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CASE STUDY

Citrix Uncovers New Data-Driven, Smarter Strategy to Increase Sales

Using data to drive prioritization, workflows, and growth

"I have not failed. I've just found 10,000 ways that won't work."

Thomas Edison

"As marketers, we obsessively track opportunities, but we don't track the 97% of engagements that don't become opportunities.

We're doomed to repeat the same behavior over and over and over again."

Barry Magee, Director of Business Intelligence, Citrix

In B2B sales and marketing, if we followed the lead of Thomas Edison, we'd learn from our failures. But the reality is, most of us just choose to look at our wins and ignore the abundance of data that could help us develop smarter strategies.

Top-performing sales teams are three-times more likely to be data driven than are underperforming teams. Data and analytics reign supreme when it comes to a successful sales strategy—or most strategies, for that matter—whether marketing or customer retention. But many B2B teams haven't kept pace. They either continue to be intuition-driven or aren't taking in enough of the available data points to accelerate growth.

Marketing benefits as well from a data-driven strategy. But actually, everything needs to be more data driven. Customer support and inquiries can't live in a silo. Everything is interrelated, really. Someone—something—needs to connect the dots. That's where being data driven comes in.

Citrix has undertaken a complete redesign of what it means to be data driven in sales and marketing. Led by the Director of Business Intelligence at Citrix, Barry Magee, Citrix has developed a platform that leverages data and **D&B Rev.Up ABX for Sales, powered by D&B Lattice CDP**. It's been an evolutionary process. Starting with just 20 users, it has expanded to the entire project's EMEA organization of 700, and it is currently being deployed globally to more than 3,000 users.

"Project Edison, as it is known internally, is now at the core of nearly everything we do. It's even part of training for all new hires," said Barry.

The Trouble With Client Engagement

With 25 years of data leadership experience under his belt, much of it in various roles at IBM and Citrix, Barry had observed and acknowledged the low B2B conversion rate: For every 100 customers that a B2B company reaches out to, whether it's sales or marketing, the average response is typically under 4%—be it inside sales, digital sales, or field sales. And the marketing baseline is even lower—probably less than half of 1%.

In Barry's view, the current sales process is inefficient. First, there are productivity issues. Sales and marketing teams are constantly inundated with tasks and often get conflicting instructions. The typical team is burdened with dozens, if not hundreds, of spreadsheets and lists; teams are mired in working through tasks that aren't even on their leadership team's radar. Second, even when they are given more specific direction, sellers are left to self-prioritize. The problem proliferates as you go down the organizational ladder. The result: a "busy being busy" problem—uncoordinated, unstructured work. Wasted time and wasted energy going unnoticed and producing, basically, not much at all.

"Most sellers spend their time talking to the wrong people in companies; that's the productivity issue. We've got to stop that—just switch it off—and that automatically improves your productivity," said Barry.

No matter how expert even the most seasoned sales team may be at knowing their customers, they need support—a way to consolidate, prioritize, and focus on the best opportunities. But there's a challenge to getting to this point. Barry noted, "Companies are fantastic at managing opportunities. For example, they call 100 customers and get back five opportunities and then manage those opportunities to death. **However, we never observe and manage the 95 customer interactions that did not become an opportunity because there's no feedback mechanism, and there's no vested interest for a seller**. That's at least 95% of engagements that aren't tracked, dooming us to repeat the same behaviors over and over and over again.

"We realized that if we were going to grow market share at Citrix, we need to learn from the customers that *don't want to buy from us* as much as we need to learn from those that do. Knowing lots about my existing customers, or the customers that are leaning toward me, is not nearly as important as learning more about the customers that aren't. That feedback piece is critical."

