

# Value Is the New Demo



# What Buyers Really Want from Your Sales Team, And How to Give It to Them

A successful sales team is one that is adept at demonstrating value—and in the eyes of today's buyers, value means more than fancy product



features or generic statements about a solution's benefits. Buyers want real, hard data—in the form of quantifiable financial figures—about the value a product or offering will deliver.

Traditionally, sales teams have struggled to demonstrate this type of value because they lacked insight about the specific financial impact of the solutions they sold. That's not because such data wasn't available. On the contrary, it has always been feasible to develop ROI calculations.

Instead, the challenge is that sales teams have rarely integrated value data into the sales cycle. They didn't take full advantage of the information available to them about the financial impact of products and services—a mistake that led to slower sales cycles and fewer conversions.

Fortunately, it doesn't have to be this way. As this whitepaper explains, the solutions that sales teams need to demonstrate real value are readily available. Leveraging them is simply a matter of combining value-selling tools with ROI assessments.

The following pages explain where to find both of these solutions, and how to pair them to implement a sales strategy that gives buyers what they really want—hard, objective proof of the value they stand to gain by making a purchase.



# The Shift in Buyer Expectations

Once upon a time, product demos were a reliable way of converting prospects. But in an era of tightened budgets and increased competition, demos alone often no longer seal the deal.

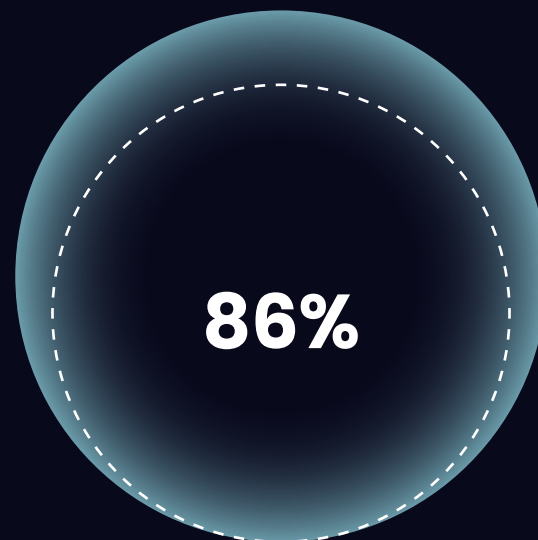
Conversion rates for leads who receive a product demo hover around **10-20 percent**—hardly the type of figure that high-impact sales teams should strive for.

Combine that with Forrester's Buyer Journey Survey's (2024) finding that **86 percent** of purchases in the B2B context stall during the sales process, it's clear that even when buyers sit down and view a demo, much could still get in the way of closing a deal.

Conversion rates for leads who receive a product demo



Purchases in the B2B context that stall during the sales process



# The Problem with Demos

Since we're pinning much of the blame for lackluster sales outcomes on demos, let's unpack what, specifically, goes wrong when sales teams settle for a demo-led approach.

The issue starts with the fact that demos are often generic and focused on flashy features—those that may make product designers feel proud, but are not likely to speak to a buyer's particular business

challenges or goals. It doesn't matter how dazzling your product is if it doesn't do what a buyer needs it to do—or if the buyer has no way of ascertaining during the demo whether the features will translate to actual value.

A second challenge is that demos often happen too early in the sales cycle, as a way of nurturing leads. That may work well if your goal is to maximize total leads. It's less effective for achieving what really matters—showcasing value to qualified leads in order to convince them to convert.

On top of this lies the challenge that anyone can produce a demo—which means that demos do little to help your sales team stand out from the competition. And when buyers spend their days inundated with demos from competing providers, none of which prove actual value, they're likely to become fatigued and give up on making a purchasing decision at all. Or, they might buy based on simplistic factors like lowest pricing, depriving your sales team of the opportunity to demonstrate that your offering delivers the overall greatest value, even if it doesn't feature the lowest price tag.

To be clear, there's nothing wrong with including product demos in the sales cycle. They are indeed a useful way of nurturing leads, for example. But if your sales strategy hinges on demos alone, you're probably missing out on key opportunities for boosting your conversion rate and shortening the average time to close a deal.



# Giving Buyers What They Actually Want

All of the above means that modern sales teams face an imperative to move from demo-led selling to value selling.

Value selling means a sales strategy that centers on communicating your solution's value—in terms of ROI—to buyers. To be as effective as possible, value selling should include:

- A clear, quantifiable articulation of a product or service's ROI.
- ROI calculations that are tailored for each prospect's specific needs and challenges.
- The integration of value data into multiple stages of the sales cycle and the buyer engagement process, in order to maximize buyers' ability to recognize the solution's value.
- Interactive tools that allow buyers to see a solution's impact, not just hear about it.

For sellers and buyers alike, value selling is a win-win approach. It allows sales teams to make their pitches as quickly and effectively as possible, leading to higher conversion rates and faster closings.

And for buyers, value selling makes it easy to cut through the noise and focus on what really matters—how effectively and provably a solution addresses their specific needs.





# A Guide for Sales Leaders

Now that we've explained the impact of value selling, let's cover what sales leaders really need to know: How to operationalize value selling in a practical way.

