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Your Reps Are Screaming for References! What Do You Do?

by Alison Chandless

Your reps need more reference customers, and you know your launch team need success stories to nail the launch strategy—but you are struggling to satisfy this never-ending demand. You are not alone. Few companies invest enough resources or energy into encouraging or rewarding customers to share their successes, capturing success metrics, or administering or tracking references. A CIO Magazine study found that 52% of IT buyers make purchase decisions on referrals from colleagues, and yet few companies train sales teams how to weave customer stories into their sales processes. Does this sound familiar? Read on!

Invest in a Reference Program. A growing presence in high-tech companies, reference teams can greatly increase the efficiency of your reference process and of your sales process in general.

Reward customers and sales teams. Let's face it, rewards are motivating. Avoid the conflicts of personal gifts, but use other resources like training seats to reward activity.

Share the responsibility beyond Sales. Ensure all organizations with customer contact add to your repository. Presales and Support teams are a great source of information.

Respect customers' time and terms. Be creative with multimedia technology to reuse content. Customers often put restrictions on references; use tracking systems to administer usage.

Educate your sales channels. Ensure your sales teams can use customer stories to effectively illustrate how your customers benefit from your products.

These are only a few of the many essential elements of an effective reference program. To learn more, please contact [Alison Chandless](#).

About the Author:

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