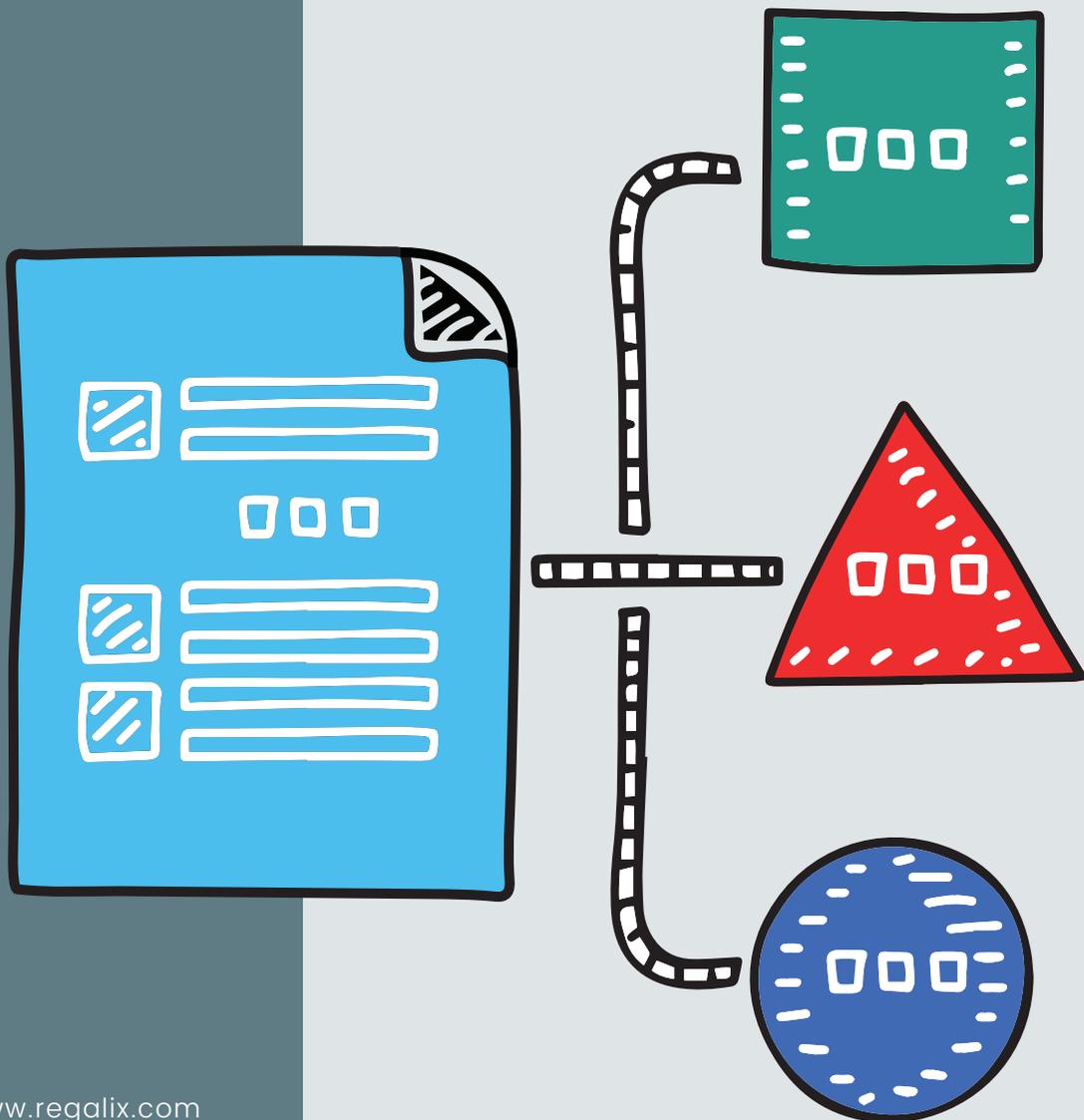


# State of Sales Enablement 2019



# Introduction

With the B2B sales process becoming more complex, organizations are looking for tools that can help them increase their sales productivity, shorten the sales cycle, achieve a higher conversion rate. Sales enablement is one such tool that has garnered much attention from marketers in recent years. Sales enablement helps salespeople sell more effectively to customers, by providing them with content and tools that make for a compelling pitch. And marketers have been lapping it up.

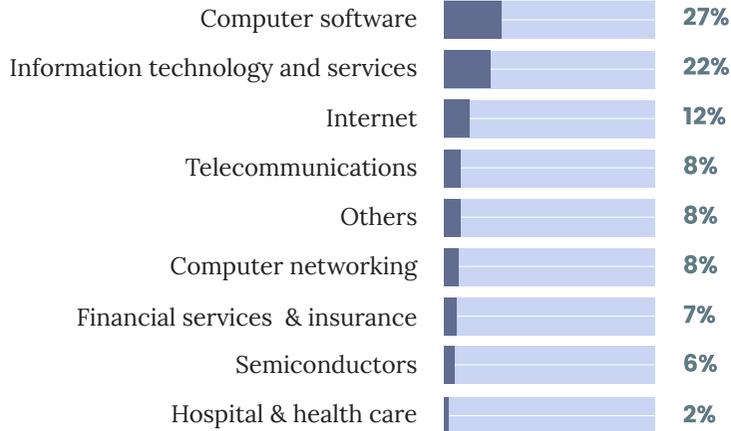
We did a study in 2017 (*State of Sales Enablement 2017*) to understand the benefits and challenges that organizations faced in implementing a sales enablement solution.

Since then, various other studies have been highlighting the positive impact that sales enablement has had on an organization's sales efforts. So we decided it was time once again to revisit the subject and see for ourselves to what extent organizations have adopted sales enablement practices, and how well it was working for them. For this study, we surveyed senior executives responsible for sales and marketing in mid to large sized corporations across regions.

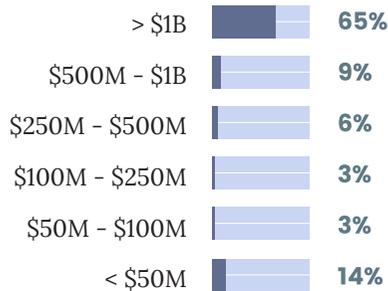
Read on to know what we found.

