



Revenue Leaders' Guide to Sales Kickoff Success

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Getting sales teams excited is one component of a successful sales kickoff (SKO) event. But if rallying the team is your only SKO outcome, you're missing out on a critical opportunity to supercharge revenue growth and set the business as a whole up for a winning year.

The reason why is simple: Effective revenue enablement hinges on more than just having a revved-up sales team. It also requires a well-educated, strategically aligned team that deeply understands their company's products and is empowered to pursue a value-focused sales strategy every day of the year.

This is where some SKOs have a tendency to fall short. They focus on team-building alone, without giving reps access to the essential tools and knowledge they need to optimize revenue growth.

Fortunately, this is a challenge that businesses can solve by rethinking the role that sales enablement plays in SKOs. Read on for guidance as we unpack the state of the modern SKO, discuss the pitfalls

that can leave sales teams under-prepared and explain what it takes to transform sales kickoffs into more than mere rallying cries.



A great SKO starts with building camaraderie. It ends with everyone walking out the door armed with the knowledge and resources they need to fulfill their sales mission."

Tony Kavadas

Chief Sales Officer, Mediafly



The bottom line: A successful SKO leads to actionability."

Owen Thal

Business Value Manager, Okta



What the Modern SKO *Should* Do: Defining the CRO's SKO Strategy

For the Chief Revenue Officer (CRO) and other revenue leaders, sales kickoff events are no longer optional or nice-to-have affairs. They're a critical element of a successful sales enablement and revenue optimization strategy.

This is because SKOs present an opportunity to pursue several vital components of sales success:

- **Team morale and culture-building:** As a place where sales reps from across the company come together, the SKO helps to maximize morale and communicate the company's cultural values.
- **Revenue alignment:** An effective SKO is one that sets clear expectations around revenue goals, and gives sales teams a concrete understanding of the role they play in meeting those goals.
- **Unified storytelling:** The SKO should ensure that every seller, marketer and customer-facing business leader communicates the same value narrative to prospects and customers.
- **Sustained enablement:** Much more than a one-and-done moment, a great SKO drives ongoing sales and revenue success well after the event itself concludes by giving teams access to the guidance and content they need to thrive in the field.



Sellers need to understand how they're tied into broader processes, and how they align with the company's strategic objectives. The SKO is the ideal place to communicate that insight."

Tony Kavadas

Chief Sales Officer, Mediafly



SKOs should always start with the fundamentals by establishing the core foundations of your company's products and the competitive landscape. But it's important to transition quickly from there by drilling down into specific examples, strategies and sales guidance."

Owen Thal

Business Value Manager, Okta



What SKOs *Actually* Do—and How They Fall Short

The problem facing many CROs today is that SKOs often don't achieve all of the key goals we just described.

Instead, the traditional SKO playbook tends to focus too much on just one of those goals—morale and culture-building.

Building morale is certainly important. Revenue leaders should use the SKO to instill enthusiasm in the sales team by highlighting exciting new product launches and features, while also celebrating the previous year's wins.

But enthusiasm alone doesn't empower sellers or optimize revenue. Too often, teams go home from the SKO excited but hampered by challenges like the following:

- **Unclear strategy:** If teams don't understand how products and features fit into the company's unified sales and revenue strategy, they're unlikely to be able to align sales operations with overall revenue goals.
- **Lack of actionability:** Without concrete guidance on how to sell new offerings, teams struggle to translate excitement to revenue wins.
- **Content overload:** Sometimes, SKOs inundate reps with so much sales content and information that they don't know which content they actually need or how to use it in the field.

- **Inconsistent follow-through:** In the absence of ongoing touchpoints following the SKO, sales teams are in a poor position to put what they've learned to use throughout the year.

Avoiding these shortcomings requires an SKO that is more than a mere event. It must serve as a catalyst for year-round revenue growth.



One of the pitfalls to avoid during a kickoff is having too many takeaways. Having an actionable focus is really important, but you need to home in on two or three initiatives without overloading your team."

Owen Thal

Business Value Manager, Okta



The product team is well aware of why new products are coming to market, but the sales team doesn't always have that visibility. It's critical to use the SKO to educate the sales team on the why of the new product, not just the what."

London Benjamin

Associate Marketing Content Engagement Manager, Moen



Unified Enablement: The Foundation for SKO Success

Achieving that goal starts with a unified revenue enablement platform, which should be the foundation of every modern SKO.

A unified enablement platform is one that places all of the resources sales teams need to thrive—every playbook, deck, messaging doc and more—in a single place. When teams can access all of the resources they need through a central “source of truth,” it becomes much easier to put sales goals into action.

What’s more, a unified enablement platform also provides the business with critical visibility into how teams are actually using resources. The

company can see when and by whom content is accessed.

