

Rallyware

2022-23 Engagement Report: Trends in Seller Behavior and Skills Enablement



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Rallyware's 2022-23 Engagement Report: Trends in Seller Behavior and Skills Enablement

According to a [2022 article in Frontiers in Psychology](#), research suggests that there is great importance in “establishing a...brand personality that is perceived in consumers’ minds as having positive dimensions, such as Genuineness or Sincerity.” The researcher, Ya-Hui Kuo, concludes that it is essential for consumer-facing companies to “understand how their target customers understand their personalities” as having positive associations.

The operative idea here is that these positive associations matter so much because in buying from such stores, consumers affirm positive qualities about themselves.



This helps them achieve what Ya-Hui Kuo calls “self-congruity,” validating their positive ideas of themselves. This is because many consumers, especially in the social media age, look to their buying decisions as reflections of their own identities and values.

Thus, at a time when consumers are faced with a glut of different buying options at similar price points, companies must reflect positive characteristics such as genuineness, sincerity, and sophistication. While part of any company’s efforts to embody these traits will bear on marketing and advertising, we have to ask what role the person-to-person sales force plays in establishing positive brand identity; and how purposeful engagement provides a path toward generating the enthusiasm, motivation, and satisfaction that lead to a more genuine and sincere sales force.



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Sales Performance Enablement Technology: a Brief Overview

In this report, we will be considering the impact of sales performance enablement technology on purposeful engagement, as reflected in Rallyware's customer metrics, which includes millions of behavioral and performance-related sales force data points. In other words, this report assesses the engagement outcomes for sales forces, on the working thesis that more engaged sellers are better able to demonstrate positive characteristics like genuineness and sincerity.

Broadly speaking, this technology is **(a) set up, implemented, and designed in partnership with customers' corporate administrators, who implement it; and (b) delivered as a cloud-based, all-in-one app directly to sales forces.** The technology "enables" sales performance, meaning that the tools therein are used to increase sales productivity at scale.

Each individual salesperson's experience gets personalized by the technology for his or her business goals and real-time performance. Furthermore, the platform guides the salesperson according to business outcomes defined in advance by the company as most relevant to them, then teaching and motivating intrinsic behaviors that lead to these outcomes, such as increased revenue or higher retention rates.

The solutions that companies can choose to implement for their sales forces include onboarding, training, and continuous learning; sales incentives; CRM; brand training; streamlined communications; and more. These solutions smartly determine the contextually relevant activities, tasks, and content that will help the individual salesperson achieve the sales goals that matter to him or her. In this way, the technology does not say, "Complete this task because the company wants you to." Instead, it says, "Here is a task that matters for your success based on your performance and behaviors."

When activities and tasks matter to sellers, they become more enthusiastic about their daily operations, more engaged, and more likely to evince positive characteristics. Though some researchers distinguish between intrinsic and extrinsic motivators, we make clear the relationship is becoming more dynamic and compelling than it is often portrayed.



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Measuring Engagement

Engagement is often considered a somewhat intangible metric – after all, how do you measure a quality that each seller experiences differently (his or her level of engagement)? For our purposes, we can conceptualize engagement as the quantity of time, clicks, taps, and overall interactions with the platform. (Note: some of these numbers were previously used in Rallyware’s 2022-23 Global Sales Force Report, but here they are recontextualized.)

Though it would be possible to survey the sales force about their engagement levels, we believe this is a more objective measurement, as it tracks the concrete activity of each seller as regards engagement. Survey opinions can always be distorted; numbers cannot.



