Cagle. I'm the Chief Customer solution officer for finless sticks. Three champions to my career, I've been on the customer side and industry division president did some industry roll ups, I came from industry. So the conversation we'll be having today, I'll put my customer hat on, in terms of up on a lot of, you know, several million dollars worth of technology. The second chapter, I transitioned to the dark side of consulting, as we say, I was a managing partner with HP Enterprise and dxc technologies, and have run different sized companies. And I've been a coach for fanlistings for about five years now. So we probably trained over 5000 enterprise sales reps worldwide, and probably over 100 countries. And some of these approaches we'll be covering today and with our level of series, and we are very, very honored to have us joining from the UK, our good friend, Dave Jenkins, with SAS. Dave, give a little bit about your background. And of course, what SAS the SAS does, please.

03:08

Thank you, Ben. My name is Dave Jenkins, I'm part of the global sales training team within SAS based in the UK, but in a global team. And the majority of my career was spent with IBM, of which half of my time was in the learning and development area in either national, international or global roles. And as such, my entire career has been spent in the IT tech space, selling solutions, products, hardware, software services, or the ability to get better decision making through use of analytics to use information in the best way possible. And I've worked within logistics for the last 12 years both with IBM and with SASS. So happy to be here and sharing my experience and knowledge. Dave

04:00

again, can't thank you enough look forward to sharing some of those war stories we've been through together, or at least some of the insights if not airing the dirty laundry. How about that, Dave? Okey doke. All right. Well, listen, today's session, what we're going to cover are in the really the perspective we're hoping to bring in is around customer led account planning, some real world perspectives, the good and then we'll be politically correct, the not so good. Maybe there's some lessons learned that we can pass on to you. And then the other thing we'd like to do is, personally, I've seen all kinds of account planning programs processes, have coached sales reps in terms of their account plans. So we'd like to go back are just really kind of level set. And I think you'll get some best practices here. We'll share some list around Yes, the definition of account planning, maybe you can communicate this to your organization. How you need to understand the customer. We'll talk about specific parameters that we sometimes see sometimes done See an account planning? Of course, how do you identify revenue opportunities to upsell, cross sell or net new or prospecting, and then getting the executive meeting. We'll touch on that Dave today, right. But we'll actually cover that a lot more detail in the in some follow up Level Up series. So what we would like to do is encourage you, as we're sharing our insights, please be active on chat, Sharon, from our team at fanlistings will be monitoring monitoring the chat line. So let's make this as interactive as possible, because we are expecting, you know, many individuals will use chat and hopefully, get this, get your input as well. We'd love to hear your perspectives. Or if you have a counter perspective, we welcome that as well. So we look forward to a good discussion today as we go through our agenda. And of course, it wouldn't be fun logistics, and we didn't bring up our founder, Dr. Steven Timmy, but we do want to give you kind of a thank you gift here. One would be if you have not seen or had access to his insight led selling book where several of the concepts we'll be covering today are covered, please hit the QR code and hit the download, we would love for you to have a copy of that. The other thing is you'll we'll be showing some insights and analytics, that if you're not a fin logistics customer, you don't have client IQ access, not to worry, we'll also from one of your accounts, if it's a publicly traded company, scan the QR code, put the company name in there, and we'll provide you with some of the insights we'll be covering. So we just wanted to kick off with that, again, use chat and feel free to download one or two of these assets as we go. And we'll have this as a reminder as well at the end of our presentation. So they must kick it off here. Let's create the context for how we're thinking about customer first customer led account planning. And really, if you think about what customers want is growth, profitable revenue growth, right? Cost Management, and some of us that sell it, you know, solutions, maybe think about the IT budget, but what is your IT solution, your analytics solution? What does that really entail or enable from a cost management standpoint, and a risk mitigation standpoint? So if you think about these perspectives, as we weighed in to thinking about outside in thinking about the customers agenda, hey, Dave, I'm gonna give you an impossible question here. But I know you can handle it if

anyone can. What percentage of sales executive sales professionals think about the customers agenda, think about how they're selling, thinking about these parameters of the customer? What What kind of percentages? Would you assign it? Dave?

07:43

You'd love the answer to be 100%. But that isn't the reality. In my experience, somewhere between half and two thirds of the people that I've come across, intellectually get the idea of hitting one or more of those three particular elements. Sadly, I think there is still a focus that is more internal, rather than customer. And by that I mean, we're still thinking in the IT and tech space of how are we going to sell our product or solution more than how is our product or solution going to enable the customer to achieve their profitability targets, their cost reduction targets, or driving forward with lower, more manageable or mitigated risks. And in terms of doing a deep dive, and really digging into that, and aligning the solution to the customers goals, strategies, initiatives, metrics and KPIs. I think that percentage drops off substantially, to the point of possibly being lower than one in three who do it well. The one distinction I would make is, if you're a strategic account manager, or a global account manager, and you just have one account to focus on, by default, that makes it easier for you to focus on that one account, even with their international divisions and global presence, and business and geo segments. You're just focused on one account and what they're trying to achieve rather than the average account exec who might have 710 or 50 accounts in their territory, and then have to prioritize and work out who they're gonna go after. So that focusing in and having that customer lens is possibly done better by those strategic account managers with the singleton account.