# Profile of respondents

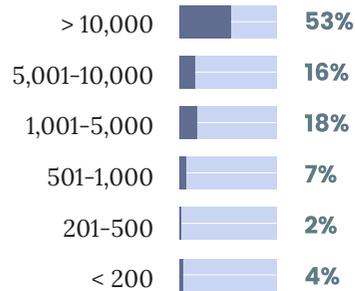
## Industry break up



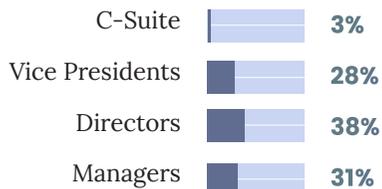
## Revenue break up



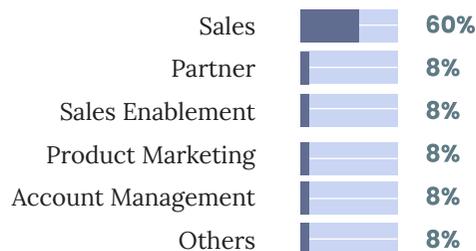
## Employee break up



## Level break up



## Department break up



# Key insights from the study

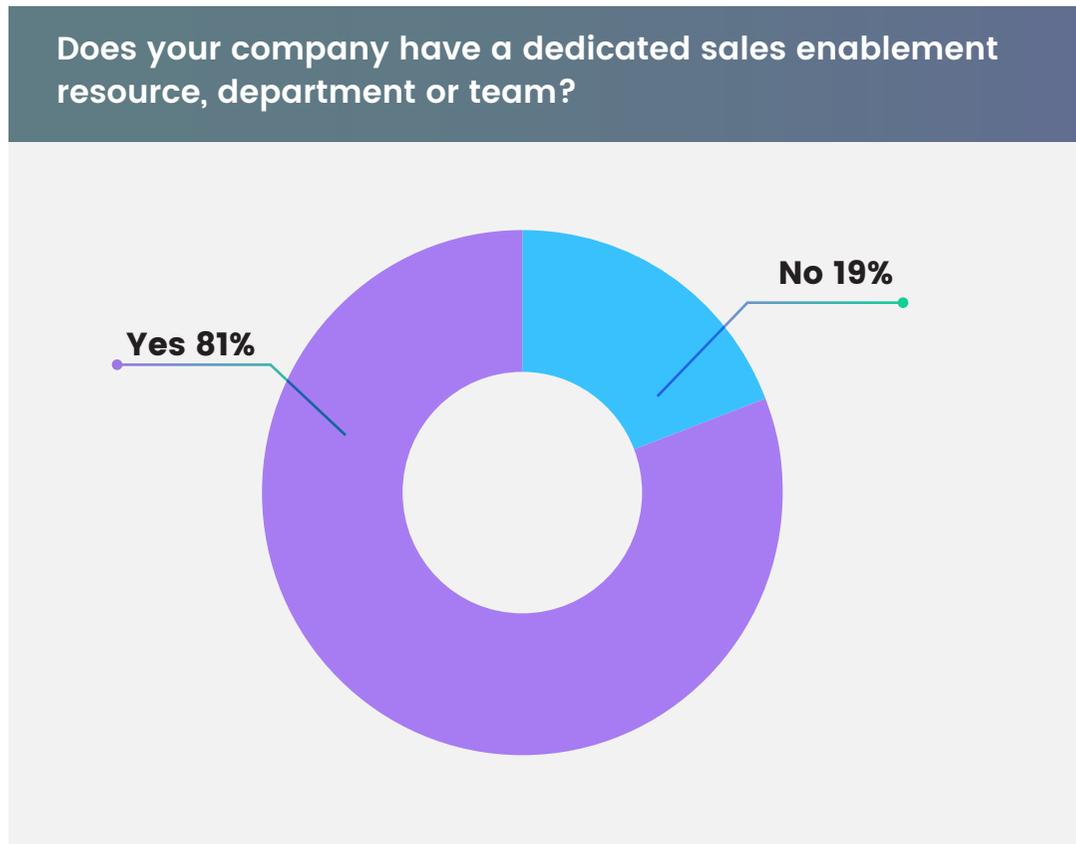
- 81% of companies have a dedicated sales enablement resource.
- 74% of organizations have an onboarding period of between 1 and 6 months.
- Playbooks and videos are the most widely used collateral in sales enablement.
- Engagement metrics are by far the most popular metrics used to measure the performance of sales enablement collateral.
- Inability to measure the success of a sales enablement initiative is the key roadblock in a sales enablement journey.
- Organizations see a significant impact on sales as a result of sales enablement; 76% of organizations see an increase of sales between 6% to 20%.

# Majority of businesses have dedicated sales enablement resources in place.

81% of companies we spoke with said they had a dedicated sales enablement team or department in place. Only 19% of them said they did not have one. (Figure 1)

With increasing complexity in the B2B selling process, sales enablement is becoming a necessary strategic investment for companies to help their sales teams make a compelling pitch to their customers.

Figure 1

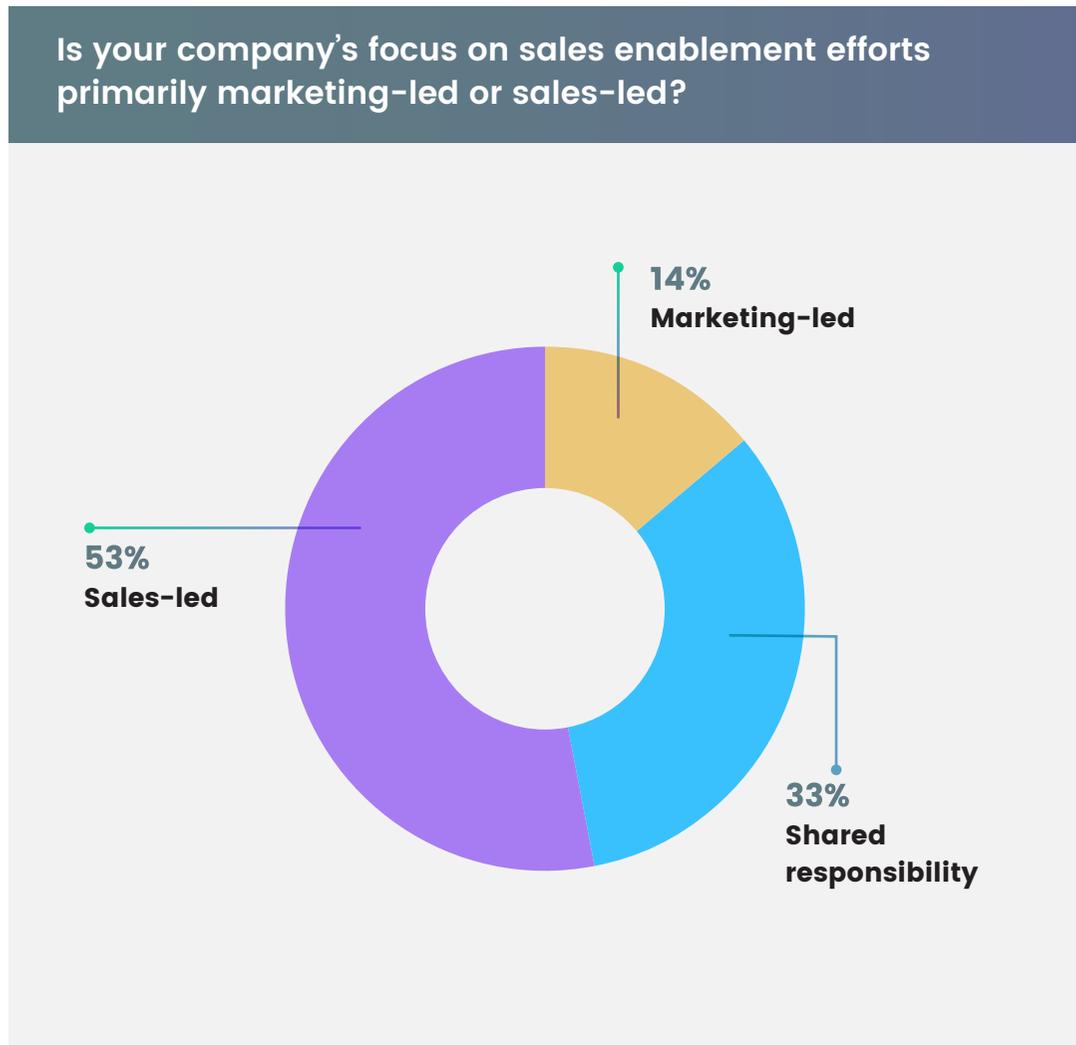


# Sales enablement efforts in over half the companies are sales-led.

53% of respondents said their sales enablement efforts were primarily sales-led as against 14% of respondents who said their efforts were marketing-led. 33% of respondents admitted to it being a shared responsibility.

