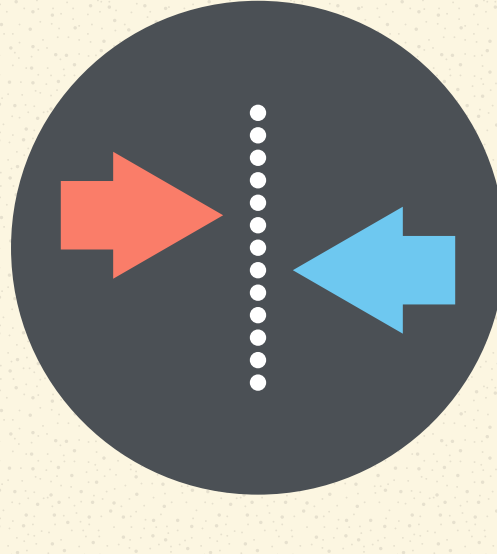


# DEVELOP

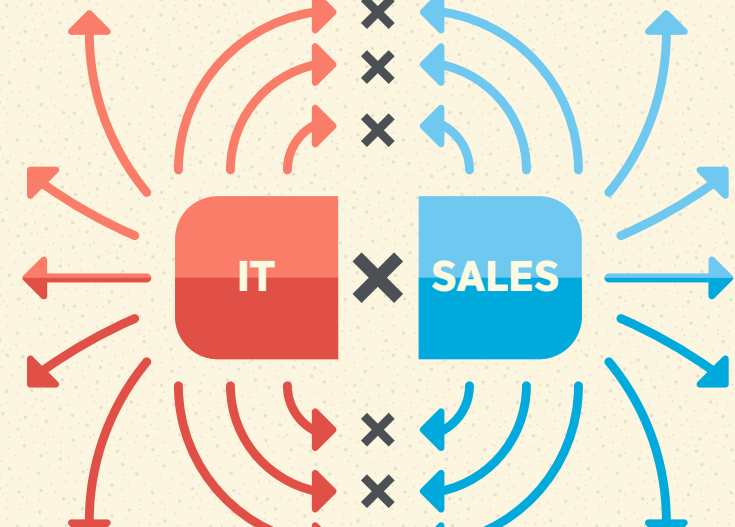
# an IT Strategy to Support Sales

Bring Sales to your side with a rock star strategy for end-to-end technology enablement.

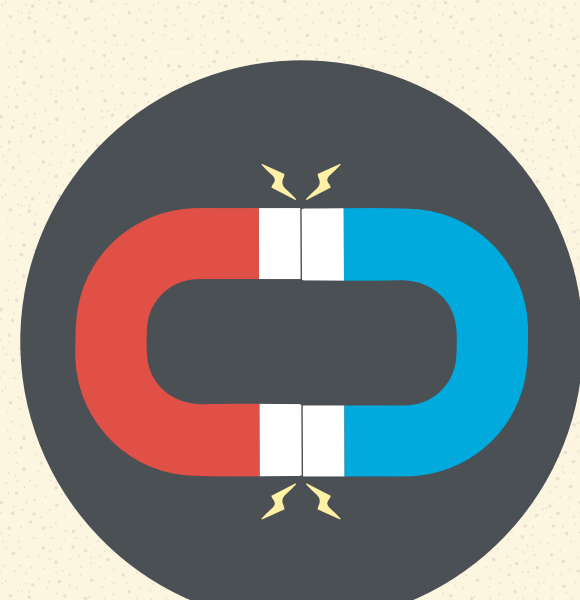


This research is designed for IT Applications Directors responsible for successfully supporting the sales department and enabling sales processes. The contents aim to identify points of collaboration between IT and Sales concerning sales-related business process improvements. The goal should be to strengthen the alignment between IT and Sales with a series of initiatives that augment sales productivity and transform IT into a strategic partner that contributes to sales objectives.