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Now, that's a good perspective, Dave. And what we see is that if when we start working with either cloud providers or infrastructure, and now AI is coming into play, right, how do you quantify the value of cloud? How do you quantify the value of AI? We're seeing a lot of people think about it just from that it cost OS lens, right or from a productivity lens. But if you think about it more holistically, and we'll touch on this as we go, we think there's a great opportunity. But Dave, good perspective there. And I'd love for you, Dave, if I don't ask you let's work in what do you think those hurdles are as we continue the conversation, okay?

10:17

Well, our for one straight up contextual lead into this slide. And that is, it's human nature, to default to where you feel most comfortable. And a lot of sellers in this space are more comfortable knowing every moving part of their solution or product, and knowing it inside out and being able to position it against the competition. But that's not what the customer is looking for. The customer doesn't want a pair of glasses, the customer wants to see better. That's an old cliché, but it holds true, because they don't care what your solution is, or does what they care is what it's going to enable them to do, what change it will drive, and how they will be better off in the new world than carrying on as they are. So in that context, it's the human motivation to stick with what you know, best and feel safe doing, rather than having a conversation with a chief financial officer or a chief marketing officer outside of that comfort zone.

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Yeah, you know, Dave, you remind me in some of the programs, we do both obviously, you know, licensing of the insights around customers, as well as some sales training, that comfort level that confidence, I want to hear more about your

ideas for how do you build the individuals confidence in this in just a moment as we get into it. But Dave, you again, great straight man here. So we always tend to work well together. But if you think about the purpose of customer first strategic account planning, sometimes companies miss these these objectives. One is around an understanding and aligning around the customers agenda. And we'll talk about this in detail. What are the basics of the of the customer? How do their companies work? What are their financial and strategic priorities? And then to your point, how do we get comfortable as an account manager, a sales executive with calling on different stakeholder groups, different lines of business across the enterprise? So if you had to Dave, this is almost like art when we engage with, you know, new connections, or potentially new customers. This is almost a checklist. First of all, do you align around the customers agenda around these dimensions when you're talking about account planning? And the other thing, this is going to seem really obvious, but the account plans are not designed to say how do we go to how we're going to sell more? We have to go sell something with revenue here. How do you advance existing pursuits, identify new sales opportunities and initiate new sales plans? So you know, Dave, again, great commentary to kick this off. But where do and again, I know this isn't any of your programs you ran? But where do these programs get it wrong? Or missed the mark, you mentioned, kind of that internal focus? What other insights would you have for us, for those of us that are accountable for some, you know, running these programs, or run or generating our own account plans?

13:10

Well, very early on in my career, when I was in a field role, I was part of an account team, that we're focused on the bottom half of your chart, what are we going to sell to the customer this year? Without the context of the upper part of your chart? What is the customer trying to do? What challenges are they facing? What disruptions are impacting them? What are their goals and strategies that drive where they are going to invest their money, and resource and time and energy? And equally, which ones are going to lead to those executive decision makers hitting their bonus targets for stock options, or payment plans, that is going to drive their personal motivation? So some of this is about mindset, which is starting with the almost start with the end in mind, what does the customer need to achieve? How can we help them enable that? Where do our products and solutions fit in either improving revenue growth, decreasing costs, mitigating risks, or improving what return they get on the assets that they have? And as such, it's all about really that mindset of together? Where do we see as fitting into those customer plans, whether it's 12 months, the next three years, the next five years, or even shaping that buying vision, so that what you are selling is aligned with the customer's buying process, and what they're trying to achieve over time. Perfect

14:40

Day. And as we go further into the conversation today, we'll actually be giving some quick checklist. And again, this presentation, this recording will be available afterwards. We'll give you information on how to contact us for that. So Dave, I want you to put your field hat back on. I know it's been a few years since you've actually carried a bag or had a quota. Hanging around your neck here. But let's think about this as you do a case study, the customer we're going to choose today is Colgate Palmolive. And then we're going to tell the story, if you will, like our solutions that are solutions we're selling is around customer insights. And our solution is about connecting siloed databases, there's a AI communication element to it, we're not going into a lot of details on our solution is, but this is what we're selling. There's predictive and prescriptive analytics, Dave, and of course, some consulting bundled in as well. So against that context, let's start looking at Colgate Palmolive as an

example, and then we'll give you a checklist or give the audience checklist of items that need to think about as we go through it. All right. So the basically, the basics on Colgate Palmolive. For brands, I'm sure some of us on a global basis have interacted with some of these. So for brand categories for branded groups here, Dave. But what we start to do is when we start doing some research, we're just going to flash up some of the slides. But Dave, what do you kind of look for? What are the key words you mentioned, kind of the revenue cost and whatnot. But as you scan, you know, using your tools use are using your experience set? What are some of the practical things as you scan a lot of these words, context and everything else? What are you looking for,