Sales enablement works best when sales and marketing efforts get aligned. Both teams need to have a common goal and a strategy that they agree upon. (Figure 2)

Figure 2

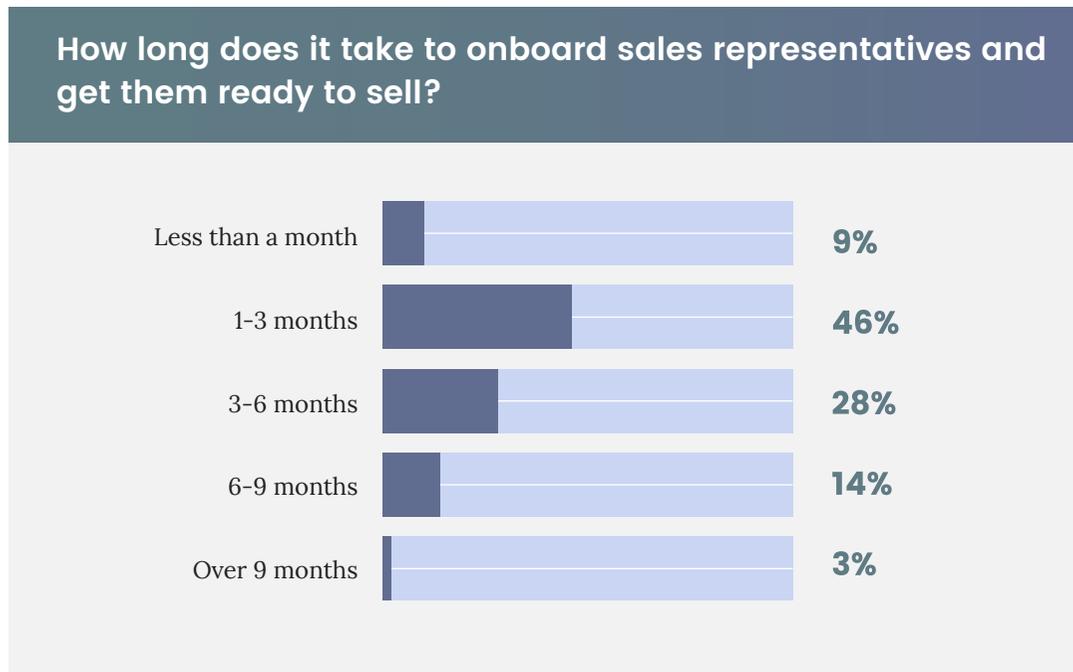


# Majority of organizations have an onboarding period of between 1 and 6 months.

74% of organizations indicated an onboarding period of between 1 and 6 months for their sales representatives. Only 3% of organizations had an onboarding time of over 9 months. (Figure 3)

Effective onboarding programs improve productivity and raise employee retention. It is important to keep the onboarding period long enough for the new recruits to settle into their new roles. Studies show that anything less than a month is detrimental to retention rates, with companies with programs that last a month or less being 9% less likely to keep first-year employees than those with longer processes. In fact, studies also show that one-third of new hires who have been in their roles for six months or less may be searching for a new job. Hence, even if the onboarding process lasts for less than six months, businesses would do well in guiding the new hires through the first six months on their job.

Figure 3

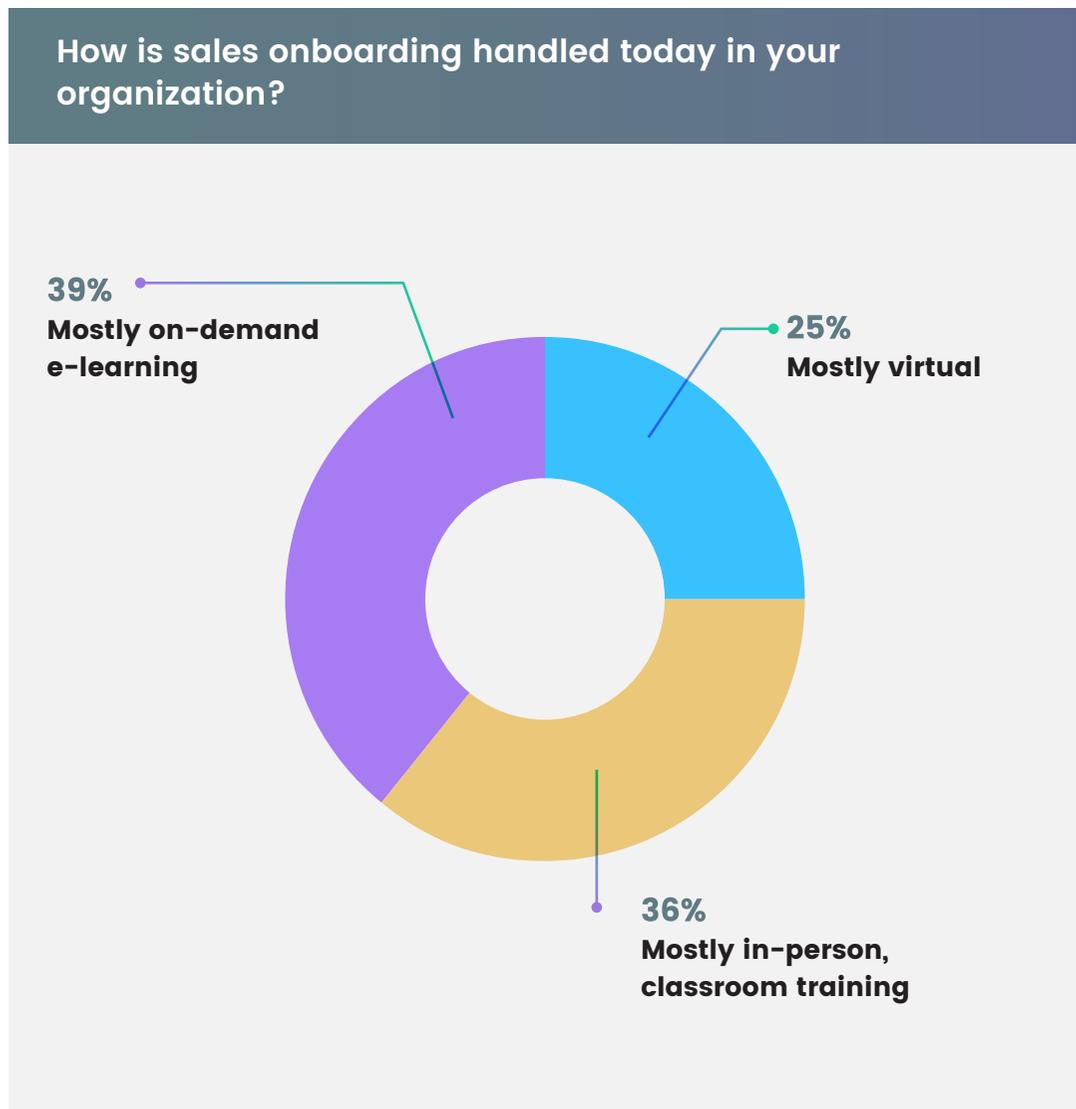


# Online dominates the sales onboarding process today.

64% of organizations use some form of online process for onboarding their sales team. Interestingly, 36% of organizations still rely mostly on in-person, classroom training.

Perhaps a judicious mix of both online and offline processes would be ideal, with the level of human touch being varied depending on each individual's requirement. (Figure 4)

Figure 4

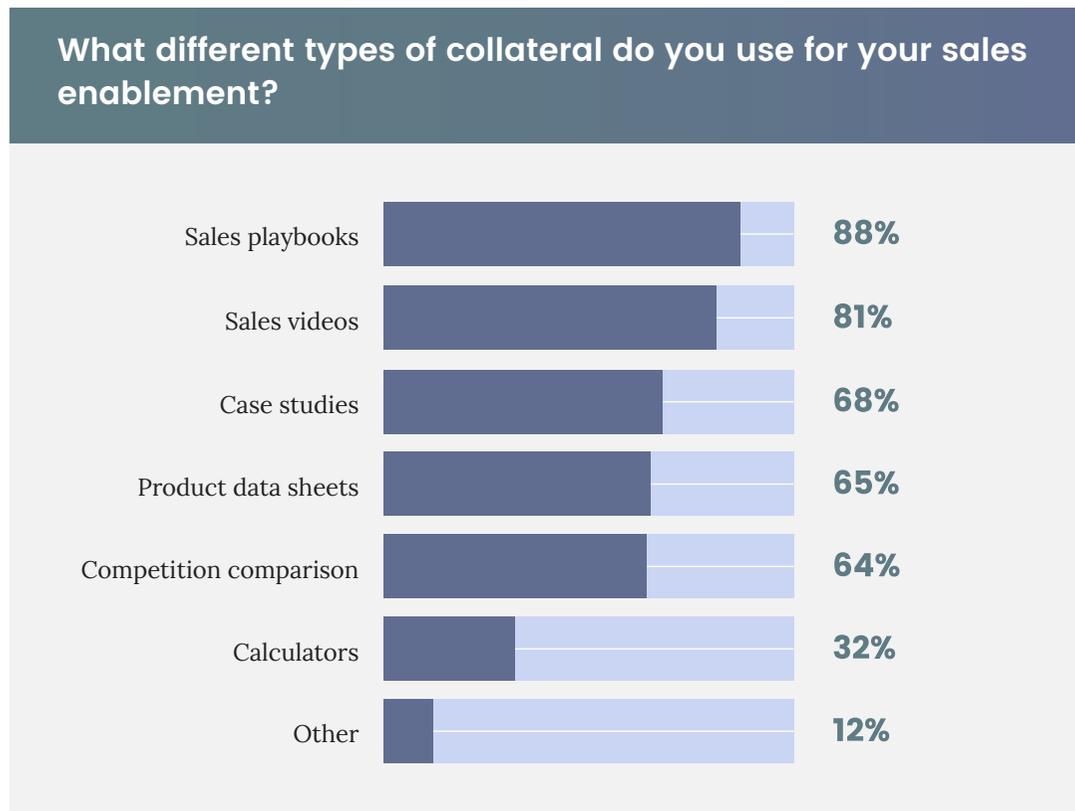


# Playbooks and videos are the most widely used collateral in sales enablement.

Sales playbooks (88%) and sales videos (81%) topped the list of collateral used by marketers in sales enablement. (Figure 5)