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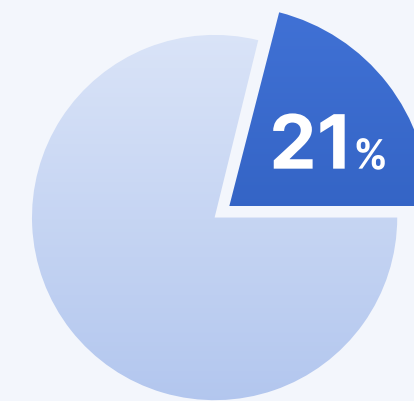
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Engagement Boosts 2022-23 and Beyond

In 2022, we saw that seller engagement was up across the board over 2021. This is at a time when many sales-based workforces, such as retail and direct selling, saw a decline in overall revenue or major sales force churn, with a complicated and uncertain consumer environment due to secular inflation and rising interest rates. Quite the opposite, Rallyware's customer base increased, as did the amount of time spent using the platform's features in order to enable higher sales performance at scale, assist sellers as they meet their individualized goals, and drive revenue growth for the enterprise.

Because more engaged sellers are more genuine, sincere sellers, more enthusiastic about the completion of their goals and thus about the products they are selling, increased engagement means an increase in positive brand associations and identity characteristics.



In 2022, compared to the prior year, **21% more members of the sales force actively** interacted with the centralized app driving their learning, business management, and sales performance, meaning that they were more engaged

The benefits of sales performance enablement technology have been recognized at a larger and larger scale among business leaders with sales forces. Hundreds of thousands of sales force members, or salespersons, chose to engage with such technology to improve their sales results. This shows the growing centrality of end-to-end technology in the day-to-day operations of sellers, the increase in tech literacy in such sellers, and the relationship between technology and engagement in the sales process.



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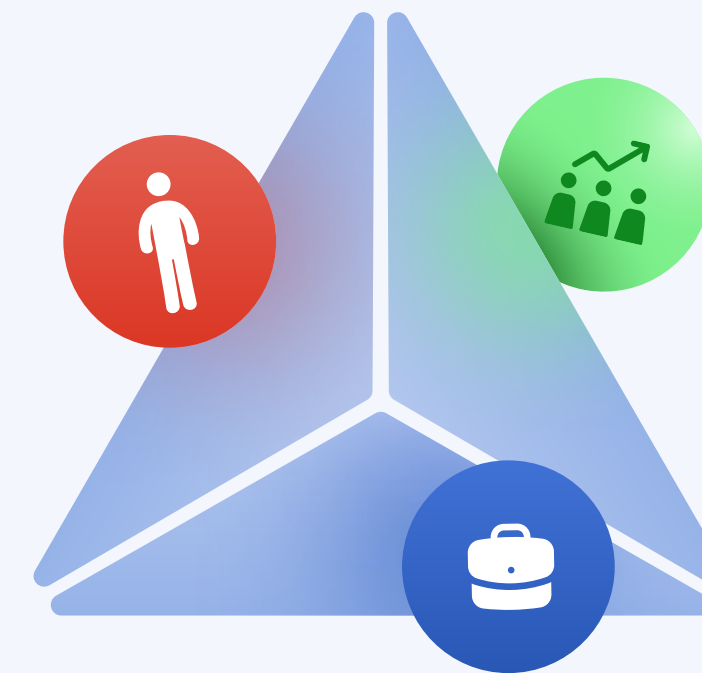
In terms of training and learning content, **9% more salespersons than in 2021 became actively engaged with such content**, with almost seven million learning and development tasks being completed among the sales force employing performance enablement technology.



9% more salespersons than in 2021 became actively engaged with such content

“Digital Library” files, which are searchable company-specific training materials, were viewed 63% more compared to 2021, while downloads came to 41% more than 2021. We can partly attribute this to the role of smart technology, which uses “business rules and recommendations” to suggest actions for sellers to perform – in this case, content to smartly serve individual users, based on a variety of interrelated contextual elements. These rules and recommendations stem from the following context-based factors:

Rules and Recommendations Inputs



(1) The Performance Enablement Platform: the smart design and architecture of the system itself, autonomously and automatically making decisions on which content to present sellers with based on multiple types of internal and external data, including behavioral data, external performance data, and current goals and progress

(2) The Enterprise: the company’s rules, adjusted using data furnished by the actionable BI data provided by the performance enablement system itself, and defined to target specific corporate KPIs (for example, revenue growth) in real time

(3) The Seller: the user’s decisions, determined by factors such as the suggestions and goalposts of the performance enablement system, the intrinsic and external motivators in the system, and behavior learned and internalized by the user following guidance from the system



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In this manner, the served content becomes not only as relevant to the seller personally as possible, but as important to the company's most critical business growth metrics as possible. In effect, this drives two goals at once, the seller's and the company's. In this manner, the goals of both the individual seller and the enterprise reinforce each other: a win for the seller becomes a win for the company and their targeted KPIs – and vice versa.