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I'd say it's a two levels, it's some of the more strategic focus areas like digitization modernization. And that then gives you clues as to what the customer is trying to drive in the way of change, and how you might be able to help them achieve that. The other is being precise and specific. On the targets, they are setting themselves. In the short and medium term, as you've got on this chart here. It's we're looking to grow net sales by between one and 4%. And that we're going to drive gross profit margin. They haven't said by how much. But that's maybe something to go and use some discovery questions with the relevant decision makers and stakeholders to find out what that target is. And as you get those specific targets, you can then start to use information in these research tools like client IQ. And in the report section of client IQ. You've got investor presentations, you've got the annual report, the management discussion or proxy statement. And these can reveal these nuggets of gold, which is we are looking to drive this metric up by this amount in this timescale. In which case, how are we too late for the budgeting cycle? Or can we get them to reallocate funds? Or does our business case have enough compelling evidence that says spend X get 10x back, and therefore it's a self funding investment, that the customer will find that money? Because people say, I haven't gotten the budget. But if your business case is compelling enough, they will find the budget, either through reallocation, or by the cost savings that you generate in the 1218 month cycle of implementation after the project goes live.

18:14

Yeah, and Dave, all that thought or bring that thought back. And we talked about how to get the meeting and whatnot, from my standpoint says we're selling our soul, our theoretical solution here is selling customer insights, I'm looking for sales revenue, right and to your point specific numbers. Profit Margin just means cost reduction in this case. So look for you know, advertising that's related to a spin to drive revenue. So start looking for those key words. And Dave, exactly what you said start to put your storyline together. It looks like advertising is up 18%. Here, they're trying to drive organic growth. So advertising isn't expense, can our customer insights help them starting to put theoretical things together? Around, you know, we can help them with their advertising spend become more efficient, or more smarter, more targeted? By better understanding the customers with our solution? Obviously, looking to what cost? They're they're looking for revenue growth, driving strong funding, again, looking for some of the key words. And I think, Sharon, you may have a question or a comment. Is that right?

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Yes. From Dennis, what can we assume by one to 4% revenue increase, but double digit EPS growth? How will will how will they do this without creative accounting?

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Yeah, well, that is true. So what they're trying to do, and we're going to show you the graphics. Great question. So we'll come back to that, Dennis, in terms of how do you how are they growing revenue, and then improving their profit margins, and we're gonna see a couple of trends there. So again, these are what they're saying. But that mindset of connecting the dots is exactly what we're trying to do. So stay tuned for the conversation, Dennis, and come back to us in chat. Well, hopefully we'll answer that question. So again, The other thing we're looking for here is what's going on with the businesses. Obviously, they're in one category of, you know, oral hygiene, dental care, they are trying to be soup to nuts here, and you can see the different price points. There's a portfolio here. So again, how can we potentially help enable their revenue growth through innovation and some of their products through better customer insights? So Dave, all we're doing is starting to put together our hypothesis in terms of what are some of the things how can we start framing up the conversation? Right? Right. So with that, here's something this is a great takeaway, a checklist for you the seven steps to creating better customer first strategic account management. So again, this is the true checklist on what we're going for. And David are going to walk you through all seven of these quickly, and give you examples of what the exhibits look like what the insights are, as well as how to use those insights. And again, we won't read all of these, but we will be going quickly one through seven on these. All right, so some of the things in terms of those seven questions, if you will, or seven topics, we actually have some of the questions to answer. So if you're in your teams, as an account team, you're debating what's included, what should we understand, or if you're designing and you know, a customer lead a customer first account management program, we listed some of these questions. And again, we're not going to go through all of these today, you're again, we'll send you the presentation and or the recording here. But these are some of the topics that conversation starters, if you will, at the team level, or at the program level that you should really think about. And what we do is we use these to advise our customers as well on some of these. But let's go through Dave, going back to our case study with Colgate Palmolive. We talked about number one, understanding the customer basics, obviously what business they're in, we looked at their brands, but also seeing which business segments, how are they're structured, which ones are driving revenue, which ones are driving the profit margin, and of course, where are where's the revenue coming from? So Dave, anything else here in terms of kind of understanding the customer basics of their business that you'd like to highlight for us, I'd

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simply state that this is a building block, which, like any good house needs a strong foundation, you need to have that basic understanding, you can't just jump to, I'm going to go and sell something to someone in marketing, that's going to improve personalization of the customer experience, and then come unstuck because you don't understand that 50% of their revenue comes from a specific geography that you didn't know even know they operated in. So doing the basics means you understand enough to be credible, and believable, such that the customer will be willing to listen to what you have to say, particularly when you get into your own experience, use cases, case studies of where you've helped other customers, either in the same industry or related industries, because you may have done the implementation of a specific solution multiple times on a global basis, this may be the first and only time the customer is thinking of doing this particular project. So if you can build that credibility and trust early, by doing this basic research, and then layering on top of that, that's going to stand you in better stead when it comes to those conversations of forward looking plans.