In our earlier study ('State of Sales Enablement 2017'), 55% of marketers had indicated that their organizations used sales playbooks in their sales enablement process; this figure has sharply risen to 88% this year, pointing presumably to the increasing complexity in the selling process.

Figure 5

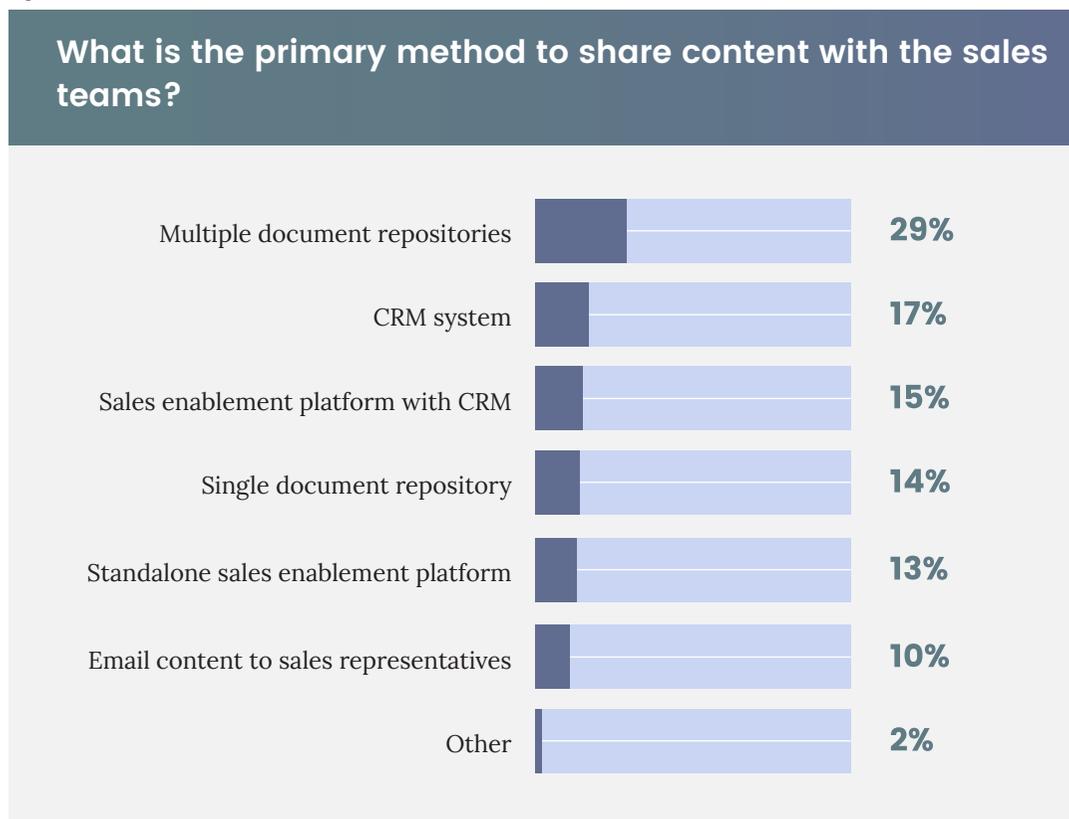


## Nearly a third of organizations still use multiple document depositories to share content.

29% of respondents said they use multiple document depositories to share content with their sales teams. Only 13% of organizations had a standalone sales enablement platform. (Figure 6)

One of the key benefits of the sales enablement process is easy access and delivery of content. Using multiple depositories to share content would invariably defeat this purpose, and organizations would need to urgently consider unifying all their content into one platform.

Figure 6

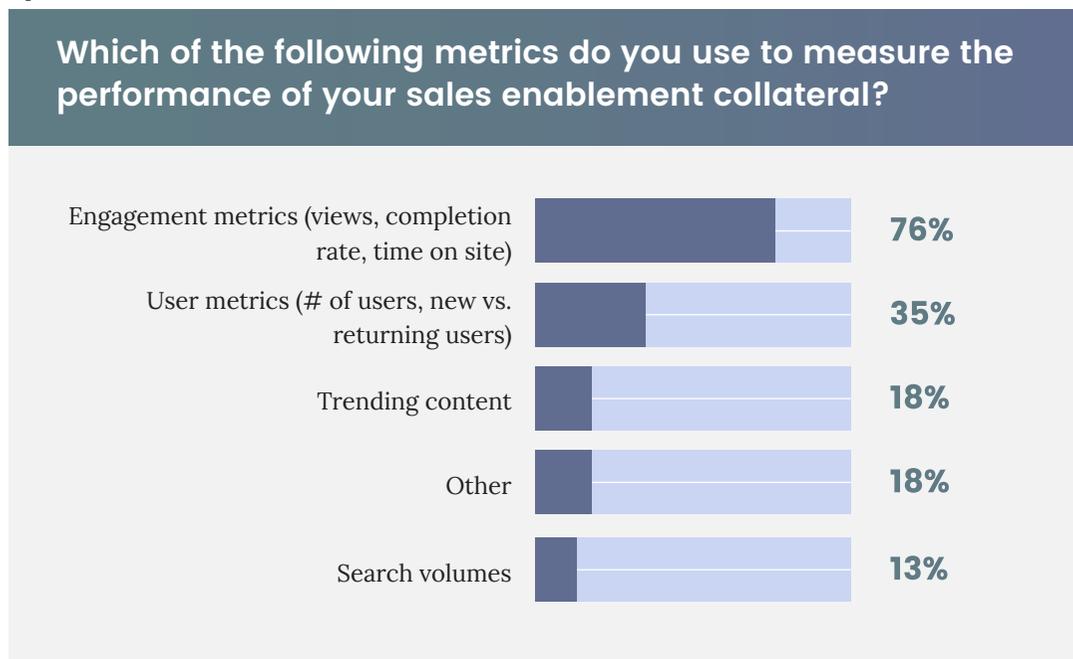


# Engagement metrics are by far the most popular metrics used to measure the performance of sales enablement collateral.

As high as 76% of respondents said they use engagement metrics to measure the performance of their sales enablement collateral. User metrics came in a distant second at 35%. (Figure 7)

The steep increase in the number of respondents who said they use engagement metrics to measure the performance of their sales collateral this year, up from a low 47% in 2017, is perhaps a testimony to the maturity that has come into the discipline.