Project Edison is meant to fill in these gaps. It is based on Thomas Edison's timeless quote that qualifies every "failure" as a positive step toward any goal. Therefore, it has enabled Citrix to build a process that drives the customer engagement mechanism to:

- Inform where market opportunity exists, in which territory, for which customers
- Show a data-backed ranking to understand with whom to engage next
- Indicate a data-driven reason to call a customer—provide a sales narrative or rationale as to why they are a fit for Citrix
- Identify where and when customers have buying signals so sales can leverage need at the right time
- Provide insight to learn, from market feedback, what worked and what didn't in order to improve engagement effectiveness

Operationalizing Corporate Strategy

Barry believes that most companies struggle by trying to take a corporate strategy out of PowerPoint and transform it into something that can be operationalized on a day-to-day basis. In other words, strategy has to translate into an operational model. At Citrix, strategy translates into 13 use cases, the value propositions Citrix wants to have with their market.

He explained, "Working with product strategy, we take each one of these use cases and ask ourselves to describe what a perfect customer looks like. And then we ingest lots of data. We look at our first-party data, and we look for third-party data—buying signals. And then we do the standard modeling stuff. The role of Project Edison is then to mine all the data to make sense of it for each use case. But the difference is—particularly where D&B Rev.Up ABX for Sales comes in—creating workflow. Having a bunch of data scientists give you a really smart model doesn't mean anything if it sits on a spreadsheet somewhere and isn't integrated into a workflow or business process."

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"We see our role in Business Intelligence as a sort of value engineer. We take the data and restructure business processes—whether it's sales, marketing, customer success, or engineering—in order to make use of that data."

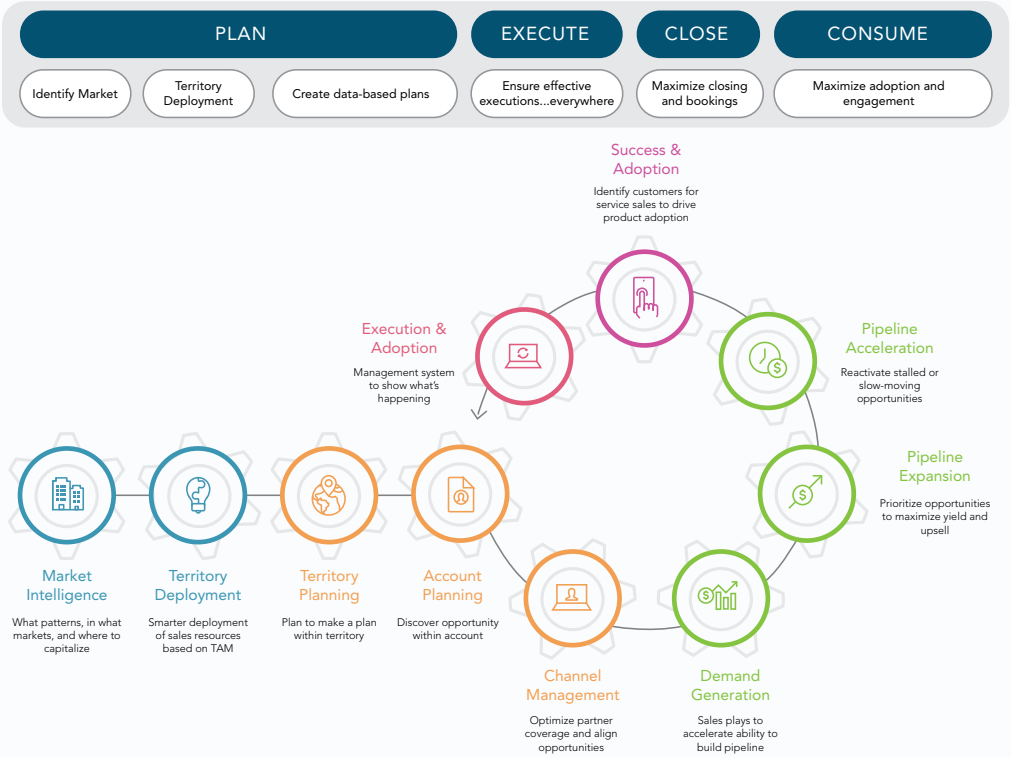

Figure 1: Core use cases

"Project Edison is really about driving behavior and prioritization. Its key objective is to guide sales to talk to their customer about XYZ and report on it," Barry explained. "That allows us not only to build pipeline, but also allows us to see what worked and what didn't. It also enables us to do things like expand existing opportunities, look at opportunities that are already there, and see whether we are selling the same stuff over and over again or whether our customers fit our other use cases – in other words, pipeline acceleration. And then in addition, we can see how to use all this data to drive workflow at customer success."