## If IT fails to adequately support Sales,

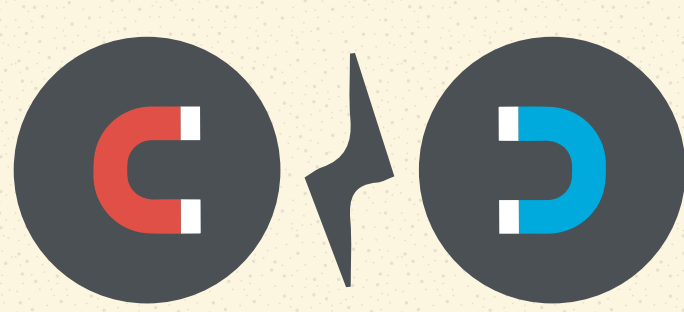


the organization's revenue will be in direct jeopardy. As a result, it's absolutely imperative that CIOs and Applications Directors work with their counterparts in the sales organization to craft a cohesive and comprehensive strategy for providing world-class technology enablement that helps – rather than hinders – the sales function.



### Components/Aspects of a Well-Aligned Sales-IT Strategy:

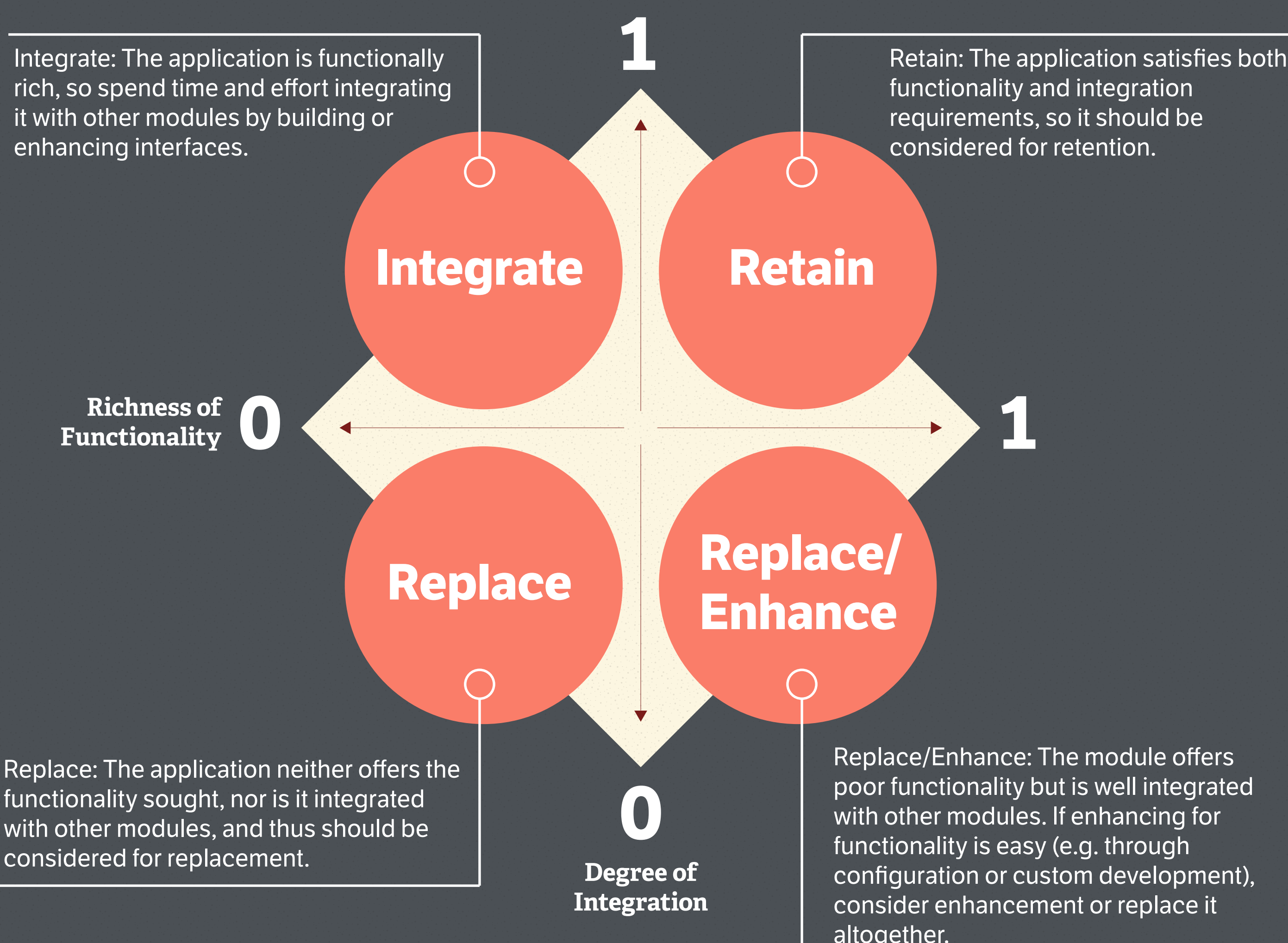
- Centralized, shared governance between Sales and IT
- Strong communication
- Comprehensive requirements gathering programs
- Strong standard operating processes and procedures
- Strong triaging and application maintenance workflows
- Cohesive, rationalized portfolio of sales applications and technologies
- Strong data governance for sales and customer data