Figure 7

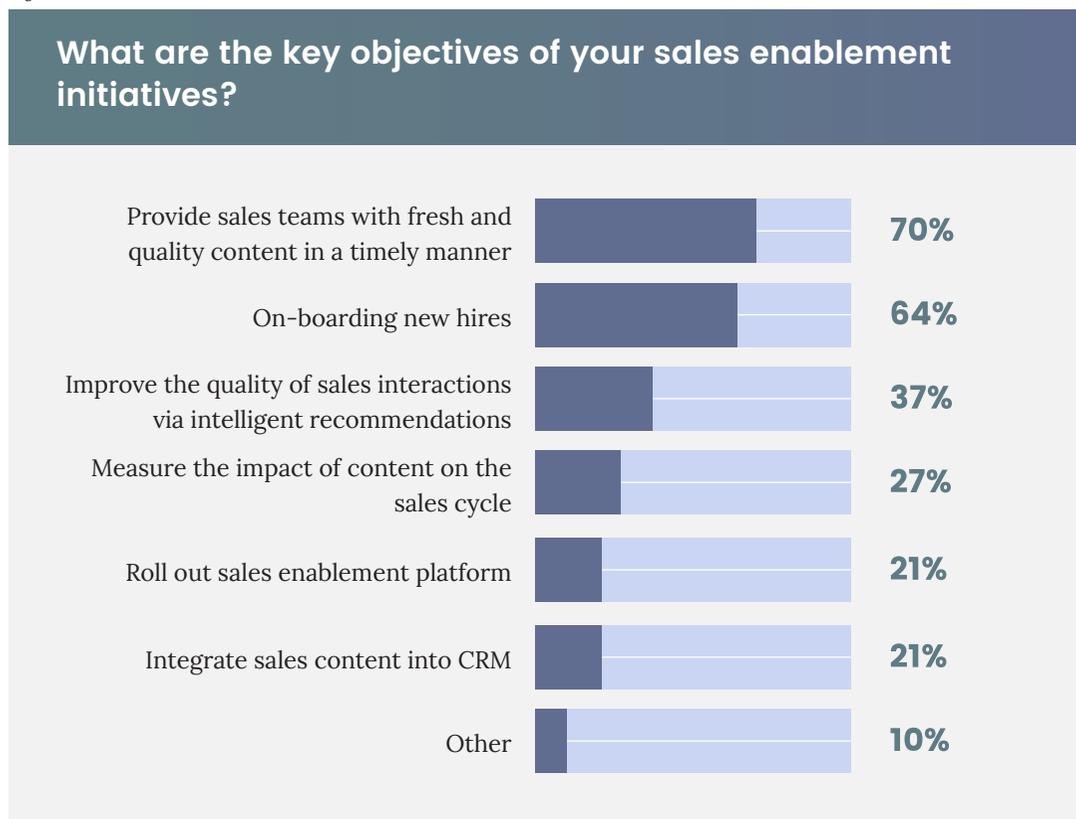


# Providing the sales teams with fresh and quality content tops the list of key objectives of sales enablement.

70% of respondents identified the key objective of their sales enablement initiative as providing the sales teams with fresh and quality content in a timely manner. 64% of respondents mentioned onboarding new hires as a key objective.

Surprisingly, only 37% of the respondents in the study have mentioned improve the quality of sales interactions via intelligent recommendations as a key objective of their sales enablement initiative, in spite of this being a significant benefit. We presume this could be because many businesses might have adopted sales enablement practices newly, and for them, the need for intelligent discovery of content could still be a step away. (Figure 8)

Figure 8

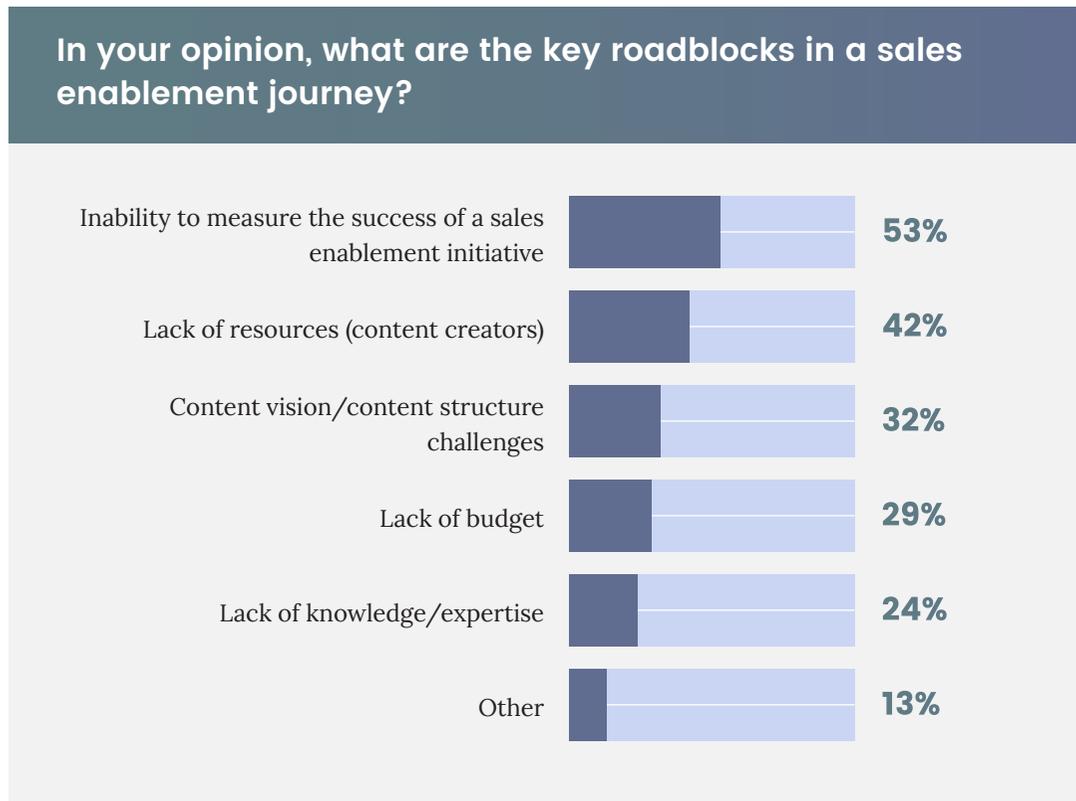


# Inability to measure the success of a sales enablement initiative is the key roadblock in a sales enablement journey.

53% of respondents said the key roadblock in their sales enablement journey was the inability to measure the success of a sales enablement initiative. This corresponds to a figure of 55% that we saw in our earlier study.

Lack of content creators was the next key roadblock mentioned by 42% of the respondents. (Figure 9)

Figure 9



# Accessing content rapidly is a notch more critical than customizing sales pitches, say marketers.

50% of respondents rated access content rapidly as being very critical while customizing sales pitches was rated by 44% of respondents as being very critical. (Figure 10)

Figure 10

How would you rate the following factors in terms of how critical they are to a sales organization?			
	Very critical	Critical	Not critical
Access content rapidly	50%	44%	6%
Access to content based on a buyer's journey/sales stage	49%	45%	6%
Ability to share content with buyers rapidly	48%	41%	11%
Customizing sales pitches	43%	53%	4%

# Over half the organizations surveyed use home-grown sales enablement tools.

52% of marketers said they used home-grown sales enablement tools in their organizations, while 30% said they used off-the-shelf/third party software. (Figure 11-A)

The various components of the sales enablement tech stack, as mentioned by the respondents, included sales analytics (59%), LMS/training platform (57%), sales onboarding system (51%) and content management system (51%). (Figure 11-B)