Trend Watch: As companies with sales force expand their use of sales technology into smart CRM offerings and AI sales coaching, we can expect these numbers to increase in 2023 and 2024. Furthermore, companies are going to start thinking about the relationship between sales technology, engagement, and perceived brand personality.

Short of a Trader Joe's- or LuluLemon-like redefinition of brand identity, something available to few companies, personalized technology is the best way to create engaged sellers who are more genuine and sincere about the sales process, displaying goals and progress while providing real-time suggestions for success. (As opposed to, say, direct supervisors, who often have a counterproductively punitive approach to engagement.)



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Extrinsic Into Intrinsic: Smart Notifications and Sales Gamification

Smart notifications are one of the key ways sales performance enablement platforms can drive engagement. Because the average American checks their phone 352 times per day, it is necessary to find smart, non-intrusive ways to continually draw the workforce's mindshare to the technology designed to enable their sales performance, which is often competing with social network apps, games, and other forms of entertainment. How can such notifications compete with updates from other apps?

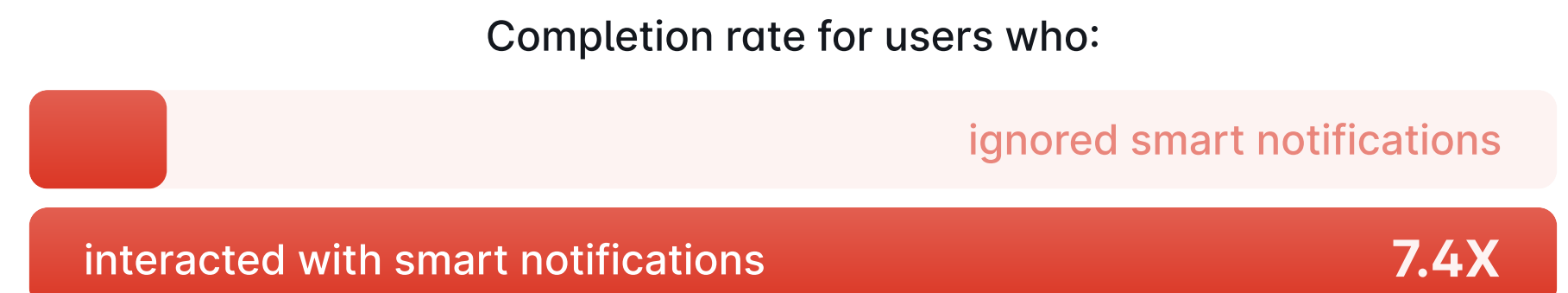
Logically speaking, the salesperson is more likely to tap on and interact with an update that matters to his or her goals, as they are in sales performance enablement technology. Personalized notifications generate engagement, as we see with the following data.

In 2022, globally across Rallyware's customer community, more than **212 million notifications were delivered and nearly 97 million of those went on to trigger engagement with in-app tasks.**



That means nearly half of these notifications led to productivity in the platform – notifications tailored to the seller's specific goals and performance data drove up their interaction with the platform, an increase in engagement.