As shown in Figure 1, the use cases fall into four broader categories: Plan, Execute, Close, Consume.

For example, early planning is focused on total addressable market and deployment (shown in blue): What is the TAM? Where is it, and how much is it worth? Then, for any given market, how are resources deployed? How much headcount is needed in, say, Germany to cover the addressable market?

The second part of planning which transitions to execution is indicated in orange: With a territory of accounts, what's the best way to manage that territory? How do the sales teams approach customers over each quarter? What are the different value propositions? And what can sales professionals learn about their accounts that they don't already know?

Execution leads to closing, represented in green. Workflows direct sellers to build the pipeline, for example, talk to this customer about X. Barry added, "In EMEA we have close to 600 people deployed on this platform and about 50,000 different client engagements, which is quite large for B2B. **We can see exactly what happened because we have the D&B Rev.Up ABX element in there, which says, 'Go talk to this customer about this topic, and then tell us what happened.'** That allows us to build pipeline but also to see what worked and what didn't, leading into the next phase."

After capturing an understanding of what works, but more importantly, what doesn't work, Citrix can create insights that help enlarge existing opportunities and explore whether other use cases apply to customers (indicated in magenta and red.) Barry explained, "Are we selling the same stuff over and over again? We can see if the customer fits these other use cases. And then, because we're moving into the SaaS space ourselves, we're also looking at customer success—how to use all this data to drive workflow at customer success. This is a pilot we deployed in Q1. Now we're Q4 and it's massively successful. And it's starting to bring all these teams together."

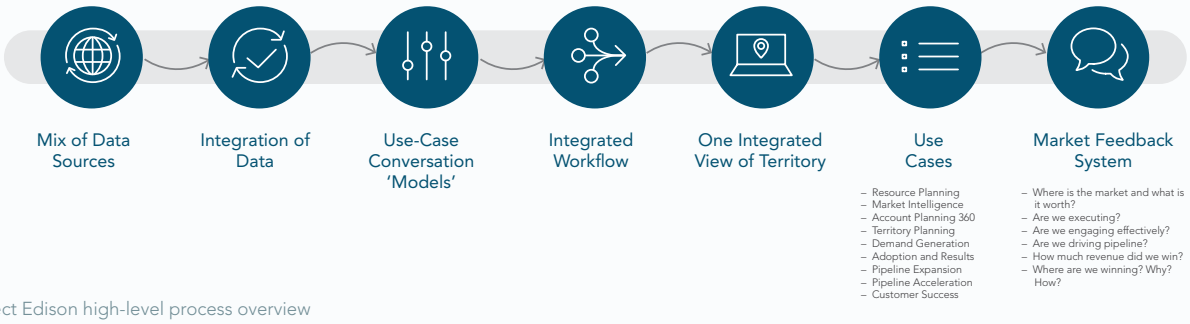

Figure 2: Project Edison high-level process overview

How It Works

Edison is meant to make sense of the world for a seller or a marketer. It functions as a Power BI skin that sits on top of Citrix data, mixing many data sources together—first-, second-, and third-party data—and integrates it into a single version of the truth so Citrix can run its analytical models.

"We cook up our own analytics and then send it to **D&B Rev.Up ABX** to do all the traditional stuff, but the critical piece is the integrated workflow," said Barry. "Up to point 4 (see Figure 2), this is just another Excel spreadsheet. It's only by point 5 – that's the **D&B Rev.Up ABX for Sale**s component – that it says, 'Here are all the customers in your territory. Now, we're creating a workflow for you on each customer. Here are all the recommendations. Now, go manage your business.' All of that is what allows us to build all these use cases and see what works and what doesn't. And that's everything, from what's working in what part of the market to managers beginning to coach their sales or marketing team.