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Yeah, I agree. I think the other thing we coach our customers on is, obviously to your point, you know which business unit is driving the bus, which one from a revenue standpoint, but also even understanding if they report their financials this way, the profit margin impact so again, you can see the in the, under the geographic segment, North America, you can see the margins are lower, obviously more, you know, about the same revenue but lower margins in North America, that could be due to several reasons. But it begs the question of why is that oh, and it begs the question on who we should target what part of the organization we should target or which part of the organization we should expand our relationship. So good thoughts there, Dave. Thanks very much. The second thing is around goals and strategies. There's a lot of noise, a lot of words and Dennis kind of, you know, started to put the pieces together. But what I use the word bucket ties categorize, right, so we started to put kind of what their goals and objectives are. They say their goals were their aspirational revenue goals, the top swim lane, they're the top bucket around revenue. They've shown three to 5% elsewhere, one to four percents aspirational for 2024 Going into 2025. So we know that their sales, gross growth will probably be in that, you know, one to 4% range based on what they're saying. But the initiatives that go with that is it accelerating frictionless commerce and expanding portfolio. So what we're trying to do is start to line up our revenue enhancement story and how our solutions map to that. The second thing is the second bucket is around improving operating margin expansion that costs, efficiency type mindset. And in terms of our world, optimizing the advertising spin would be a natural there. And also possibly, if our insights can help them streamline the supply chain that may be a bit aspirational, a bit outside of our customer insights solution, but we can inform a better supply chain there. And then, of course, to Dave's point, look for those large numbers. We did not show it here. But one of their their goals is obviously to, you know, drive the annualized savings of 90 to 110 million. And again, they did mention another strategic initiative around cloud platforms. So you can see how we're starting to line up their priorities with the metrics, they're trying to improve the goals and strategies along with our solution in terms of how we can impact that, Dave, any other coaching or kind of tactical and practical advice in terms of how to start to line up your story here? Well,

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before we do that, Dennis has followed up with a question going, whilst it looks like every bit of information on Colgate Palmolive is in the public domain. He's asking whether there is any risk of any blowback from them in using them as today's case study. So touching on the confidentiality versus public domain information. Yeah,

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and this is all public domain. We didn't, we do not have official permission to use them as a case study. But again, we're not sharing anything proprietary, we're not sharing anything around Colgate Palmolive that our customers have shared with us. So everything we're sharing with you is publicly available information, some of the analytics will be based on the public information. But again, there shouldn't be any sensitivities to this. And we actually coach our customer, our customers the same way that when you go into engage with a customer saying, look, we've done our homework, we've done our research. And I know Dave, when I was on the buy side, if someone said, Hey, we did our homework, we don't quite understand we think these are your priorities, can you help us understand? It's amazing the conversations you can engage with from a sales perspective around that. So Dennis, thanks very much for that. Hopefully that answered your question. But do you have anything to add there any other clarifications?

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I'm gonna ask Fred, who's asked a question about when you engage them on numbers showing improvement. If he can hold that thought, we're going to come back to that in a little while. So there's a question about believability of numbers and uniqueness of each customer. So we'll come back to that.

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Yeah, we're going to actually touch on that, Fred. So thanks very much again, and you're leading the witness here. The third thing I think we'll get in that and actually topic six, and seven. So stay tuned, we'll, we won't speed dial through these, but we will be going addressing each topic here. So the third thing here is around executive compensation. And this is another one, Dennis, Fred, you may be saying, Okay, how does this fit into the story? And if nothing else, be aware of the executive compensation, what's driving the C suite? What metrics are they looking to understand. And again, if you look at earnings per share, which of course is going to be a multiple of it's going to be revenue and cost components, you don't have to worry about EPS, exactly the converse, or the compensation or the composition, or how it's calculated, but just understand that EPS, that stock performance is there, and what are some of the stock drivers look at organic growth, obviously, 40% of their variable pays on organic sales growth. So again, thinking about our theoretical solution around customer insights, how can we help them drive performance growth? And then the other thing here is around strategic initiatives? How do we align around? Or how do we help them execute and realize the benefits of their strategic initiatives? So again, this is, again, a typical executive in the consumer packaged goods. Industry, this is what their compensation is based on. Again, this is public domain information. It's not sensitive. We'll talk on the next slide about how you use this information in a conversation. But Dave, any other coaching here in terms of thinking about or why we wanted to understand executive comp, what it's based on, or how to think about it, I'd

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say two points, the human motivation element and the getting to what matters most to the customer. And the two are linked. So the human motivation is if I'm an exec, and I have two people from two separate suppliers, vendors, consultants, whatever come in, and they both have something to offer in the space. But one has a track record. Go to having done it 100 times the other one, it's the first time they're going to do it. And the former that's done it 100 times, can implement it six months faster and get me partway to my target the whole way to my target or a significant way along that journey faster, with lower risk. And with lower commitment of my team, my resources, my money, then that is going to play to my motivation of, they're going to help me be more successful faster. And with lower risk. So it's linked in the sense of that's the way the executives going to think. But it's also going to drive what is top of mind for them, what matters most of them, I need to drive organic sales growth by this percentage. So don't come and talk to me about some other initiatives that might be high on your radar. But it's not even on my radar.

