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How to Drive Sellers' Adoption of Generative AI

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Generative AI is a transformational technology, but can also pose significant risk. Sales enablement leaders should create a plan and drive sellers' adoption of generative AI to improve efficiency in creating enablement materials and enable revenue generating functions to improve value messaging.

Overview

Key Findings

- Generative AI is moving faster than most businesses can keep up with the technology.
- Sales enablement will need to drive responsible use of the technology to help achieve better sales outcomes as generative AI is now freely available to use to generate content.
- Vendors are embedding generative AI in their products and employees are using the "free" technology whether or not their managers know about it.
- Governance, privacy and risks are not completely known, but sales use cases are emerging that need to be addressed.

Recommendations

Sales enablement leaders should:

- Learn how to create content with generative AI by experimenting with prompt crafting.
- Develop enablement programs by determining specific use cases to create content and training for revenue generating roles.

- Invest in generative AI literacy as a foundation to enable sellers and other revenue-generating roles to provide a return on investment by creating curricula that helps them learn to create meaningful generative value messages using generative AI.
- Advise IT on enablement use case needs, and use technical resources to help evaluate technology and ensure that corporate policy is followed.

Strategic Planning Assumption

By 2025, 35% of chief revenue officers will resource a centralized “GenAI Operations” team as part of their go-to-market organization.

Introduction

This document was revised on 20 June 2023. The document you are viewing is the corrected version. For more information, see the [Corrections page on gartner.com](#).

Generative AI is out there and freely accessible. There is no going back. Vendors either have or are in the process of incorporating it into their products. Revenue-generating roles are using free sources to create customer-facing content and materials – whether or not their managers know it. Every day, multiple articles announce the technology’s advancements, benefits, risks and use cases. Sales enablement leaders must navigate this environment and create a way to drive adoption of this new technology to help sellers use it in a responsible, ethical and effective manner.

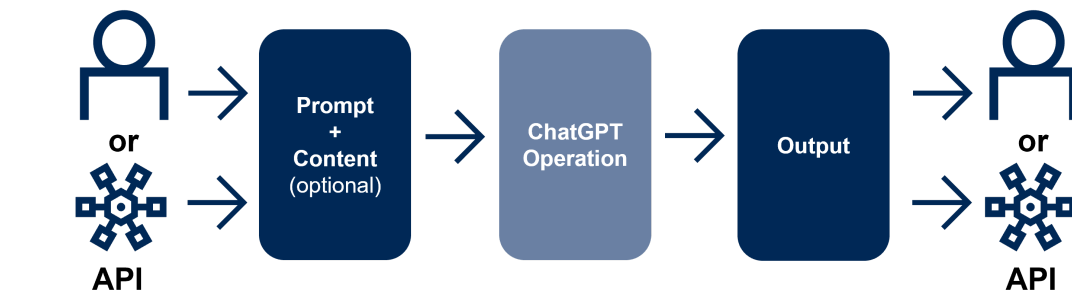
Enablement teams and other sales functions have been using AI for years, but it has been a long path to reaching true value and overcoming skepticism about machine learning algorithms. For example, organizations employed due diligence to ensure the algorithms were transparent and provided logical recommendations.

Today, AI is used in prescriptive recommendations, such as next-best actions or recommended content for a seller to share. It’s used in training and coaching to determine sentiment or skill level. Gartner’s 2023 Technology’s Impact on Seller Productivity Survey found that 75% of respondents regularly used data-driven insights from their organization to do their job and 84% of respondents said their systems provided advice on next-best actions to take with customers/prospects. ¹

The use of those insights and prescriptive recommendations can now be extended to create personalized and relevant content, for example, by using generative AI’s ability to summarize a previous meeting. The intelligence in technology today is the foundation that generative AI will build on to assist in helping sellers create messages and content for buyers. Figure 1 illustrates how it works.

Figure 1: Inputs, Operations and Outputs of ChatGPT

Inputs, Operations and Outputs of ChatGPT



Source: Gartner
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Gartner.