Figure 11-A

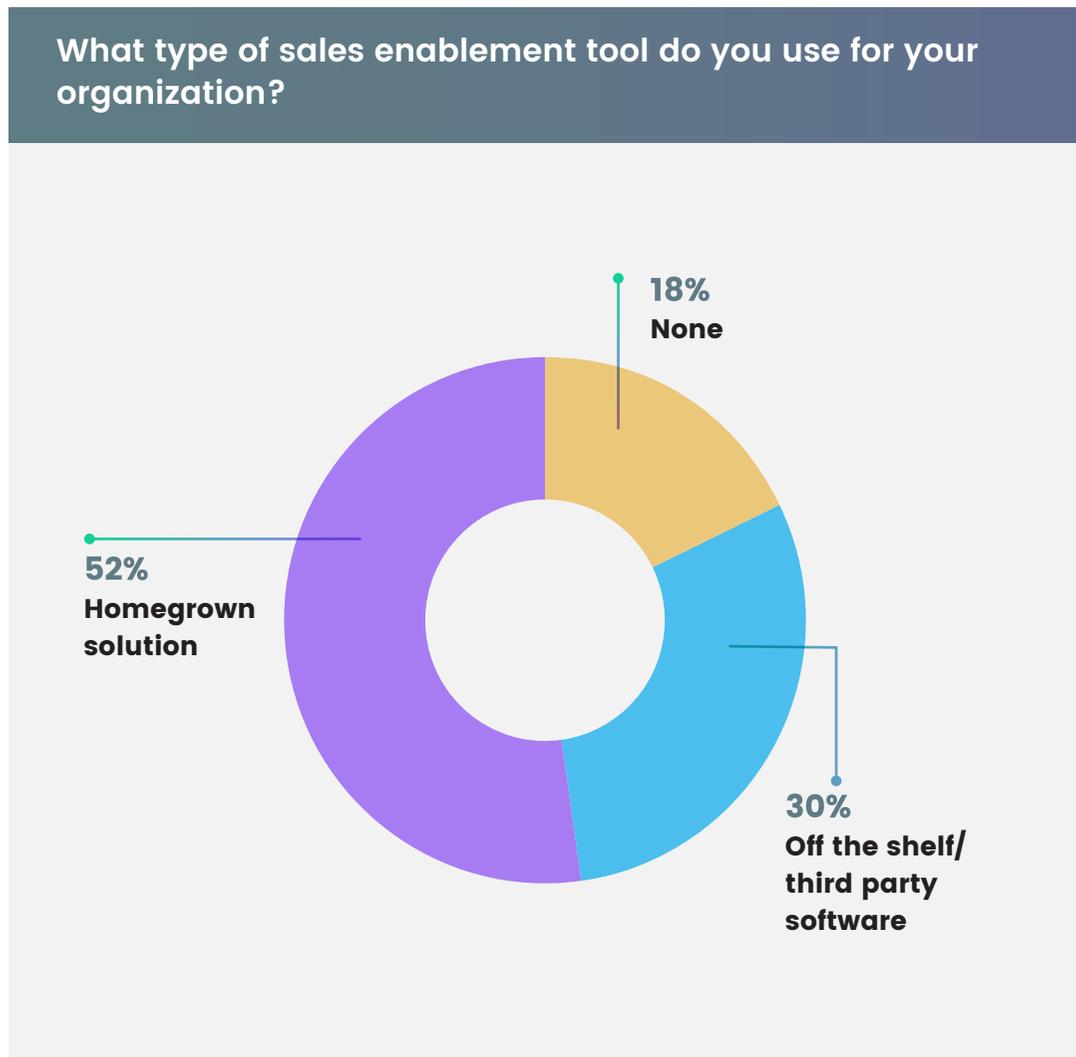
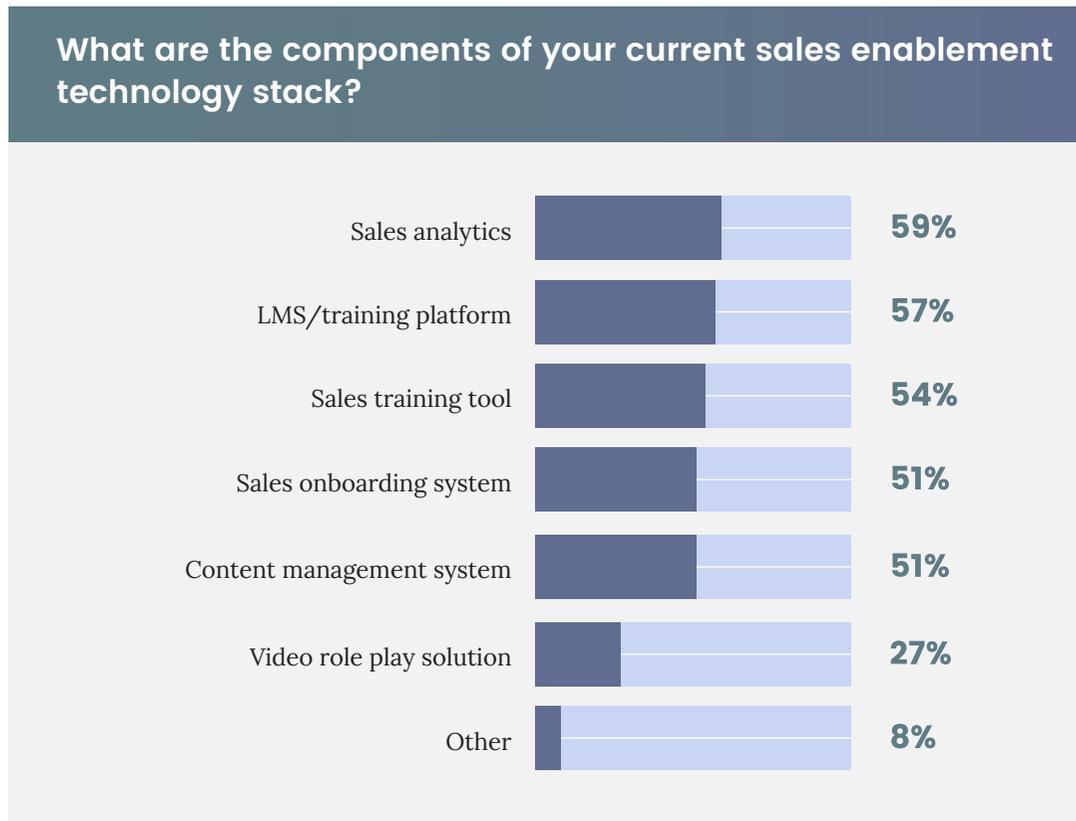


Figure 11-B



# SAP is the most popular sales enablement tool, followed by ShareDemos and Seismic. About a third of the users say they are very satisfied with their current sales enablement tool.

SAP (24%) topped the list of sales enablement tools used by marketers, followed by ShareDemos (12%) and Seismic (12%). (Figure 12-A)

31% of the respondents said they were very satisfied with their current sales enablement tool while another 63% said they were somewhat satisfied. Only 6% of the respondents said they were not satisfied with their current sales enablement tool. (Figure 12-B)

The percentage of respondents who said they were not satisfied with their sales enablement tool has decreased significantly from 29% in 2017 to 6% now; while the percentage of respondents who said they were very satisfied, has increased from 17% to 31% - a reflection perhaps of the advancements made in technology and the improvements made in the tools. Notwithstanding this, the large number of respondents who are seemingly only somewhat satisfied with their current sales enablement tool leaves a lot of ground for product companies to move in with further improvements.