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Yeah, absolutely. And the way Dave, to think about this, we kind of think about it as look, you know, my focus is to help your company achieve its goals. And we know performance and top line growth is, you know, we focus on growth and profitability. In other words, speak their language, as you know, without being so direct. If you're saying, Hey, I know what your bonus is based on, I know, it's based on growth and profitability, I can help you make your bonus. And you know, and once CFO told me

one time, I need to pay off my alimony. Kidding, you know, could pay off the kids conversation, that's just a little bit creepy here. So the key thing is, you want to be relevant, relevant to their goals and strategies relevant to their priorities, and really carry a conversation along those lines. So that's just a little lesson learned that we get from many of our customers in terms of how to have that conversation. The other thing here is number four, Dave is the financial performance. And again, these are some of the insights that we can provide, if you request the the company report, again, for those that don't have fanlistings insights on the top here is how they're trending from a revenue and profitability standpoint, on an annualized basis over from 2018 to the end of 2022. So this is their annual results. And you can see that their revenue growth on the top left, slightly below the industry average of 4%. But you can see that they actually accelerated their growth going into COVID, in the years of 2020 21. And the growth rate starting to decline, you can also see that as they were growing here, again, over the same five year period, that they're getting more and more profit margin pressure, they were able to keep their profitability up be in the in the first quartile there. But there were some as as revenue started to slow they were getting profit margins, you know, over the same time period, several reasons why that could be but this is a great conversation starter with a customer to say, hey, help me understand these trends. On the bottom line, you can see that they're actually it looks like their revenue is growing from like 17 billion to 19 billion on pace for that, as we look at through September of last year, their rate isn't is growing, but look at that profit pressures. So again, thinking about how do we position our solution around customer insights, you know, an analytics and AI, how can we help them keep the growth trend going and possibly reverse or, you know, the profitability trend, or offset some of the profitability pressure they have? Dave, anything else here on kind of the magic numbers to think about, we're just using this as an example. We're not trying to do a deep dive necessarily? How should we think about this? Yeah,

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a couple of points. One is I'm a big fan of using both the annual review of the last five years. But the more up to date, more recent view of the last 12 months, because what you don't want to do is go in and say, Hey, I've been doing some research, and I noticed that your revenues going up only for the customer to go. Well, it was but it hasn't been for the last 12 months, because boom, credibility shot to pieces in that one statement. So are they going to believe whatever comes out of your mouth in subsequent statements. So having that check and balance to go, performance over time, performance in the most recent time period can bring things up to speed. The other point I'd make is contextual relevance. And by that, I mean, using a tool like client IQ can be a huge productivity and time saver. However, you also need to ensure that you are looking at other sources of information to make sure you understand the complete picture for the customer, for example, if they divest or sell off a part of their business that made up 20% of their revenue, and they did so for perfectly good reasons. It was no longer part of their strategic plan. That's going to have an impact in revenue performance. And if you simply regurgitate, oh, I noticed revenue dropped off in the last 12 months so we can help you grow revenue. And then they come back and go Well, yeah, of course. It's I'm going to show that revenues declined in the last 12 months, because we had a big hole of 20% of our revenue disappearing and you didn't know, again, credibility, building trust, and so on. So my point is, client IQ can be fantastic. Use it in conjunction with your common sense, and your other research sources to get that holistic view of what is going on in the customer. And what is relevant to the stakeholder you are going to be engaging with. Yeah,

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Dave, that's, that's good. We kind of this is kind of the what's going on by the numbers. The why being curious is key. And the third thing is we find from that going back to thing Dave, what you said around habit, helping people's confidence in terms of having this or using this in a conversation is just understanding that it's okay, you'll never understand your customers business as well as they do. You'll never you know, so don't even try don't even think that's the expectation from your customer. But the fact you're doing homework and the fact that my favorite line is helped me understand, hey, we noticed this is happening, help me understand what's behind that we think it could be this, it could be the, hey, you spun off a company or you know, you acquired another company behind that help us understand and it's amazing the conversations you can have by kind of serving first with an insights, having some theories about why doing your homework thinking through, not just again, as Dave said, regurgitating the numbers, and then thinking about kind of, you know, helping me understand it's a great combination. Great way to engage the customer. Thanks for that, Dave. That's great. The other thing number five on our list of seven is the industry disruptors trends and risk, what I always like to do is say we kind of tune in on what's going on with the company, how its structured, whether the agendas you know, financial priorities, strategic priorities. But what also is taking up executive mindshare, from the industry trends and drivers here and this this kind of analysis, what's happening externally internally, disruptors and risk. And the reason you do this is again, not to cover all of these bullet points, but to it's kind of like going to a tapas bar, right, you choose a couple of entrees, an appetizer here or there, choose the ones that are most relevant. But Dave, anything else in terms of how you build credibility or the credibility you build by understanding your customers industry? And what's going on in the industry, any points of view here? Well,