### Components/Aspects of a Misaligned Sales-IT Strategy:

- Senior management is not involved in strategy development
- Attention is not paid to the "art of the possible"
- Attention is not paid to the actions of competitors
- Misalignment between objectives and financial/personnel resources
- Sales culture that downplays the potential value of technology or new applications

## Sales-Related Applications:



### The Various Best-Of-Breed Sales Applications in Support of Core CRM Suites:

- Customer Relationship Management (CRM)
- Sales Collateral Management/Cloud File Sharing
- Sales Collaboration Management/Collaboration Platforms
- Social Media Management Platform
- Sales Force Automation
- Lead Management Automation (LMA)
- Field Sales/Service Automation (FSA)
- Email Marketing Bureaus
- Marketing Intelligence Systems



### 1 Review the benefits and investigate the urgency for improving Sales-IT alignment

A well-oiled IT strategy to support Sales should function like two attracting magnets: the requirements and objectives of both IT and Sales are aligned and interlocking. A misfiring IT strategy to support Sales causes the opposite – incompatible goals, miscommunication, and resource misalignment – and the two departments repulse rather than lock together. When crafting your IT-Sales support strategy, make sure it passes the magnet test.

### 2 Structure the project and build the project team

Do not forget that customers are critical stakeholders as well. Make sure there is strong customer advocacy within your team. IT's involvement and collaboration with Sales can significantly impact the customer experience – always build the strategy with the final customer in mind.

### 3 Articulate business objectives and define vision for future state

Incorporate future considerations into the requirements. Will the system need to adapt over time to accommodate additional processes, process variations, and the introduction of additional channels and capabilities? Do not overreach by identifying system capabilities that cannot possibly be met.

### 4 Document current state and assess gaps

Decommissioning modules and replacing entire applications can put well-functioning modules at risk. Make sure to drill down into the granular features to assess if the feature-level performance prompts change. The goal is to make the architecture more efficient for Sales and easier to manage for IT. If integration has been chosen as a course of action, make sure that the spend on resources and effort is less than that on system replacement.

### 5 Identify sales solutions

Do not wait until Sales takes the reins of technology procurement without IT involvement. Once "shadow IT" takes hold, Sales will view IT as an administrative roadblock and hesitate to obtain their input for technology-driven initiatives. What IT ends up with is a plethora of unforeseen, ad hoc integration and configuration requests that further hamper strategic involvement with Sales.

### 6 Build the roadmap for Sales-IT alignment

The timeline that you are on for sales application implementation will be impacted by many variables, most notably the degree of optimization required. As the "business critical" list increases, the amount of time that must be allocated to the systems integration and data-related work also increases. Keep these technical requirements in mind when setting kick-off dates.

### 7 Implement the roadmap

Remember your goal should always be progress, not perfection. Application sales is a complex task that causes every organization to feel pain and relapse into poor practices at some point. Your goal is to be vigilant about being aware of set pain and determining if the changes you are making are helping to deliver positive metric results. Celebrate the small wins as this will help your desired processes regain momentum.

