

Revenue Ops: The Salesforce Way

Insights and Inspiration
from Meredith Schmidt,
EVP, Revenue Operations, Salesforce



Introduction

One of the driving forces behind Salesforce's incredible growth is the innovative work of the Revenue Ops department led by EVP Meredith Schmidt, who reports directly to the CFO. She and her team have created an automated sales process by constantly challenging the status quo, and by making the most of connected apps and unified data. The team currently operates at 75% no-touch from quote to compensation – on an annual volume that exceeds 1 million orders. That's serious volume.

In the following pages, we'll reveal some of the approaches Meredith uses to foster innovation and creativity – universal tips that can be easily tailored to supercharge your own quote-to-compensation process.

Meredith Schmidt

EVP, Global Revenue Operations, Salesforce

Meredith Schmidt has spent the last 15 years – 11 of them at Salesforce – famously disrupting the SaaS, finance, and consulting sectors, while earning a reputation as a dynamic and visionary leader.



Meredith Schmidt's Five Best Practices

Meredith and her team have established five best practices as a path to innovation. At the root of these practices is the philosophy that process and policy decisions should always come before the implementation of technology.

1

Question the status quo.

Just because things have always been done a certain way doesn't mean that's the best way.

2

Automation is a must.

Any time you can automate a task, it frees up people to do their most valuable work.

3

Focus on the end user.

Always remember who your target audience is. This is why you do what you do.

4

Think scalability and growth.

A solution that only solves today's immediate problem might not be the best solution.

5

Empower individuals by giving them a voice.

There is tremendous value inside each member of your team. Be sure to unleash it.

BEST PRACTICE #1

Question the status quo.

A successful team is always on the lookout for pain points and processes that don't make sense. And, of course, it's not enough to simply point out a problem. The recognition of an issue needs to be met by action and creative solutions.

For example, a member of Meredith's team recently asked, "Why do I have all this paperwork awaiting signatures on my desk if we have so many great e-signature partners to choose from?" Meredith called a meeting, raised the issue, and brainstormed ideas with her team. Now the team is using an e-signature app to eliminate 90% of signature paperwork.



Our team vision is to innovate, ask questions, and challenge the status quo.”

MEREDITH SCHMIDT



BEST PRACTICE #2

Automation is a must.

Too often, routine manual tasks and data entry are accepted as necessary evils. The Salesforce Revenue Ops team looks for every opportunity to replace manual-level controls and people-driven processes with app-enabled, automated processes. The team is constantly on the lookout for tasks that consistently show up in email inboxes, because there's a good chance it can find an app that will help automate the process.

One example: A new integration app has enabled the team to create a post-signature provision process that is entirely automated, free of human error, and much more cost-efficient than a multiperson order-management staff.

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Once a customer signs, nobody at Salesforce has to touch it. It's automatically provisioned. The invoice is billed, the opportunity is closed, and the sales commission process gets kicked off.”

MEREDITH SCHMIDT



BEST PRACTICE #3

Focus on the end user.

Meredith firmly believes that the end user – individual account executives (AEs), in this case – should always be the center of attention. While developing and implementing any process, the team must be laser-focused on making the end user's job easier and faster. So Meredith's team constantly engages AEs to discover pain points and inefficient workflows that inhibit timely response to customers. The team also relentlessly looks for ways to push information to help AEs increase sales, such as algorithm-generated recommendations on sales automation apps and related products.



BEST PRACTICE #4

Think scalability and growth.

Solutions that increase productivity aren't just about increasing revenue right now; they're also about keeping up with growing demand in the future, even if headcount doesn't grow. Forward-thinking is the best way to ensure that your company is ready for sudden opportunities when they arise. Before implementing any new processes or technology, Meredith and her team always ask growth-related hypotheticals to make sure they're prepared for 2x or 3x growth, new acquisitions, and everything else that comes with these opportunities.

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If you're prepared for scale, your team will not get pulled back into manual processes as system demand increases, which means it can remain focused on the high-value work that drives growth.”

MEREDITH SCHMIDT

BEST PRACTICE #5

Empower individuals by giving them a voice.

To ensure that great ideas are encouraged and welcomed, the Revenue Ops team made it easy for employees to provide feedback, report issues, and share ideas. This feedback loop is even available to people outside the core team, including those in departments like finance, legal, product, and pricing. Meredith believes great ideas can come from anyone, anywhere.

A great example of this comes from a sales compensation employee in Meredith's org who noticed that an integration app was automating 85% of orders. She realized that there was a similar use case in sales compensation and asked to extend the app license to include compensation activities. Within 30 days, she tested and implemented the app for the new use case. The new, app-driven process now handles a workload that previously required two full-time employees.

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By giving employees the ability to test and share ideas, we are able to use technology across teams, find patterns, and successfully automate processes.”

MEREDITH SCHMIDT



The Technology That Gets It Done

Vision is great. But execution brings results. Below are some details of the technological solutions that Meredith's team has used to execute its carefully considered vision, and with which it has created sales success that helped Salesforce be named one of the most innovative companies in the world for five years in a row. The technology has two main components: the platform and AppExchange.

1. The Platform

The revenue operations machine at Salesforce is built on multiple apps from AppExchange. All of these apps work seamlessly on the Salesforce platform, which means they draw from a single data source, have the same, familiar UI, and are 100% mobile optimized.

Salesforce also integrates with other systems to unite back-office and front-office data, so Meredith's Revenue Ops team never has to leave the Salesforce environment. The platform makes everything simpler, more efficient, and more productive.





2. AppExchange: Apps for Every Step of the Quote-to-Compensation Process

Here's how AppExchange helps reinvent the entire sales process:

Step 1. Creating Quotes and Getting Approval to Send

An advanced, customized CPQ (configure, price, quote) app allows reps to configure quotes and streamline even the most complex approvals process.

Step 2. Sealing the Deal

An electronic signature app allows customers to easily review and sign orders on any device.

Step 3. Billing and Compensation

Upon receipt of the signed document, advanced workflows automatically trigger submission of the initial order, delivery of service, and billing to the customer. Then the opportunity is closed and locked as revenue.

Step 4. Internal Support

Service Cloud from Salesforce helps the revenue ops team quickly prioritize and handle incoming requests for support, as well as analyze data to find trends and opportunities. Service KPIs are available and used as a management tool.



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