37:29

I'll link it back to one of my points of why people are fearful of getting outside their comfort zone and talking about their product, because they don't want to look foolish. So my advice is, if you don't understand the industry in which your customer operates, go and talk to someone who does in your company, and learn from them, do some research. Obviously, with the internet and the plethora of information around now, it's a lot easier to get that 101201 level understanding of what the drivers are, what the key factors are, what's going to change over the next three to five years. The other thing that's really useful is you can have consultant reports that are available for free online, from delights from Accenture, from McKinsey's, that go, this is what's happening in retail in the next three to five years, this is what's going to happen for banks, who also sell insurance. And that gives you that external validation point, it's not just my opinion, this is what experts in the industry are saying, and it gives you that contextual relevance that I mentioned earlier. So taking these points, which are this is what's impacting the customer, but then turning it into that helped me understand how this factor is driving your immediate priorities, Mr. Customer, so it's making it specific to the pain they're feeling now, or equally, the opportunities that present themselves for them to take advantage of now. And with the advent of Gen AI, and the greater use of analytics to make faster and better decisions. There's never been a better time to add value through the application of technology to making sure people can take advantage of those opportunities or fix the pain points.

39:20

No, Dave, excellent insights there. And building on that and continuing our conversation here. And this goes again to that comfort level right Dave have calling not just in technology or you know, the department you you're familiar with the thinking about number six, the business functions that support the goals and

strategies. If you think about accelerating revenue growth and frictionless commerce, these are some of the stakeholders, some primary, some secondary, that really have a vested interest in As Dave said, kind of the strategic level they are tied to the strategies and the goals. They're accountable for getting those accomplished, as well. was delivering on the financial or operational results. So putting together your account plan and not just calling on the same people, but as Dave says, do your homework, you know, come up with the approach, who else can either be a direct influencer, or, you know, basically has budgetary access in some cases as well. So David, in terms of kind of the budget, the asked, you know, the the access to executives, putting all the pieces together here, any practical tips or war stories you can share around this,

40:31

I'll link some of the points I've made earlier, which is, let's say the big opportunity is in personalization, and improving the customer experience that's going to be relevant to marketing. But one of the ways that analytics and AI can help is also improving supply chain management, getting better utilization of the assets you've got in warehousing, truck distribution, and so on. So that would be in the distribution logistics, you can also impact customer care and service with chat bots, and so on to speed, time to resolution for simple problems, and have the humans dealing with the more complex situations. So I'd advise people to get out of that comfort zone of, we're always calling on Fred or Susan, they're our ally, they're our friend inside the customer. And think about who we need to be connecting with, that we can tell a better story to about how we can help them address their challenges, how we can make them successful. And in many cases, the heads of marketing and distribution and logistics and so on, have bigger budgets than the CIO does anyway. So you're not constraining yourself to just the CIOs budget, you need them on board, and they need to be on side with you and whomever in the line of business. But quite often, the growth for you and your established accounts is going to come in these other areas. Yeah,

41:59

and Dave, what we're hearing from everyone is that decisions are taking longer sales cycles are getting longer in this these times of uncertainty. And we I heard from a few individuals, hey, by, by me connecting with these different lines of business, the different departments, it's taking longer in the sales cycle. And I've also heard the inverse Dave, that by getting a subset A group aligned actually helping the customer get aligned around their strategy, bringing marketing and the customer care leaders together for a conversation sponsoring that after you've had conversations, and actually, again, relating their goals and strategies, the metrics they want to improve, and how your solution enables that you're actually helping the customer get organized, and possibly even accelerating the decision making process or process and getting to a proposed and close scenario. Any observations on that date? Kind of anecdotally, what's going on here, including more people? You know, how do we can we, you know, strengths, some of the sales cycles, we're seeing the day any other practical tips or insights around that?

