



EXECUTIVE OVERVIEW

MARKET
MAP

Sales Technology Platforms Market Map 2017

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Business-to-business buyers' journeys can be complex, demanding digital strategies similar to business-to-customer approaches to help the sales team execute in the digital era. New advancements in machine learning and artificial intelligence show promise in augmenting the sales team with actionable insight and intelligent automation.



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Sheryl Kingstone leads 451 Research's coverage for Customer Experience & Commerce, which covers the many aspects of how customer experience is a catalyst for digital transformation. She oversees the company's coverage of a variety of customer experience software markets spanning ad tech, marketing, sales, commerce and service.

Key Findings

Software for sales teams is moving beyond systems of record and into systems of engagement that enable more accurate forecasts, content delivery and lead qualification. As these capabilities become categories in their own right, there will likely be consolidation among the most mature of them, as well as interest from large enterprise software vendors seeking bridges between their sales and marketing suites.

451 Research's IT and line-of-business decision-maker surveys found that sales analytics and intelligence, engagement, and content delivery are the most sought-after capabilities.

The sales tech market continues to be dominated by the 'Big Four' (Salesforce, Oracle, SAP and Microsoft) despite a large number of competitors claiming to have alternatives that are more agile, less technically complex or far cheaper. All these vendors have been in a rush to re-architect the software stack to embrace cloud-native deployments. Now we are in not only cloud wars among the Big Four companies, but also an artificial intelligence and intelligent business application battleground.

The market is also fragmented, with more than 1,000 vendors that can be divided into a number of key areas. However, because of the diverse landscape, there is overlap among features and functions, with many vendors providing technologies that solve similar problems with very different feature sets.

Executive Summary

THE SALES EXECUTION CONUNDRUM IN THE DIGITAL ERA

Companies of all sizes and across many industries invest in sales technologies; the industry is going on three decades of managing sales execution strategies. The original job of sales force automation (SFA) was to manage the contacts, accounts and opportunities within the sales funnel, and its strength still is tracking and managing sales interactions and activities with customers and prospects. SFA ensures that sales managers have a full picture of the current state of the sales pipeline, which lets them take leads from consideration to purchase.

While marketing has the tools for lead generation and prospect maturation, sales teams also need a set of technologies that provide the right insight for salespeople to shorten cycle times and win deals. The B2B buyers' journeys can be complex, demanding digital strategies similar to B2C approaches to help the sales engagement process. New advancements in machine learning and artificial intelligence (AI) show promise in augmenting the sales team with actionable insight and intelligent automation.

METHODOLOGY

451 Research Market Maps™ are designed to provide a view of the vendor landscape by major segment. The map highlights companies competing in multiple segments by connecting them through a circuit line. Identification and placement of companies into these segments is based on analysis, both published and unpublished, performed by 451 Research. This analysis includes interviews, reports and advisory work with several thousand enterprises, vendors, service providers and investors annually. 451 Research Market Maps™ are not intended to represent a comprehensive list of every vendor operating in this market. Inclusion on 451 Research Market Maps™ does not imply that a given vendor will be specifically featured in one or more 451 Research reports.

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