Further analysis showed that salespersons who interacted with notifications displayed **a 7.4X higher completion rate for activities compared to users who skipped or ignored notifications with a previously shown direct correlation between task completion and sales growth.**



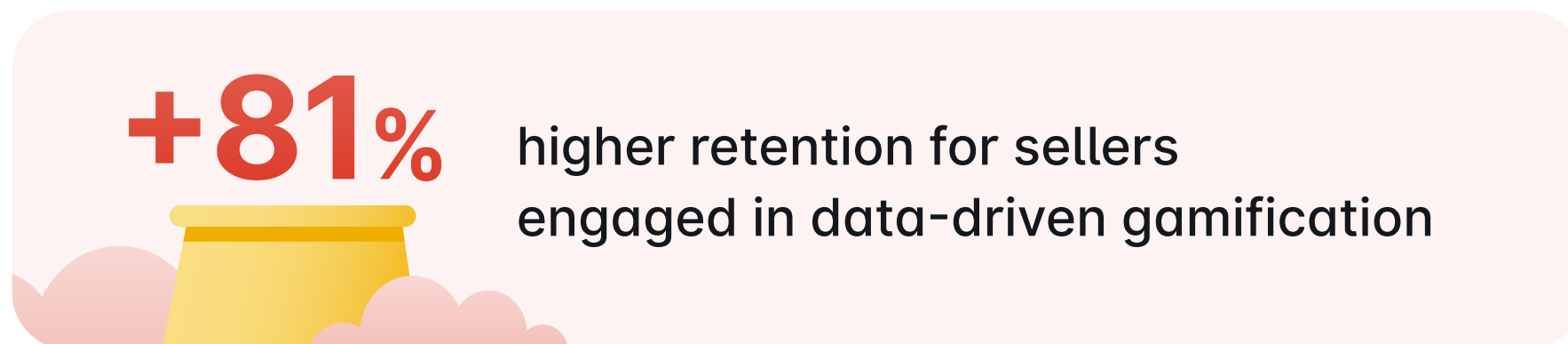
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Sales gamification is another key method for increasing engagement – the use of game-like elements to make non-game productivity tasks, such as selling, more engaging. Gamification helps make extrinsic motivators (the completion of a sales goal) into intrinsic motivators (something psychologically and behaviorally relevant to the seller).

Rallyware saw that **smart sales gamification features like leaderboards and badges increased sales volume 2X and boosted retention growth 81% over a 150-day period.**



This result indicates that sales gamification features, when personalized for the individual seller through (1) goal setting and (2) multiple data integrations to improve relevance, excel in transforming extrinsic motivators into intrinsic motivators. This transforms selling – normally thought of as a goal for the company – into a goal for the seller herself.



Trend Watch: The transformation of extrinsic into intrinsic motivators will be a major component driving sales performance for sales forces for 2024-25. While there has been much written about the power of intrinsic motivators (e.g., passion and enthusiasm), and the business value of salespersons’ seeing the company’s mission as their own, these are rather intangible factors that have a fairly roundabout connection with the corporate bottom line.

The future of sales technology and seller engagement lies in tools (smart notifications, sales gamification) that transform extrinsic motivators like monetary rewards and selling contests into intrinsic motivators, that is, satisfying in themselves.



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Conclusion: The Near-Future of Seller Engagement and Brand Personality

With the growing centrality of technology to seller engagement, and the transformation of extrinsic into intrinsic motivators, the path forward is clear. Indecisive consumers, particularly for high-ticket items, want to buy from brands that feel genuine, sincere, sophisticated, not bleak and depressing.

Think about Target vs. Walmart in the retail sphere. When asked, nearly everyone would prefer Target's brand personality for its clean, friendly "vibe," which includes the generally helpful attitude of their sales force. Yet this vibe is partly supported by Target's gamification of the checkout process. As described in *CIO*, "Target stores have implemented a little game cashiers play when checking people out. It shows the cashier in red and green based on whether the item that was just scanned was done so in the optimum time. Then they see their immediate score on screen and know how 'in-time' they are with the ideal time."

Of course, this only applies to point of sale rather than selling itself. As we've seen, increases in order size and profitability results when gamification strategies are applied to sales and supported by modern technology, multiplying seller engagement.

Yet not every company has the resources of Target, which is where technology used at scale can be helpful to (1) engage sellers, (2) develop positive brand personality characteristics through engagement, and (3) make extrinsic motivators like sales incentives into intrinsic motivators that are gratifying to each and every seller.

