
“OPTYMYZING” SALES WITH OPERATIONS AS-A-SERVICE

Optymyze's Approach to Sales Operations has Disrupted the SPM Industry

Author:

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An informed and engaged sales force is a critical asset for companies to drive continuous growth. As sales quotes are set to reach corporate goals for growth, and compensation of sales professionals is linked to achieving these quotes, sales operations are increasingly strategic. HfS recently spent some time with a service provider that is focused on enabling dynamic and insight-driven sales performance through a combination of software and services—Optymyze. This “sales-operations-as-a-service” is a set of SaaS-based business process management services designed to improve all aspects of sales force and sales organization performance by bringing its people, process, and technology to the table.

Optymyze works with its clients to manage sales compensation, territories, quotas, objectives, and other sales processes, incorporating analytics to drive continuous change as needed. The cornerstone of the Optymyze approach is to blend on-demand talent and technology services that adapt quickly to change and have the flexibility to scale up or down as the business requires.

What caught our attention about Optymyze is the way it can disrupt traditional sales performance management (SPM) with its As-a-Service approach—partnering SaaS with business process services to engage in collaborative client relationships that deliver on business outcomes, like increasing sales quota attainment.

Why This Matters

In 2013, the company launched Optymyze Sales Performance along with an integrated platform-as-a-service suite for managing big data and analytics and developing extendable apps. Optymyze leadership recognized that clients don't just need software, they need the people and expertise to extract real business value from the software and an understanding to promote best practices in process management. Many clients also lack the analytical abilities necessary to know what to analyze and how to adapt over time, and the knowledge to effectively use the software to make the changes.

Architects of the As-a-Service Economy™

Optymyze offers two As-a-Service solutions to address these gaps:

- **SaaS:** A software-oriented client relationship that includes cloud services applications and platform and professional services for management of the transformation from the old to the new systems and processes and the ongoing management of changes to the new systems as data, compensation plans, reports, and workflow processes change.
- **BPaaS:** A business process management-oriented client relationship that consists of an agile client engagement relationship. Focused on defining and prioritizing business outcomes (rather than scoping out software requirements), it eliminates the need for clients to select, buy, and maintain the various software applications that a sales operations department typically manages.

Optymyze's success hinges on the value provided above and beyond a standard software or implementation services engagement. For example, Optymyze helped pharmaceutical company Kowa redesign and refresh its sales incentive program. Sales professionals now better understand the processes and requisite quotas, and feel the new plans are more "fair," with reps having an equal chance to earn if they accomplish the goals of the sales leadership and grow their business. The Optymyze consultants are now focused on increasing operational efficiency with daily feedback, weekly reports, and continuous improvement that aligns with Kowa's development in the coming years.

The outcomes that Kowa has reported from the engagement include an increase in quota attainment by 14% and an 80% decrease in time to value based on results turned into actionable plans. In addition, its incentive compensation management system has increased recognition and motivation, and there is a decreased time to calculate and report sales performance results (weekly versus monthly).

The Optymyze story exemplifies several of the As-A-Service ideals, in particular:

- **Write off Legacy:** The Optymyze solution seeks to replace legacy applications with applications and platforms in the cloud. Its professional services geared toward helping clients transition from old to new systems helps them write off legacy and move onto the Optymyze platform.
- **Plug and Play Digital Business Services:** Optymyze leverages best practices and processes using its talent and enabling technology to drive easy ramp, continuous improvement and agility in its business processes, maximizing time to value.
- **Actionable and Accessible Data:** Optymyze uses real-time applied analytics models, techniques and insights to create insight that can have an impact on sales representatives' performance and approach to prospects. The analytics employed in Optymyze can range from basic compensation analytics to connecting activities to the performance of the individual along with direct analytics tied to the salesperson and process.

What to Watch

Of most importance for Optymyze, as it embraces the As-a-Service ideals, is the nature of its client relationships and ensuring it is viewed as a genuine strategic partner for its clients' success. The cornerstone of its value proposition is the unique blend of talent and expertise that enables the technology to be used to its best advantage in creating more effective sales organizations. In the future, Optymyze will be working on expanding its platform and further developing its service offering, adding capabilities, including new functions around sales

planning and objective management. The technology roadmap includes expanding on true platform-as-a-service and building business applications on top; the key components used internally by Optymyze consultants will be further standardized and productized service offerings. The company is also keen on adding capabilities to expand the range of services in the areas of sales planning, salesforce automation and objective management to compete in the greater enterprise planning services market.

Despite Optymyze's success, driving the shift to these higher value engagements that are business outcome focused is still challenging, and Optymyze has the opportunity educate the market about exploring the possibilities beyond traditional SaaS SPM. Making the appropriate investments in marketing and sales, which Optymyze has demonstrated it is eager to do, will be crucial for future success.

While Optymyze started in the pharmaceutical industry, the company has branched out broadly and will need to proactively manage its own growth as well as that of its clients. It is seeing take up across industries including insurance, banking, telecommunications, distribution, and technology, and other life sciences industry segments. Optymyze should also consider capitalizing on Sales-as-a-Service as it relates to the overall concept of the customer experience. While an internal performance focused tool, as Optymyze expands capabilities toward sales planning and automation and expands its presence across verticals, looking at the way that sales data can integrate with marketing, customer sentiment and other customer facing data will open even more doors as it fits into the ecosystem of providers focused on omni-channel customer experience.

About the Author

Melissa O'Brien



Melissa O'Brien is Research Director, Contact Center and Omni-Channel Operations and BPO at HfS Research. Her research coverage includes customer experience management services, exploring ties with marketing operations and developing thought leadership around intelligent automation for contact center and vertical specific customer engagement business processes.

Prior to HfS, Melissa spent four and a half years at IDC as Research Analyst managing the Worldwide Customer Experience Management Services program. Her role at IDC included analysis of evolving contact center business process and consumer communication trends and delivering reports, presentations and custom consulting projects including market forecasts and in depth competitive assessments.

Melissa previously worked within the BPO industry as Client Services Manager at PSG Global Solutions, an outsourced recruiting services business. Melissa held various roles at PSG Global, including new client implementation, program design, and training, including development and delivery of the original training program in their Manila and Cebu, Philippines offices.

Melissa graduated with honors from the University of New Hampshire with a BA in English and Communication, and is a member of the Phi Beta Kappa honor society.

Melissa is a Boston area native and lives just outside the city with her husband and adorably mischievous Bluetick Coonhound. She enjoys various outdoor activities, traveling, and has recently become a kickboxing fanatic.

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About HfS Research

We coined the **As-a-Service Economy** term because we see a profound change under way that is more all encompassing than a simple business model or product line. It's a global shift that will leave few sectors of business or society untouched.

To help our clients and the market get to the As-a-Service Economy, we serve the strategy needs of business operations and IT leaders across finance, supply chain, human resources, marketing, and core industry functions in organizations around the world. HfS provides insightful and meaningful analyst coverage of best business practices and innovations that impact successful business outcomes, such as the digital transformation of operations, cloud-based business platforms, services talent development strategies, process automation and outsourcing, mobility, analytics and social collaboration. HfS applies its acclaimed **Blueprint Methodology** to evaluate the performance of service and technology in terms of innovating and executing against those business outcomes.

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