

TechScholar™



**Supporting a B2B
Technology Sales Force
in the Digital Age**

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Your sales reps know HOW to sell, teach them how to sell YOUR products

Supporting a B2B Technology Sales Force in the Digital Age

Challenge

The Changing World of Sales

The days of the traveling salesman are long behind us. Today, B2B buyers progress more than 70% of the way through the decision-making process before engaging a sales representative.¹ Customers now seek personalized interactions with brands and expect their sales reps to learn, understand, and anticipate their needs—like personal consultants. An overwhelming majority—79%—of business buyers say that it's critical for sales reps to add value to their business by serving as a trusted advisor.²

In short, customers want more than your product: they want your expertise to help their business succeed.

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¹Erskine, Ryan. (2017, December 28). How to Turn B2B Buyers into Sales Leads, According to Data. Retrieved from <https://www.forbes.com/sites/ryanerskine/2017/12/28/how-to-turn-b2b-buyers-into-sales-leads-according-to-data/#3fad32135a18>

²Calnan, Ed. (2019, February 7). How to Sell in the Era of the Educated Buyer. Retrieved from <https://business.linkedin.com/sales-solutions/blog/sales-reps/2019/01/how-to-sell-in-the-era-of-the-educated-buyer>

Background: The World of B2B Tech Sales

The Acceleration of Technological Innovation

AI is the top growth area for sales teams: its adoption is forecast to grow 139% over the next three years.³ Sales reps are becoming bogged down with non-selling activities, but they are turning to AI for smarter selling processes.

Soon, product recommendations, lead scoring, email responses, and even day-to-day administrative tasks will be autonomously integrated so that sales reps can focus on delivering the best customer experiences.

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³Bova, Tiffani. (2019, January 25). 26 Sales Statistics That Prove Sales Is Changing. Retrieved from <https://www.salesforce.com/blog/2017/11/15-sales-statistics.html>

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B2B reps need to evolve with the times from being basic order-takers to informed brand ambassadors educated on products, solutions, and client needs.

The Modern-Day Sales Force

In a blind survey conducted by Product Sales Training platform TechScholar, 90% of B2B reps in the office technology sector self-identified themselves as being likely to target and introduce products to a new customer. To succeed in these sales overtures, today's sales reps require detailed, up-to-date product and market information. Sales reps are responsive to product education and, given the opportunity, will actively engage with new product or selling information presented to them. Online Product Sales Training is a valuable tool for presenting that information.

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Background: Product Sales Training

What Is Product Sales Training?

Product Sales Training differs from general sales training in that it focuses on product-centric features instead of traditional sales technique training. Product Sales Training offers product-specific distinguishing points, includes customer-required information, and answers solution-focused customer questions.

It also differs from general sales training in another key way. Traditionally, manufacturers provide dealer/distributor Product Sales Training at lunch and learn events. These events take up valuable selling time and unfortunately leave many representatives furtively playing on their smartphones. Online Product Sales Training makes it possible for manufacturers to educate geographically disperse dealer/distributor sales reps consistently and concisely, at a time convenient to them, reducing the need for costly and largely ineffective lunch and learns.

What Makes Online Product Sales Training Successful?

High-quality Product Sales Training requires careful crafting, consistent formatting, timely delivery, and easy access. It needs to provide value-added, product-specific selling information and the answers to sales reps' most important selling questions. Successful education in Product Sales Training should deliver measurable results.

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Conclusions

The Value of Quality Sales Training

To maintain a competitive edge, companies need to help their reps understand their products. Multiplatform Product Sales Training is the innovative solution to traditional product education and is a necessary resource in the modern B2B world. Well-crafted online Product Sales Training is broadly targeted and therefore more cost-effective to develop and deploy.

Based on survey results from over 5,000 outside sales reps, 41% of registered users on TechScholar self-identified as having completed Product Training Modules (PTMs) during their free time. This entrepreneurial mindset makes modern sales representatives a valued asset to the companies they represent.

Reps who complete online training verifiably come back for more information. In fact, 77% of users who completed a Product Training Module on the TechScholar platform also download sales collateral from a resource library, sometimes right before a sales presentation.

From that same survey, 58% of users said they'd like to see new Product Sales Training modules monthly. Clearly, there is wide acceptance and demand from B2B reps for Product Sales Training because it helps them sell and hit their goals. They appreciate short, concise product information that helps them recognize opportunities and start a sales dialogue. When the training includes all those components, it validates their time investment.

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Positive Results From Successful Product Sales Training

When companies offer well-executed sales training, they get positive results and feedback from their inside and outside sales reps. TechScholar clients report that engaged sales reps display year-over-year sales improvement, sometimes as high as 30%. Post-training product knowledge is validated by quizzes with average quiz scores at about 90%.

Take a look at B2B sales rep comments from the survey:

“These trainings are great. They provide all the key highlights without getting too technical. I like that the information is always geared toward what a customer would truly care about in their product.”

“It helps to better understand and makes it much easier for me to show, explain and offer each product.”

“Always enjoy new product knowledge. Helpful to keep up with technology.”

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Summary

The B2B sales world is forever changing: representatives are getting younger, and product sales are shifting to online channels.

But this is not the end of the road for B2B salespeople; rather, it's a time for companies and their representatives to collaborate and usher in an improved era of B2B sales. Product enhancement cycles now move faster and need modern technology to help reps keep up to speed. Buyers don't need simplistic product details from sales reps; they need sales reps who will understand their needs and answer questions they can't research online and provide comprehensive solutions and service both before and after the sale. Easy access to quality Product Sales Training is a modern-day necessity for sales reps to stay relevant and be successful.

B2B sales reps aren't going away. They just need to be properly trained to deliver the information and service that customers require.

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TechScholar™

TechScholar, founded in 2009, creates professionally prepared, web delivered Product Sales Training for some of the most widely recognized tech companies in the world.



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at your side



lenovo

LEXMARK

plantronics.

Fellowes



The company has created over 200 Product Training Modules, trained hundreds of sales reps worldwide and administered and reported on an accumulated 500,000 hours of web based training. With TechScholar, all product training costs are in a single budget line, and manufacturers and distributors get reports on training activities and performance that allow them to evaluate and validate their spend.

To learn more about how a TechScholar Product Sales Training campus can solve your company's training challenges, contact us today.

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