43:05

I think it's about leveraging your company and your personal experience of where this has been done before. And linking it to a comment in chat from Vijay, turning these high level, this is what's impacting the customer as external factors. These are the risks in play in that industry, and turning it into either through research, digging into the specific pain points of what, in this case Colgate Palmolive, are experiencing in these different business functions. But also bringing your experience to bear with the

would it be helpful for me to share with you, Mr. Customer, where we've helped customers who were experiencing problem a problem be an opportunity x? Well, sure, by all means, but keep it brief. While they were experiencing this specific problem, which led to this outcome. And by working with us, we were able to implement x y Zed, which led to this outcome that was better. Good news. And then you can go how, how specifically relevant, is that to you and your instance, are you experiencing that problem? If not, how does it manifest itself? So you can turn a we've done this elsewhere use case example, illustrative story, to then discovery qualification clarification. Oh, it's not that it's this. Could you tell me more about that. So it's an opportunity to show you are in safe hands with us we can reduce the risk of fixing this or exploiting this by working with us. And then clarifying and qualifying those specific pain points or opportunities to move things forward. Sorry,

44:46

my apologies. I had a hair trigger there. Dave did not mean to cut you short. But I think that's right. The other thing is again, this is Draw connecting the dots and drawing the picture and actually by putting my consulting partner hat back on, we used to get all the stakeholders around the table until one story, but understanding their initiatives, potential projects, KPIs and marketing. And what we're showing here is that we have research, obviously, that looks at an industry, and what are some of the related initiatives or project level insights that are representative for this industry? And how do they align to the metrics and indicators? But Dave, you mentioned not just a client IQ, there are other sources for what are some typical projects going on some transformation projects going on in front of the customer. The other thing we found is, again, we're starting to do that through kind of our buckets that we've outlined the lining strategies and financial metrics. This is very important data that we see some customers don't have we call it the financial sales playbook. Not all the sales reps are actually selling the solution using the same metrics, the revenue, and in this case, SG and a the sales general administrative overhead cost and the KPIs so actually mapping your solution to the key performance indicators, the specific metrics that your solution enables that customer to improve is key. And to to us, this has been a missing component, that bridge between the the theoretical, and then where does my solution impact the business? Any practical solutions here, Dave? Yeah, program standpoint, or how you think about this? How do you get everyone aligned to say, this is how we're going to sell the solution?

46:30

I think I'll make a comment, then I think it's a good time to refer back to Fred's question. So first, I'd say I'm a big fan of the solution mapping, and have seen that implemented at both of my employees, my current one and my former one, to good effect, as in, it turns something theoretical and conceptual into something practical and meaningful and specific, which is, this solution is going to attack this financial metric by improving these KPIs. And by working with experts who understand those solutions, who can then determine Yep, we do impact cross sell upsell, we do impact online sales, we do impact customer churn and new customers, but we don't impact these others, you end up with a roadmap for the seller, that even if they are not an industry expert, or a solution expert, they can make the connection between what the solution is and what it does, with how it's going to impact the high level metrics, and specifically which operational KPIs which then leads you to who owns those who is measured on those who is going to be most motivated to see an improvement in those specific KPIs. So to Fred's point, Fred saying whether or not it's accurate as a statement, many execs believe their company to be somehow unique. Very true. We wouldn't disagree with that. How do you respond to the comment? Hey, I believe

your improvement numbers are true for your study, but they don't apply to us. And Fred's question is, how do you drive buy in of that, that may be true for my competitor or a your use case, but were unique and different? And it wouldn't necessarily work that way here. So Ben, what are your observations on getting over that objection? If you like? Yeah,

48:29

and this is all, there's a couple of schools of thought here. And I'm actually going to go the next topic, Bill, the end, Fred, thank you for again, helping us build the story here. These are actually quantifying the financial benefits. So this is taking those metrics those KPIs, and modeling a one to 3%, or one to 2%, a very modest improvement, using in this case, Colgate Palmolive, the actual financials, and then industry recognized benchmarks and coming up with a quantification. So in terms of trusting the numbers, or the the impact, what you can say is the first thing is the solution framework that they've covered on the previous page, actually socializing that and getting the customer to buy in that yet though, technically, you could impact those numbers. The other thing is having the right conversation at the right level with the right customer around those metrics. If you're getting pushback around, this is not relevant. Just give me the price. Everything else that ship shows you right there, you're possibly too low, and your customers organization, you're not someone that actually owns those metrics of improvement, and possibly you're not enrolling all the stakeholders. So this is a sales mindset, and an intention, you know, being intentional versus again, who do we know and what's the customer telling us? So that's the first thing, have that framework and have that point of view and validate that with the right customers at the right level. The other thing we're looking at here, quantify Adding the value, you do this early in the sales cycle, this is a whatever this is based on positioning based on your publicly available financial information based on industry benchmarks, based on our experience with other customers that we can help possibly improve online sales one to 3%. If that's the case, potentially you're not making a promise you're not proposing here, you're not doing a gain share deal. Potentially, we can help you improve your online sales 21 million Tibet 64 million, based on industry benchmarks and some of our past experience. So this is, as we say, serving up potential and you're not losing credibility, you're saying hey, outside looking in, you are unique, Mr. or Mrs. Customer, you do have unique attributes. We don't know we haven't engaged. But this is rough order of magnitude improvement. Is this a sizable enough opportunity that we can explore together and you're just trying to get their sponsorship to engage with their teams, and everything else. So leading with these numbers, talking in rough order magnitude, validating the KPIs is really part of the sales process. And again, make sure you have in the right conversations. Dave, as usual, that was very long winded on my part, how would you either correct or expand what what points are made there, and he will