For the first time, a consumer-like experience is being applied in a business setting. Sellers can easily ask ChatGPT, Google Bard or other applications based on large language models (LLMs) to create an email or craft a message. To many, the experience feels new and exciting – not like just another tool, but a new collaborative teammate for sellers. But as generative AI emerges, it also has potential to cause risks that must be mitigated (see Note 1). This sets up a key problem: How should sales enablement leaders drive adoption and value with GenAI while protecting corporate IP and their organization’s brand and reputation?

Sellers and other revenue-generating roles must start by **safely and effectively** creating and sending messages and content using the concepts of generative value messaging (GVM). Safe and effective GVM requires sellers to understand how to use generative AI, develop generative AI literacy, and internalize the difference between generative value messages and low-quality value destroying content.

Generative value messaging is an operating framework designed to harness the power of AI in messaging. The framework enables messaging teams to harness three disruptions of generative AI: democratization of creating messaging, accelerating how quickly it's generated, and the benefits of empiricism when crafting messaging.

Sales enablement leaders will need to ensure revenue-generating roles create generative value messaging, rather than flooding prospects with tons of generic messages and content.

Analysis

Learn How to Use Generative AI With Prompt Crafting

In Gartner's Revenue Success Survey, 68% of those surveyed use AI as part of instructional design and 34% rank AI in the top three for impact. ² Generative AI has the potential to increase that impact. Experiment with what is generated by asking the tool questions in different ways. The more you familiarize yourself with the inputs and resulting outputs, the better you'll be able to create generative AI results that add value. Additionally, use generative AI to aid in reporting such as summarization survey data and analysis of usage data.

Taking the time to learn the different ways to create a prompt (prompt crafting) will enable you to create a strategy for teaching others how to best use it given their role. For example, choosing a specific "voice," such as persuasive or empathetic, will have different output results. Determining which voice will likely have better results and provide a better customer experience will be important to convey in the enablement program. While this may take some time to learn and improve, it will have better results for your customers as well as internal employees. There are online communities where you can learn and share about prompt crafting for users with all levels of experience.

Note that prompt crafting is different from prompt engineering. Prompt engineering injects specific corporate data based on the question being asked by the end user at the same time the question is asked. This will require more operational skills.

Develop Enablement Programs by Determining Specific Use Cases

Defining specific use cases based on data that is available will help to review and curate results helping enablement to become more effective.

Use prompt crafting skills to help you create enablement materials. Create training programs and materials that address the following at minimum:

- What is generative AI?
- How do you use generative AI responsibly?
- What are corporate IP and policies and what does that mean for selling?
- What is the seller's responsibility before sending anything either internally or, more importantly, externally?

The boundaries and responsibilities need to be outlined, learned and practiced to minimize risk of messaging that could be harmful. Create training content to educate revenue generating roles on what open LLMs are and what the chat function on top of them can and can't do. Currently, there are very high expectations that open-source models can replace sellers, but they can't. They can help summarize conversations or content. They can simplify the creation of a title or email or even create content that the enablement or marketing team can utilize.

Sales enablement leaders are poised to be able to help sellers transform the way they work through generative AI to better serve prospects and help the organization grow.

Responsibilities and Boundaries

Creating content using generative AI is a start, but the content needs verification for accuracy and personalization along with a check against the corporate message to make sure that you maintain your brand and values as an organization. The seller has responsibility to ensure that what is being sent is not only accurate, but also accurately reflects their own brand. Engineered insincerity has the potential to destroy the trusted advisor relationship. Sales enablement leaders should create content to help identify items that should be reviewed and how to properly review them before information can be sent.

For example, Gartner has seen demonstrations from vendors putting this type of technology in the product where a conversation is summarized and it generates an email “template” with specifics from that meeting. A guardrail may or may not be in place where a seller wouldn’t be able to send that email out as is. Even if there is a guardrail, modifying just one word in the email is likely enough. The seller will need to check the tone and use their learned skills to review the information that will be sent.