Figure 12 A

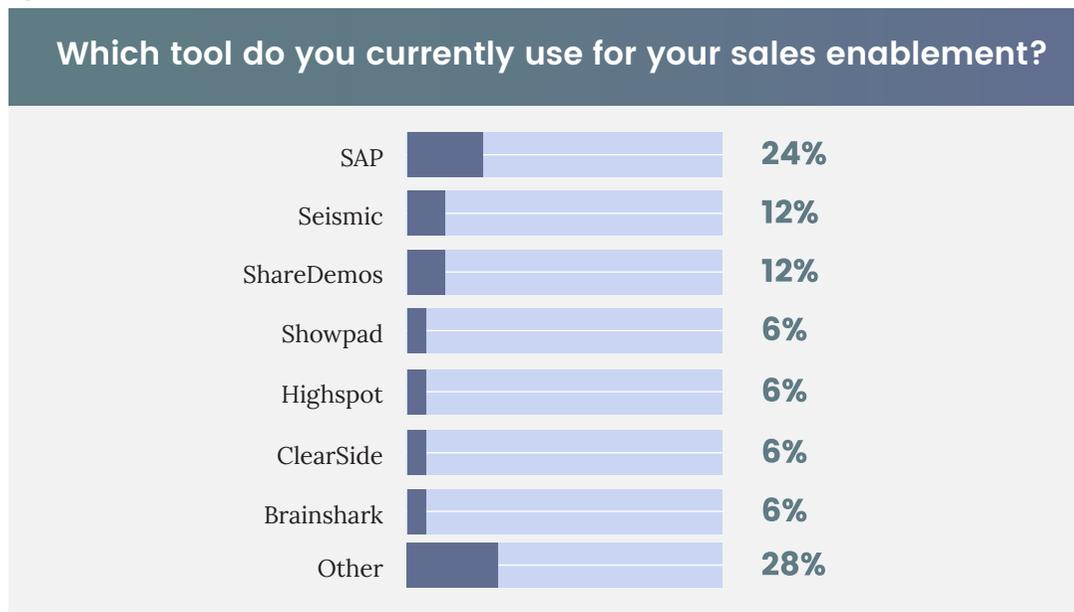
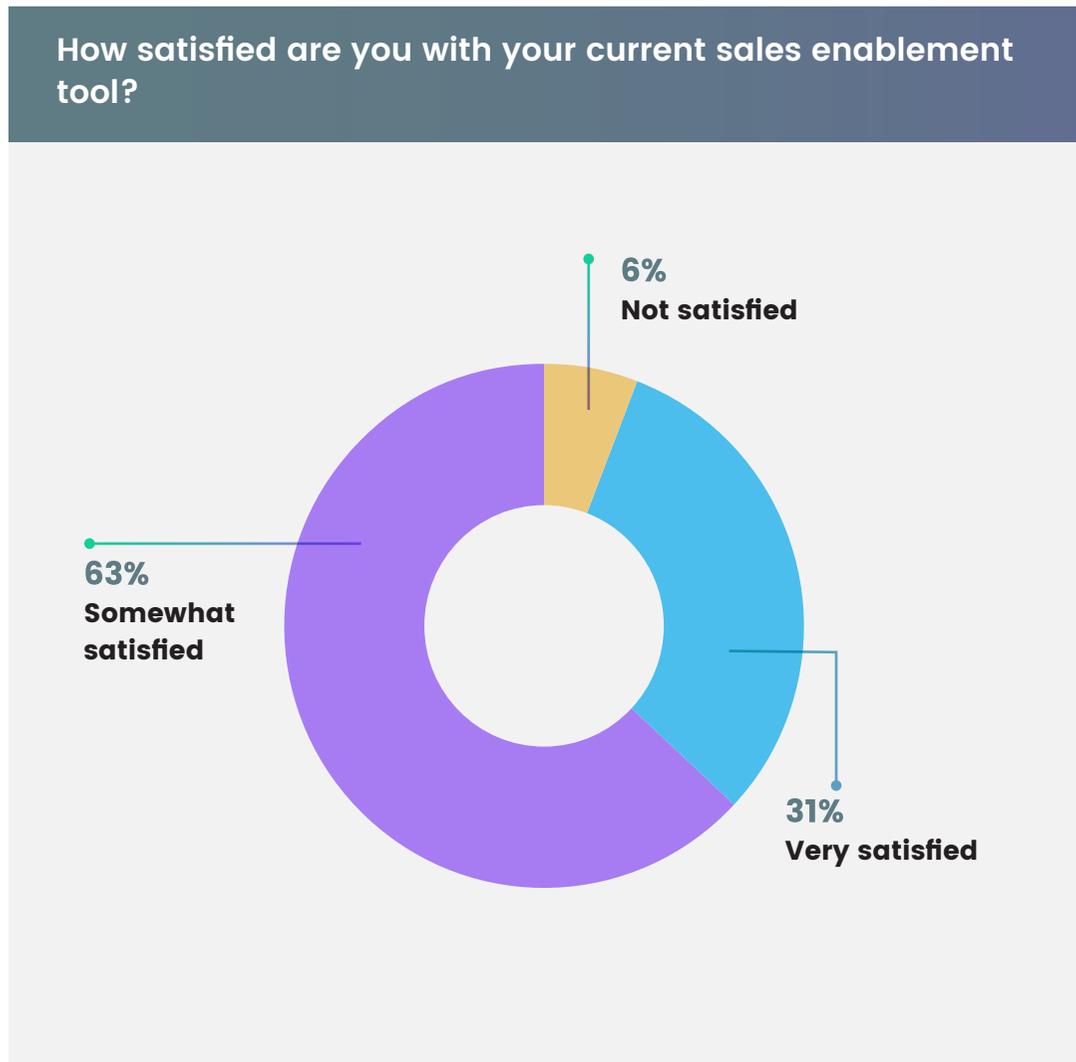


Figure 12 B

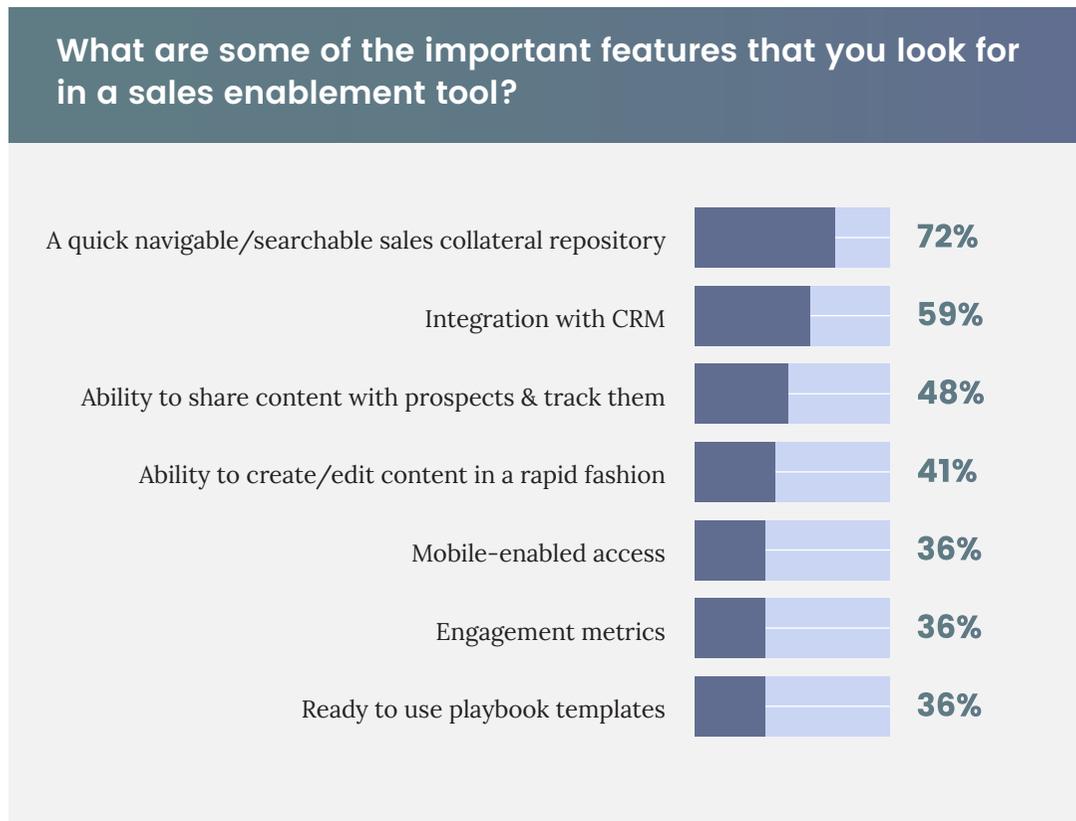


# An easily accessible sales collateral repository tops the list of features that marketers look for in a sales enablement tool.

When we asked marketers to name the most important features that they would look for in a sales enablement tool, a quick navigable/searchable sales collateral repository topped the list at 72%, followed by integration with CRM at 59%. (Figure 13)

Given the rapid adoption of mobile in the B2B space, we believe mobile-enabled access, currently mentioned by only 36% of the respondents, would command more attention in the coming years.