51:24

expand by referencing order of magnitude. And what I mean by that is, as you say, if you use this early in the sales cycle, in this particular instance, you can gain curiosity to explore further by going, even if you think our 1% improvement is unrealistic and too large, let's divide that by 10. And make it 1/10 of 1%. If that were to generate over 2 million of improved cash flow, and the cost of implementing that solution was just a quarter of a million. Would that be a good deal for you generate 2 million for an investment of a quarter of a million? The customer goes well, yeah, that sounds a pretty good deal to me, and I'm getting an eight fold return. That's pretty good. Okay, so would it be reassuring to you that were we've done something similar with customers of your size we've seen between a two and 7% improvement, therefore,

that naught point 1%. That was a good deal in itself, the two to 7% range is looking very attractive, wouldn't you agree? So you're almost leading them to the yet you've done it elsewhere. That sounds fanciful, but I'd still go for something that's a fraction of that. So if we can get close to what you've done with others, that's going to be good, then you can go together, we can collaborate and work with the numbers you feel comfortable with, and the metrics and the KPIs that matter most to you, and your fellow stakeholders who are impacted by this solution. So essentially, you're taking away that fear of this is just pie in the sky. Unbelievable numbers. I don't buy into that I'm unique to what if it were as small as this that's still worth pursuing? So let's now go and see if we can make that bigger. Yeah,

53:21

absolutely. Again, this is a mindset. It's an approach. And this is playing the, you know, the white F game, if you will, and maintain your credibility throughout that. So any other Sharon, any other questions or comments come in?

53:36

Vijay? Vijay has got a supplemental watch the timeline for the percentage improvement is 1%. In one year, so is that 21.5 6 million for a 1% improvement in online sales, what they would expect in one year?

53:54

Yeah, absolutely. And Vijay, this is again, on an annualized basis, rough order of magnitude paint with a broad brush, as we say, but yeah, definitely on an annualized basis around this. So the good news is, when you kind of again, I liken this to playing tennis you're serving first, outside looking in, we haven't really met with you to get Mr. Customer to get your detailed numbers. rough order of magnitude could be this. Is this a problem we're solving and when I had my customer hat on, it used to drive me crazy when someone was coming in saying, hey, look, I could save you anywhere from five to \$6,000. And it's like, well, that is great. How did you get on my calendar versus understanding the rough order of magnitude of the improvement? Dave, any other comments or that you have or anything else in chat since you seem to be monitoring for me thing, nothing

54:48

in chat and in the interest of finishing on time for people I think will move forward.

54:53

Absolutely. So again, just a quick recap. We walked you through the top seven and Again, some of these insights can be available to you as well. So get ready with your, your, your phones for the QR code, we'll be putting those back up again, and other level of series we'll be talking about. So these are coming attractions, finding new sales opportunities, establishing that playbook getting the C suite meeting. And even for sales leaders, there's some best practice that we've worked with a lot of our customers lessons learned out there in terms of, hey, there's four questions about every pursuit that a sales leader should ask, besides how big it is, and when are you going to close it. So there's some other things coming soon around the attractions. So again, we would encourage you, we thank you for attending, we encourage you to download the book if you haven't. Or if you want to see some of the insights we shared with you. You're not a client IQ user, or if you are in the coaching reach out to us. But if you would like this report, and we would love to give you some of these insights to help you hopefully progress your account plan and find new sales opportunities as well. And again, you can contact us through fanlistings@fanlistings.com with any questions, or if we can help you in any way,

please feel free to reach out to us. Hopefully, you're getting the feeling that we're very collaborative, very open and hopefully as transparent as possible there. But any other parting shots or comments or chats, their debut would like to address? Well,

56:24

just a lessons learned if you like, I referenced an early attendance at an account planning session that was too internally focused, that account team turned it round the next year and ended up holding a joint account planning session with the customer. That was very successful, both in qualifying where resources would be dedicated, which projects the customer is willing to engage collaboratively with us on and equally which they were not happy to go with. So it saves time pursuing something that there was no chance of ever winning, I would encourage everyone to see account planning as an iterative, ongoing process, not a once a year admin exercise and chore. It is something that can add value, improve retention, reduce wasted resources, expand the scope of relationships that you have in the customer, and get you to prioritize where you can add the most value for the customer use properly, you can be differentiated and properly aligned with the customer and what they're trying to achieve. And that's going to lead to greater success for you. So I wish you well. Thank you, Ben for having me on. And I hope that what we've shared with everyone will at least allow them to turn the dial forward in a positive way. And

57:47

go up to that next level. Dave, great wrap up. We'd like to thank all the participants and registrants today. Thank you so much for attending. And again, this recording will be made available to you and Dave, as usual. We're not worthy. Thank you so much for your participation. Always enjoy learning from you. So thanks again. Take care everyone. Have a good day. Bye bye!