Review the generative AI outputs with these questions in mind:

- Does it sound like something that the seller would say?
- What happens if the seller reads it out loud?
- Does it sound natural? Is the data accurate?
- Are the points in the email the ones the seller wants to emphasize?

What about that private conversation the seller had the other day where the seller knows the buyer is getting married next week? They may want to add a sentence to wish the couple a happy day.

Training content should be created to cover as many known situations that can occur along the buyer journey and deal stages. This will enable sellers to learn how to use the tool to their advantage while helping to minimize potential risk in information that is sent to buyers. If you have purchased a revenue enablement platform, create role-plays and assignments to create messaging that can be peer-, manager- and machine-scored. Best-in-class results should be captured in your training content library to ensure new hires can see “what good looks like.”

Invest in Generative AI Literacy as a Foundation

Mass adoption requires sales employees to understand and see value in the technology. Sales enablement leaders should invest in generative AI literacy to help enablement teams and sellers see generative AI as more than just another tool but as a new teammate to collaborate with and improve their work. Generative AI literacy is critical to improving curriculum that drives sales outcomes and mitigate risk, and should include:

- **Content** — Outline the capabilities and limitations of your organization's deployment of generative AI to help sales employees understand the best ways to use it. Include both best-in-class examples of content created and a living knowledge-sharing component to enable real-time information sharing and experimentation.
- **Policies** — Create clear generative AI usage policies that outline how AI can be used within the company and for various roles. Define specifically what is permissible and what isn't with examples.
- **Data and analytics** — Train sellers on how generative AI data and analytics can refine and guide decision making. Also share your organization's policy around data privacy and security of conversations employees have with the system.
- **Prompts and prompt crafting** — Show how sales employees can craft prompts that are clear and concise, and include relevant details. Build and share resources and tools, like a prompt dictionary, to help employees craft more effective prompts. Include more advanced training on how sales employees can create prompts for multistep tasks and routines. This includes more technical aspects of how the company's generative AI works and how that influences the best way to interact.
- **Prompt engineering** — Create a library of questions that will generally be asked. Combine this with internal data sources that can be injected when prompts are created to have the system return more specific answers to the prompts.
- **AI ethics and responsibility** — Sales employees should receive training around the ethics of using AI, including bias and responsible usage.
- **Guardrails** — Guardrails should ensure responsible and effective use of generative AI. This should include rules around human oversight, bias monitoring, hallucination spotting and transparency requirements such as marking what content used generative AI to create.

You will need to prove impact or return on an investment in generative AI literacy. Enablement will need to be able to track the effectiveness of its use in programs with results. Seek data on performance improvement, cost savings in time spent on creation of both internal and external information, as well as the risk mitigated. Using generative AI may be tied to an improved ability to grow and retain business through the speed and accuracy of serving customer needs.

Train Sellers How to Create Generative Value Messaging

Create a series of microlearning assets specific to a role such as field seller, presales (technical seller) or customer success. Consider creating an AI playbook script that takes them through specific situations and shows how they will be able to use generative AI to transform messaging. Provide sellers an opportunity to practice each newly learned concept in a safe environment and include cadenced quizzing for knowledge retention.

Create learning opportunities for your sellers by having them practice using generative AI to:

- Create follow-up emails to prospects
- Create GVM in digital sales rooms
- Create cross-sell emails
- Make solution recommendations

The training to enable the field to create prompts that yield meaningful results should build on the last step. See Table 1 for an example of enablement content showing how the seller would use that training to practice and receive coaching.

In this example, a seller would like to create an email to a prospect to explain the benefits of using the company's product in the buyer's organization. A simple question might have the seller creating a prompt that says something like "write a response that explains the benefits of using this product." The seller could receive a very generic response that may or may not specifically hit on the pain points for the buyer or may be incorrect if not reviewed.