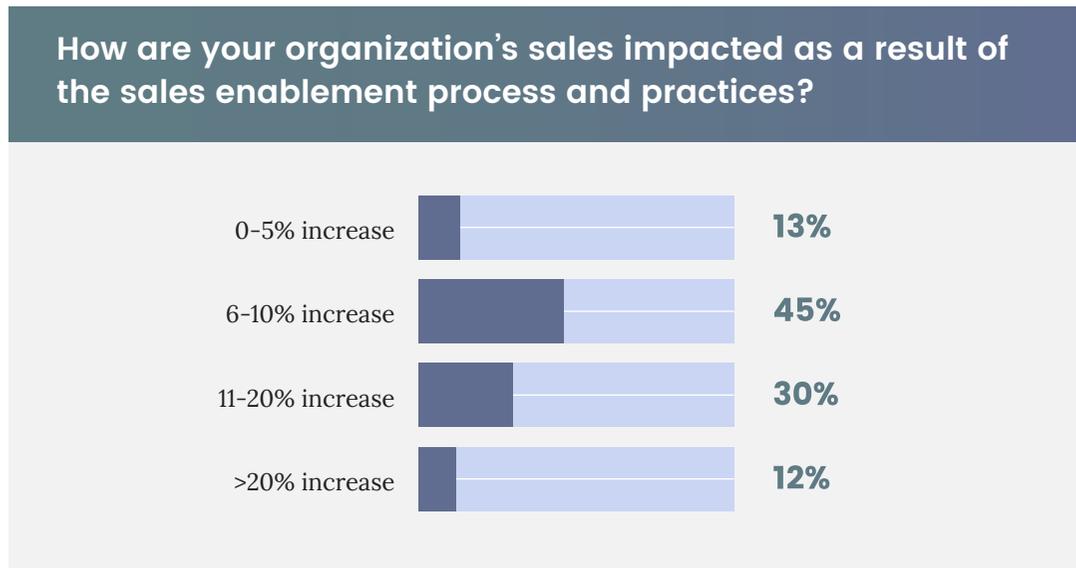
Figure 13



# Organizations see a significant impact on sales as a result of sales enablement.

75% of organizations in the survey saw an increase in sales of between 6% and 20% as a result of their sales enablement process and practices. 12% of organizations saw an increase of over 20% in sales. (Figure 14)

Figure 14

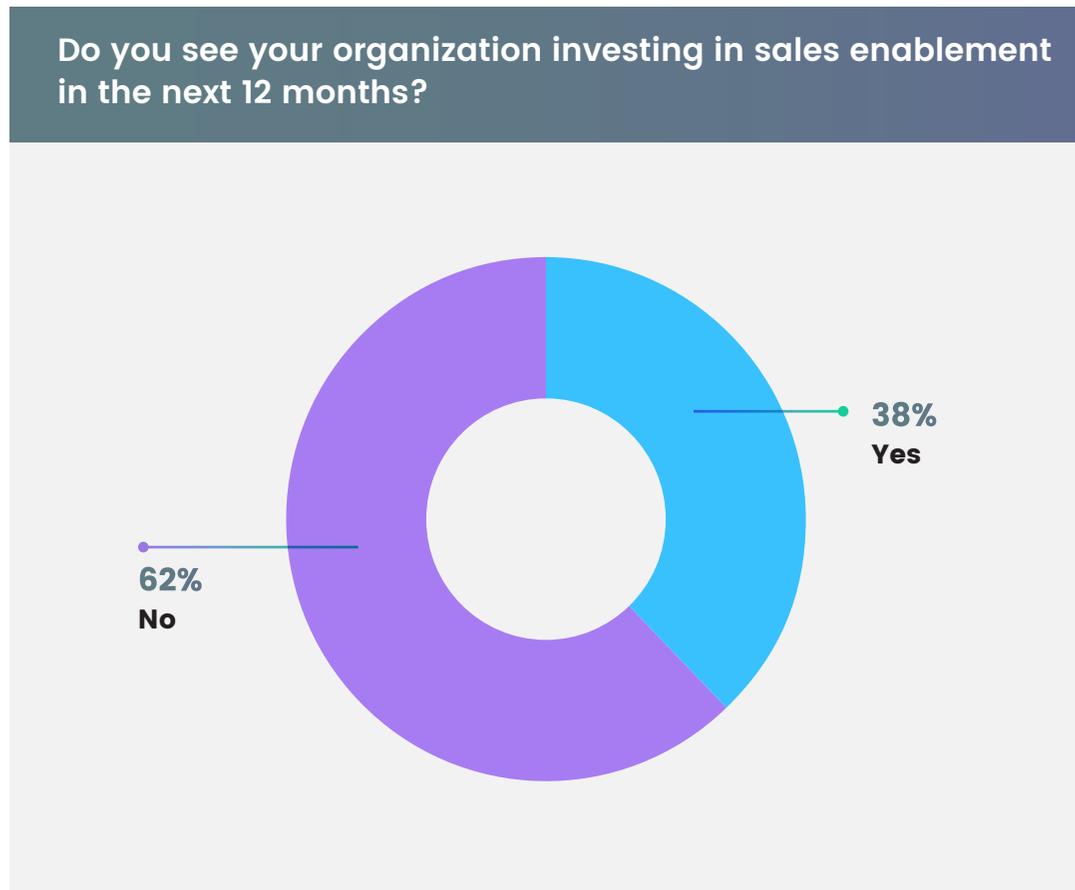


# Only 38% of organizations say they are investing in sales enablement in the next 12 months.

62% of the organizations that we surveyed had no intention of investing in sales enablement in the next 12 months. (Figure 15)

Considering that 81% of organizations have already invested in the sales enablement function, we can only presume that the focus for a large percentage of the organizations in the near future would be on adopting best practices and getting more out of their initial investment.

Figure 15



# Shortening the sales cycle is the key priority for organizations in 2019.

61% of respondents identified shortening their sales cycles as a key priority for sales productivity in 2019. Decreasing onboarding time (44%) and streamlining opportunity management process (42%) were next in line. (Figure 16)

Figure 16



# Recommendations

- **Align sales and marketing efforts:**

When asked whether their company's sales enablement efforts were marketing-led or sales-led, only 33% of respondents admitted to it being a shared responsibility. One of the key demands in rolling out a successful sales enablement program is to ensure that both the marketing team and the sales team are working together toward a common goal. Along with sharing the responsibility for achieving the desired outcome, the teams need to agree on the metrics that will drive the program.

- **Invest in new technology:**

52% of marketers in the study said they used home-grown sales enablement tools. Given the rapid advances in technology, especially in the areas of AI and predictive analytics, third-party sales enablement tools are becoming increasingly sophisticated. We believe most home-grown solutions would find it difficult to match up to these in their capability. The rather large percentage of businesses using home-grown solutions could also be an indicator of the large number of new practitioners in the field. However, as they mature, we hope to see more businesses investing in third-party tools to run their sales enablement program.

- **Measure the effectiveness of the program:**

53% of respondents identified the key roadblock in their sales enablement journey as the inability to measure the success of a sales enablement initiative. Gauging the level of success of a sales enablement initiative is important as it can provide us with data that could help in refining our sales enablement strategy. While there may be no single metric that can measure the success of a sales enablement initiative, there are secondary indicators that could provide valuable insights. Content usage pattern and lead-to-sale conversion rate are two such metrics among many others that we urge organizations to monitor.

# About the analysts



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Nimish works with CMOs and senior marketing professionals. His research focuses on customer success management, predictive analytics, mobile enablement and other emerging trends that help customers leverage technology as an enabler of marketing and business outcomes.



**Manan Bhatia**  
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Manan works with senior marketing professionals and is currently involved in studying emerging trends and understanding consumer behavior in the digital space. His research focuses on developing and managing online marketing campaigns, account growth, product strategy and client relationships.

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# About Regalix Research

Regalix Research supports organizations across the globe to augment their marketing, customer satisfaction and retention initiatives through timely insights. Headquartered in Palo Alto, in the Silicon Valley, the organization boasts of an extensive network of top executives and practitioners across the globe who help identify and answer the ‘when’ and ‘why’ of disruptive trends.

## About Regalix

Regalix is a Customer Acquisition and Customer Success company that re-imagines digital experiences across hi-tech, ad-tech, and retail domains. The company has partnered with some of the largest global B2B organizations in their efforts at customer acquisition, growth and retention. Regalix works with businesses, supporting their customers through the entire journey, to deliver reliable products and services in today’s subscription-based economy.

Regalix has a long history of creating award-winning ventures with enterprises through co-innovation and idea-driven frameworks that inspire companies to think different. Headquartered in the Silicon Valley – Palo Alto, California – Regalix has offices in Europe and Asia.

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