And we’re not talking here just about accessing content during the SKO. A revenue enablement platform also drives ongoing reinforcement by delivering consistent training and messaging for sales teams, long after the SKO concludes.

In all of these ways, a revenue enablement platform helps transform sales content and training from an ad hoc, scattered operation into a scalable system for effective revenue execution—which is exactly what sales teams need to bridge the gap between excitement and action.



For each new product launch, we create a suite of content for the sales team—sales sheets, customer presentations, internal training modules and the like. With a unified enablement platform, we can easily make all of this available to reps during and after the kickoff event.”

London Benjamin

Associate Marketing Content Engagement Manager, Moen



Value Selling: Taking Revenue Enablement to the Next Level

Revenue leaders can get even more out of sales kickoffs by leveraging them as launchpads for embedding a culture of value selling among reps.

Value selling means communicating the business outcomes and financial impact of products and services. To do this, sellers must be equipped with the data and tools they need to quantify offerings' impact on customers in terms of ROI, cost savings and revenue growth.

The SKO is the perfect place to provide teams with access to these resources and showcase how to place them at the center of sales operations. From

there, ongoing access to value tools ensures that reps are prepared to pursue consistent, value-focused messaging throughout the year.



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My advice to salespeople is to use those tools as an extension of how they sell. Don't wait until someone is asking for value or ROI. Instead, value should be informing the way teams approach the sales cycle at all stages.”

Owen Thal

Business Value Manager, Okta



A Practical Approach to Value Selling

It's easy to understand why it's important to place value at the center of sales operations: Customers make purchasing decisions based on how much value products deliver, not how shiny or novel they are.

What's harder is executing value selling in a practical, repeatable and measurable way. Value selling success requires more than just integrating value into sales messaging. Teams also need value tools that empower them to achieve goals such as:

- Formulating value-centered questions to help discover leads.
- Quantifying financial outcomes on a customer-by-customer basis to enable personalized, value-focused sales engagement.



- Delivering proposals that directly connect offerings to business results.

The SKO is the ideal moment to place value tools in the hands of the sales team and demonstrate how to use them. Doing so is another critical step toward translating excitement into action that will drive revenue growth all year long.



At the core, most sales people will say they want to sell on value. But a lot of the time, they have a harder time asking those extra questions, taking the abstract and quantifying it—putting dollars on pain points. So you use the SKO to get them comfortable with using value and integrating it into the sales conversation.”

Owen Thal

Business Value Manager, Okta



Operationalizing Success Beyond the Event

The true measure of an SKO's success isn't what happens during the event. It's how the event drives ongoing revenue enablement.



To this end, CROs and other revenue leaders must provide ongoing touchpoints that allow sales teams to draw on the guidance, content and tools shared at the SKO whenever they're in the field—which happens when they have a unified enablement platform and value selling tools at their fingertips from any location.

At the same time, the business should consistently and comprehensively measure how reps are using resources throughout the year. It should look at data such as how content usage, training and value selling align with revenue outcomes for each sales team or rep. With this insight, CROs can identify what's working and what's not, then use this feedback to help make their next SKO even more impactful.

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After the sales meeting, we use our enablement platform to keep tabs on engagement with presentations that were shared during the meeting. For months after, we can track which resources our sales team is using most.”

London Benjamin

Associate Marketing Content Engagement Manager, Moen

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In addition to celebrating successes, the SKO is also a time to look at losses and missed opportunities—like how using different resources or shifting the conversation toward value sooner would have helped achieve a higher win rate.”

Tony Kavadas

Chief Partner Officer, Mediafly



Conclusion: The CRO's Playbook for SKO Success

In short, the success of SKOs—and of the revenue leaders behind them—hinges on their ability to drive actionable revenue enablement throughout the year and serve as strategic levers of growth.

To help achieve that goal, CROs should ensure that the SKO includes each of the following core components:

- A clear definition of sales strategy that aligns with revenue priorities for the business. Every rep should understand the role he or she plays in driving the company's overall vision.
- Unified enablement via a centralized content and messaging platform that reps can draw on during and after the event.
- Value selling tools, which empower sellers to integrate value into every step of the sales process.



- Analytics that deliver ongoing visibility into the adoption, usage and revenue impact of sales enablement resources and value tools.

These are the characteristics that transform sales kickoffs from mere “pep rallies” into events that empower sales teams with the information, tools and resources they need to excel every day of the year—which should be the ultimate goal of every SKO. These are also among the benefits businesses gain when they place Mediafly's suite of revenue enablement solutions at the core of their strategies.

**View a demo to learn more about
aaahow Mediafly helps drive actionable
outcomes that maximize revenue
at every stage of the sales cycle.**

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