Table 1: Example Prompt Creation Enablement Path for a Seller

(Enlarged table in Appendix)

Enablement Topic	Example Input to the UI
<p><i>Voice</i> Identify the voice that you want the response in to generate a response that will sound like it's coming from you to the prospect or customer.</p>	<p>Act as a:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Seller ■ Presales engineer ■ Customer Success Manager
<p><i>Concise and clear ask</i> Construct an ask that is specific, personalized and clear.</p>	<p>Describe specific points and benefits that will help the buyer do something, learn something, or articulate the value of the product to stakeholders.</p>
<p><i>How you want to see the output</i> Create a prompt where you define the specifics of how you want to see an output.</p>	<p>In 200 words or less, deliver the response explaining the benefits for an audience that is a product manager who is a potential buyer that reports to the CMO. Include in the email at least three benefits that will improve the buyer's ability to generate additional revenue, profitability and cost savings.</p>
<p><i>Tone</i> Learn about different requests for tone and when to use them. Examples include: Empathetic Like a training manual Like a blog Friendly Casual Persuasive Optimistic Funny Inclusive</p>	<p>Deliver the response in a friendly but persuasive tone. Add in empathy for the buyer's present situation of needing to automate based on the summary of the call last Tuesday.</p>
<p><i>Words and phrases to avoid</i> Learn how to avoid words and phrases that might be harmful or can be considered biased or insincere</p>	<p>In the response, avoid bashing competitors.</p>

Source: Gartner (June 2023)

Advise IT on Enablement Use Cases and Partner to Evaluate Technology and Ensure Compliance

Enablement leaders must drive the use-case scenarios and requirements to ensure that revenue-generating resources are well-equipped. While there may be some hesitancy, organizational growth is dependent on the ability to grow in this transformational time.

Partner with your IT liaison to gain a foundational knowledge around generative AI. Learn about the executive decisions that have been made and the official corporate stance on the use of generative AI technology such as ChatGPT, and specific products supplied by vendors such as, for example, Microsoft's CoPilot or Viva Sales.

The advances in generative AI technology are happening very quickly and it will be hard to keep up with the nuances. For example, in March 2023, Open AI released a business ChatGPT that allows conversations to not be stored. ³

Use IT resources in software evaluation or new capabilities released for existing software to identify areas of strength, weakness and compliance issues of the vendor to ensure that your requirements will be met within corporate policy.

LLMs contain the data and user interfaces – the chat part – which make that data accessible for free to anyone. Users simply prompt (type a question) and the model strings together the response using the next most likely word/phrase to complete the sentences. This is the free part. Sellers and the enablement teams can enter almost anything and receive a confidently produced output. By confident, we mean the response sounds authoritative and trustworthy. If a seller were to provide a document and ask the model to summarize and condense the material into 500 words or less, the model will do that – and your corporate IP will be part of that LLM and available to the public. Remember, these applications are still prone to hallucinations, inaccuracies, bias as well as other issues (see Note 1). It is important to review outputs of anything created by generative AI to ensure good results.

Some organizations will invest to either hire resources with prompt-engineering skills or develop those skills internally to create a dataset of corporate materials and policies. These materials can be injected at the same time a prompt is created to return a more specific response that will be supported by the organization. For example, when a seller prompt asks, "Create an email to persuade a buyer to understand all the benefits of product X that I'd like to sell them," the system is injected with marketing collateral, which will be used to pull out the benefits for that product and construct a persuasive email to that buyer. This, of course, has cost implications and will take time to properly create a set of prompts and data pairings to be used but it does prevent corporate IP from being absorbed by the LLM.

Vendors are also including this technology in their offerings. Typical capabilities include:

- Summarizing content or meeting transcriptions including topics and next-best action

- Creating suggested content such as email follow ups
- Classification of content

Gartner expects revenue enablement platform vendors will use generative AI to create content based on its domain expertise. Enablement leaders will be able to create training content. Content creators (marketing and enablement) will be able to create new content more quickly for external consumption. They will also be able to create more interactive role-play scenarios for sellers to use in practicing messaging or situation handling.