## Empowering Teams with Value Selling Tools & Data

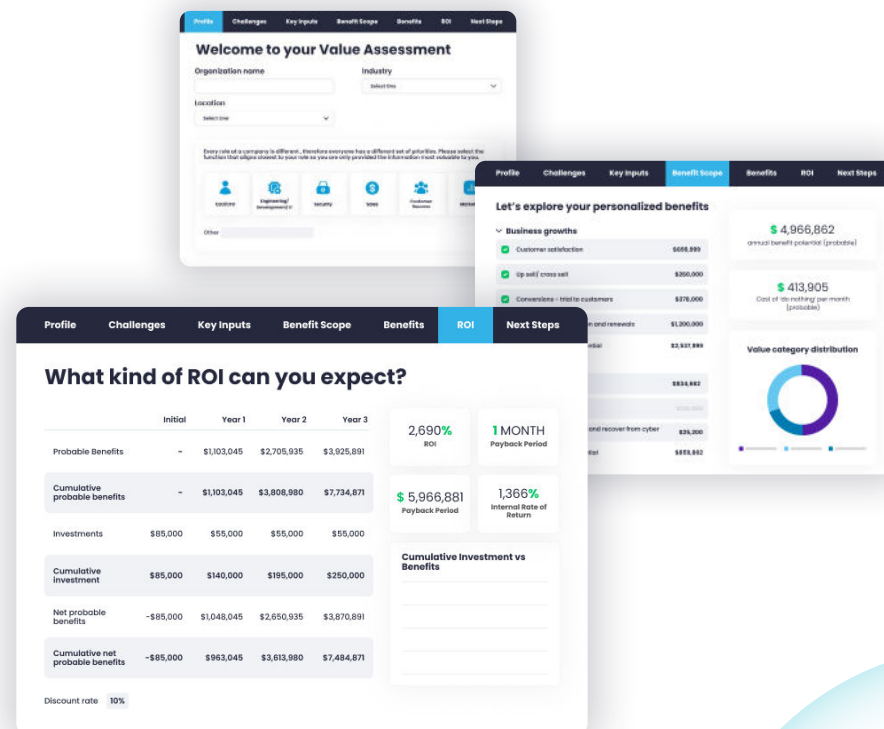
The process starts with finding the right solutions.

Sales teams need:

1. A value-selling tool that empowers sales reps to demonstrate the business impact of solutions in an interactive way—and to embed that impact directly into conversations.
2. Quantifiable ROI data to serve as the fuel for value-led sales conversations.

Each of these solutions is readily available. For value-selling tools, sales teams can turn to solutions like Mediafly's Value Enablement platform, which enables reps to embed value data into every stage of the sales cycle.

As for obtaining ROI data, businesses can leverage offerings like Forrester's Total Economic Impact™ (TEI) assessment—which provides an objective, methodologically rigorous analysis of an offering's financial value. A Forrester TEI study gives sales teams hard data that they can use to show value, rather than relying on hypothetical numbers that are not connected to specific customer needs and are less likely to convert. By providing a consistent set of data—based on assessments of a product's actual existing customers—to use across the sales cycle, TEI studies help sellers make a business case and get a buy decision.



## Rethinking Sales Operations

Deploying the right tools and data is only part of the process for pivoting toward a value-led sales strategy. Equally important is changing the way sales teams operate by embracing tactics like the following:

- **Lead with questions, not slides:** Reps should ask buyers about the challenges they need to solve, not walk through slides or demo generic features.
- **ROI-based storytelling:** Using value calculators or ROI tools, sales reps should offer quantifiable data about how a solution will solve buyers' challenges.
- **Cohesive value narratives:** The value conversation that the sales team has with buyers should align with marketing messaging, creating a cohesive value narrative that stretches across and beyond the buyer's journey.
- **Encourage co-creation:** Rather than focusing on what a product does, reps should engage buyers in conversations about how their businesses can work in tandem to develop unique solutions—all the while reinforcing that message with value data.



# How Skillsoft Made the Leap to Value Selling

As a real-world example of putting value selling into practice, consider the story of Skillsoft, a leading provider of digital training and learning solutions.

Originally, the company's sales teams "relied on a one-size-fits-all strategy that was less focused on quantifiable priorities and outcomes," said Amy Gormley, Skillsoft's Value Principal for Global Engagement. "Without a clear value narrative, our conversations were shifting to price, and a lack of compelling, data-backed insights made it more difficult to secure stakeholder buy-in."



**Mediafly helped us democratize value selling by enabling all sellers with the tools and resources needed to deliver value-based outcomes.**

That changed when Skillsoft adopted Mediafly's Value Enablement solutions, coupled with Skillsoft customer benchmark data.

"Mediafly helped us democratize value selling by enabling all sellers with the tools and resources needed to deliver value-based outcomes," Gormley explained. "We can speak the language our customers are accustomed to speaking."

She added that, by tracking data points like win rates and deal sizes using Intelligence, another Mediafly product, "we've noticed a clear improvement in our stakeholder engagement and trust."

For Skillsoft, adopting a value selling model was easy—and it delivered significant, tangible results in the form of more effective sales reps, higher close rates and larger deals.





# The New Sales Imperative

In short, the best sales teams don't sell products. They sell value—which is what buyers really want.

That's why sales leaders aiming to turn their reps into super-sellers must empower their teams with value selling solutions like those from Mediafly.



## Learn more about Mediafly's value selling solutions

The easier it is for your reps to integrate value into the sales cycle in an interactive fashion that focuses on customer needs, the better your business's ability to stand apart from the competition.

[Learn more](#)