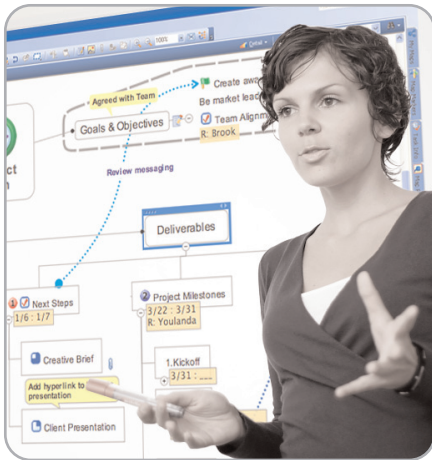




Case Study

WebEx Communications, Inc.



“MindManager helps us develop a significant level of trust, because potential customers can tell that I’m listening and that I’ve captured what they’re trying to achieve.”

ROI

WebEx’s sales cycle has been reduced significantly. The professional services team now closes deals in as little as a few days, down from several months, and the post-sales planning process works more smoothly. As a result, the team closes more deals, and is able to move more deals into the current quarter.

Company Profile

WebEx is the worldwide leader in online meeting applications. More than 3.5 million people use WebEx every month to communicate and collaborate online.

Challenge

To shorten sales cycles by ensuring that potential customers’ needs are captured accurately and correctly communicated to internal resources..

Sales Effectiveness

A leader in online meeting technology uses Mindjet® MindManager® software to energize sales

In its focus on delivering increased value to customers, WebEx Communications, Inc., the worldwide leader in on-demand collaboration applications, has elevated its sales process to a refined art. To WebEx’s professional services division, sales is a process of developing trust, demonstrating capability, and truly listening to the customer to learn about their needs—before developing a solution that produces business results.

WebEx’s sales team believes that the first step in a successful sales process is to engage prospective customers in a deep discovery process. The goal of that process is to gain a clear understanding of their business challenges—all the better to help tailor a WebEx solution that fits. WebEx uses Mindjet MindManager at every step of the sales process—from initial engagement, to inking the deal, to delivering the right solution.

The Common Challenge: Decrease Sales Cycles, Improve Close Rates

Stu Schmidt, vice president for professional services at WebEx, first introduced Mindjet’s visual mapping technology to his team a year ago. Since then, WebEx has seen a reduction in the time needed to gain new clients’ confidence. This often-delicate process can now be completed, Schmidt says, in the course of one WebEx-enabled mapping session. And short time-to-trust translates into tangible, bottom-line returns on investment.

“As a result of using MindManager at every stage of customer engagement, we have seen our sales cycle reduced significantly—sometimes to as little as just a few days,” says Schmidt. “This means that we have closed more deals, and moved more deals into the current quarter.”

Schmidt says that using MindManager pays off first in the deep discovery stage, when his team first meets with customers to determine their key challenges. His staff sets up a remote meeting via WebEx, then asks the customer a series of predetermined questions while building a MindManager “map” in real time. The mapping process concisely captures the customer’s business objectives, existing technology, execution issues, approval processes, and so on.

The approach worked well recently when WebEx engaged with a major technology company in the storage area networks business. By mapping key elements of the process, WebEx closed the deal much more quickly than possible using more traditional sales tools. By developing a more effective, map-enabled sales process, WebEx won a major piece of business to build and implement a six-stage, Web-enabled sales process designed to increase the client’s productivity.

Improve Sales Process & Customer Collaboration

“One of the key problems in any sales cycle,” Schmidt says, “is that you present a solution to a customer and they say ‘That’s not at all what we talked about last time.’ You have to go back and forth and rework it because you didn’t really capture what your customers were trying to say in the first place.”

But by using MindManager, the WebEx team and the customer work together to build, in real time, a concise visual document of their discussion. “This way, the customer has an opportunity to correct the way we’ve captured something in the map document, before we move on to the next topic. By the time the meeting is over, we all have exactly the same picture.”

Solution

WebEx uses MindManager to map clients' needs before and after the sale to develop solutions that are on target in helping them solve their key challenges

Product

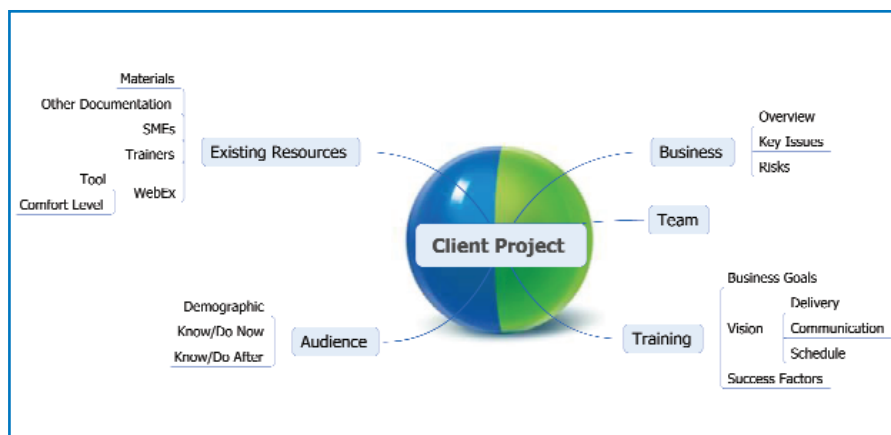
Mindjet MindManager

Result

Improved customer engagement, shorter "time to trust," and improved internal communications lead to significantly reduced sales cycles for this market leading company.

Then, within minutes of the end of the meeting, the WebEx team is able to deliver via email to the customer and stakeholders a map that enables each recipient to understand at a glance the full contents of the meeting. Depending on the needs of each recipient, they can scan the map for a quick overview of the meeting, or use the unique visual interface to drill down for more details.

"MindManager helps us develop a significant level of trust," Schmidt says, "because potential customers can tell that we're listening and that we've correctly captured what they're trying to achieve. They're working with us collaboratively. They don't see us anymore as sales people trying to push a deal—but as partners working closely with them to solve their problems."



Requirements Validation and Customer Sign Off

Once the client has signed on to use WebEx to address these challenges, Schmidt's group continues its use of MindManager. Using a series of WebEx-developed map templates, the sales team holds more discussions with various client representatives to capture more precise details about their needs. When this stage is completed, the team maps out the best possible solution, and then send these maps to the representative as PDF files for the client to approve or edit.

When this stage is complete, the team links all of these maps to a single "master recommendations document" that clearly and concisely maps out WebEx's overall solution. The map is richly populated with the client's business requirements, implementation steps—as well as an ROI estimate for each opportunity. Client feedback to the proposed solution is then incorporated directly into the map—again taking advantage of the map interface's transparency to ensure that all feedback is correctly captured.

Schmidt says that the map interface enables WebEx clients to really get their arms around what WebEx is planning to do. This means that clients who have a much higher comfort level in the proposed solution, are able to provide more focused feedback, and usually volunteer critical information. Information such as the client's internal business owners, decision makers, major stakeholders, and target dates, is often difficult to obtain, but can significantly accelerate the sales process.

"The goal at the end of the day is to come up with an action plan that the client understands and feels comfortable with," says Steve Thiessen, WebEx director of professional services delivery. "MindManager is the best tool out there to enable the kind of real-time collaboration that makes this possible. It's flexible and visual, and enables you to build a detailed, but accessible action plan that everyone just seems to 'get.' Everyone who sees us use this application is just blown away by it."

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