Verify that your prompts and output will not train and learn off of your company's protected data and IP, and supply it back to the LLM. Sales enablement leaders should look to IT to help them decipher these capabilities and the risks of using LLM to develop enablement strategies to minimize risk and gain competitive advantage.

Finally – though currently cost-prohibitive – your organization might build its own LLM. Today, the cost to create, train and curate that model is not only monetarily expensive but also includes sustainability concerns.

By leading the conversation with IT, you can drive to meet the needs of the revenue organization and better learn where and how generative AI can be safely used. Enablement leaders can also determine whether the company is planning short-term investments in using corporate policy and materials to help tune outputs from these models, and whether this will help you drive your enablement programs.

Evidence

¹ **2023 Gartner Technology's Impact on Seller Productivity Survey:** This study was conducted to understand sellers' sentiment and emotional reaction toward technology and its impact across key levers of seller productivity. The research was conducted online in March and April 2023 among 501 respondents from the U.S. (n = 259), Canada (n = 86), the U.K. (n = 80) and Asia/Pacific (n = 76). Industry segments included banking/financial services, healthcare, information technology, manufacturing, business services and telecommunications. Respondents were screened for B2B seller roles with the following minimum requirements: at least one year in role at an organization with at least 50 sellers and annual revenue in 2022 of at least \$25 million or equivalent. Disclaimer: Results of this study do not represent global findings or the market as a whole but reflect the sentiment of the respondents and companies surveyed.

² **2022 Gartner Revenue Success Survey:** This online survey was conducted from November 2022 through December 2022 to understand key differences in the revenue tech stack, sales enablement approaches to behavioral change and collaboration skills of high performers and low performers. The survey was completed by an online sample of 194 C-suite respondents (chief sales officers, chief revenue officers, etc.), senior sales executives and other senior leaders across Asia/Pacific (9%), Western Europe (18%) and North America (73%). Qualifying respondents had roles focused on commercial operations/revenue operations, sales strategy, sales/revenue technology or specific geographic location with enterprisewide annual revenue in 2021 of more than \$5 million or equivalent or business unit/region annual revenue in 2021 of more than \$25 million or equivalent. Industry segments included banking/financial services, business services, information technology, manufacturing and healthcare providers. Disclaimer: Results of this survey do not represent global findings or the market as a whole, but reflect the sentiments of the respondents and companies surveyed.

³ ChatGPT Plugins, OpenAi.

⁴ **2023 Gartner Consumer Community Survey:** Gartner Consumer Community (n = 320, 10 – 17 February 2023). While the Gartner Consumer Community (n ≈ 500) resembles the U.S. general population, the data cited is based on the responses of community members who chose to take each activity. These samples may not be representative of the general population and the data should only be used for directional insights.

Note 1: Risks

Generative AI comes with risks that can have serious implications to the organization, its IP and the reputation of the individual and the organization. The results from these models can read very confidently, even though errors or hallucinations can be nuanced or outright wrong.

“Hallucinations happen when the service can produce content that is nonsensical or untruthful in relation to certain sources. This tendency can be particularly harmful as models become increasingly convincing and believable, leading to overreliance on them by users.”

– *Emerging Tech: Generative AI Needs Focus on Accuracy and Veracity to Ensure Widespread B2B Adoption*

If the end user doesn't know the truth, information could be sent from your organization that is at least incorrect, and at worst biased, harmful or exclusive.

It's nearly impossible for the business to keep up and grasp all of the implications and uses of generative AI. Even experts in the field of AI struggle to keep up with all of the advancements. A survey of Gartner's consumer community shows that concerns seem to outweigh the benefits. ⁴ But there are benefits that can help speed response time from the revenue organization, which improves engagement and helps buyers move forward in purchases.

There is great potential to improve the speed at which work gets done and reduce manual efforts, but there is also a great risk of diluting the brand, sending misinformation or creating harm to the reputation of the organization. Sales enablement leaders can help mitigate these risks for sellers and other resources responsible for revenue generation.

Recommended by the Authors

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