"Now we can see behavioral patterns, such as which sellers are getting stuck at gatekeepers and accounts. The workflows basically say, 'Here are all the customers you should talk to, and by the way, on each customer, here are the different topics you're looking for. Secondly, when you talk to the customer, capture an outcome. Whether it's good, bad or indifferent.'"

Barry added, "Traditionally, only opportunities are captured. We're more interested in the 96% to 97% that don't become an opportunity, because that's how you pivot. Codify the outcome, whether that's no budget, no authority, no need, or they're with the competition. That's standard stuff. But then give us commentary and use the comments. In this way we're capturing big data sets, and basically, at the end of all this, we're building a business process that is the equivalent of a machine learning loop."

Summary

"Project Edison is driving behavior and prioritization," noted Barry. "Our main objective is to provide guidance to go-to-market teams about relevant customer discussion points. Whether you're customer success or you're an engineer or you're marketing—whatever. And then when you've done it, tell us what happened during those discussions.

"We can't measure if and where someone is physically talking to customers, because right now, Citrix, like most companies, doesn't know. You give a quota to a seller and you're able to measure their opportunities. But those are all lagging indicators. Whether you have an opportunity—a sales opportunity—is a lagging indicator of the effectiveness of your sales and marketing organization. You want to know who are they talking to? How is it progressing? How effective are they? Are they getting stuck or not? We're starting to get that.

"This is game changing because now you can create this entire new mechanism of managing the business that did not exist before. With D&B Rev.Up ABX for Sales powered by the D&B Lattice CDP at the core of Edison, we're able to think of as many use cases as we want, from customer success to marketing to engineering—everybody has a need for this because everyone's in the business of 'here's your target,' whatever that target is. Very few organizations have mechanisms that let them know whether their team is doing what they want them to do, and even if companies can observe that, are they actually learning from it? That's where the workflow comes in to say, 'Well, actually, when we went out and talked to the market, we found that this is where we are very effective, but this is where we are not.'"

Results That Get Noticed

"We've gone from that 2%-3% conversion rate to an average of 20%, so a 10X improvement in conversion rate. That's a flattened average. When you look at our blitzes, when we're actually doing these sorts of focused motions, those numbers are as high as 25%. Also, when you find customers that have both intent and fit and they fit a use case and we can see they're in a buying cycle, that conversion rate is 30%. That's a massive number."

Barry pointed out, "The more our sellers execute, the more the models get smarter and smarter and smarter."

Legacy Processes	New Processes
Ad hoc-driven execution from multiple and hidden stakeholders suppresses lead conversion and time to pipeline target	One integrated process in sales connects with management system and market feedback allows increasing speed to pipeline
• Takes months to build pipeline	• Takes weeks (not months) to build pipeline
• Conversion rate of 1%-2%	• Conversion rate of 13%-20%
• Ex: a $1M sales target of $100K transactions and 20% win rate will take **50 weeks** of activity to achieve with a 1% lead conversion rate	• Ex: a $1M sales target of $100K transactions and 20% win rate will take **nine weeks** of outbound activity to achieve with a 5.5% lead conversion rate

Adoption

Of the 600 or so provisioned users in the Citrix EMEA region, sales and sales ops make up the majority of users, followed by marketing, telemarketing, and the executive team. Individual users range from sales ops who use this data to optimize sales territories to individual sellers who use this new platform on a daily basis. The entire marketing team uses it to drive campaigns, segmenting it, whether it's for digital media buying or ABM-type activities.

"Sales operations loves it because there's so much data here," said Barry. "Often, sellers can't see patterns in an account, but the sales engineers can; and with their more technical eyes, they can help the seller understand what's going on in an account. We've got a couple of hundred sales engineers providing recommendations such as, 'If you're talking to Customer A, talk to him about this, because I can see they have this technology and here's how to position this.'"

The customer success team also leverages Edison to prevent churn and drive up adoption, and is always looking for signals to identify risks as well as opportunities.

A Vision Come to Life

With **D&B Rev.Up ABX for Sales** at its core, Project Edison increases speed to pipeline, increases sales conversion rates, and decreases time spent to achieve higher conversion rates. Citrix has redesigned the meaning of data-driven smart strategies for sales and marketing.

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