

CUSTOMER CASE STUDY: ELSEVIER

# Better Sales and Marketing Alignment Drives New Opportunities



ELSEVIER

One of the leading publishers of scientific, technical, and medical information products and services, Elsevier counts over 2,000 journals and 20,000 books to its product portfolio. Overall, Elsevier serves nearly 30 million scientists, students, faculty, and health and science professionals worldwide. A global business headquartered in Amsterdam, the company employs 7,000 people worldwide and is part of Reed Elsevier Group PLC.

As Elsevier observed the Web's ability to connect customers with the research that matters most to them, the company began to expand its portfolio of online solutions by launching Scopus® — the largest abstract and citation database of peer-reviewed literature and quality web sources with smart tools to track, analyze, and visualize research — in 2004. As this area grew, Elsevier saw the opportunity to address additional challenges with regards to research performance, planning, and funding, and they launched the SciVal suite of solutions and services in June 2009 to enable institutions around the world to better evaluate, establish, and execute research strategies.

Although it was a very exciting and innovative step for Elsevier, there was a unique challenge in launching the SciVal suite: Elsevier's sales and marketing teams were entering a new market. Traditionally serving the librarian community, new marketing strategies were required to go beyond the library and meet with institutional research leaders. They needed to quickly identify what worked — and what didn't — to drive new business opportunities from SciVal. To help keep the sales and marketing teams connected in real-time to the colleagues and information they needed to reach this new market, Elsevier chose Socialtext's enterprise social software platform.

## Challenge: New Market, New Challenges

When Elsevier decided to build the SciVal suite, the company wanted to move quickly to address the new market challenges and establish new revenue sources to diversify its digital services business. The net result was that the sales and marketing teams had little over a half-year to prepare, leaving many uncertain — and even anxious — about how the company would evolve its skill sets to serve such a new market.

Internally, they realized the current communication and collaboration mechanisms within sales, product, and marketing would further exacerbate the task if left unattended. Most sales collateral and marketing documents were sent via e-mail, crowding inboxes and causing confusion about who had the most current information when they dialed into a meeting. The company intranet wasn't sufficient, either; like many corporate intranets, Elsevier's required the assistance of IT to update it, allowing content to become stale or static.

“As we prepared for the SciVal launch, we realized, more than ever, we needed a new collaboration platform to keep information up to date in real-time,” says Brie Betz, a Solutions Marketing Manager for SciVal. “We were moving from libraries to research offices and that required new resources across the board for our sales and marketing efforts.”

## Solution: Easy, Secure Collaboration. Now.

With only months to form a sales and marketing strategy for the SciVal launch, Betz says Elsevier wanted a collaboration offering that would provide little technical effort on the part of the company on the back end and that was easy and quick for employees to learn and derive value from quickly on the front end. Betz says this is where Socialtext’s flexible software as a service (SaaS) model played a big factor.

Elsevier’s IT department manages dozens of applications across the company, and adding another that would require lots of maintenance and labor would not rank highly on their list. To mitigate that need, Elsevier chose Socialtext’s hosted appliance. The secure hosted appliance sits in Socialtext’s datacenter and is dedicated to Elsevier’s data. At the same time, Socialtext manages all the updates on monthly iteration cycles, keeping the software seamlessly up to date and secure.

For Elsevier stakeholders, the simplicity of Socialtext’s enterprise social software applications made it easy for them to create and edit content in a way that hadn’t been possible with its existing intranet. By the simple click of “edit” and “save,” Elsevier employees can modify content on a web page and easily share it with all their colleagues in real-time with Socialtext Signals, an enterprise microblogging tool. They also utilized Socialtext people, an enterprise social networking profiles where Elsevier sales, product, and marketing members could share expertise, project work, and other critical information with colleagues. As more work migrates to Socialtext, Elsevier has a dedicated customer success manager (CSM) to ensure that people get the most business value from the platform. When they have questions about new features or want to try something new inside Socialtext, they can rely on their CSM to answer them quickly and efficiently.

## New Go-To Resource for Sales, Product, and Marketing

Prior to Socialtext, Elsevier’s sales, product, and marketing teams relied on e-mail and the existing company intranet to share information with each other about customers, market conditions and collateral. But information inside of e-mail boxes became “instantly outdated,” and the intranet required IT assistance to do any heavy-lifting of content. So within three months, Betz and her colleagues populated a designated workspace within Socialtext to ensure that people had the most updated information as they prepared to go into the field and sell SciVal. Now, Elsevier uses Socialtext to create, share and collaborate on critical sales, product, and marketing information, including the following:

- Product collateral and white papers
- Publicity and pricing sales tools
- Market feedback and competitive intelligence
- Presentation slide decks and FAQs

Betz set up short e-mail digests that reminded people of new content inside of Socialtext, prompting even more updates to the sales and marketing materials that kept it fresh and current.

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Yukun Harsono  
Vice President, Product Marketing

## Benefits: Adapt Quickly, Improve Product Feedback, Beat Competitors

The benefits from sharing information openly inside Socialtext's secure enterprise social software platform has been pervasive across both sales and marketing, and even product development. The sales and marketing teams are better in synch. They know they have the most updated information as the market evolves. Every account manager knows he or she enters a meeting with the latest collateral that helps them address customer needs and illustrate value. On the marketing side, the volume of e-mail decreased substantially, as marketing managers fielded fewer product questions and requests for collateral from sales and other stakeholders. Although it took some time to move beyond saying "I know it's probably on Socialtext, but...", her colleagues now understand to look first, ask second.

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Brie Betz  
Solutions Marketing Manager

Consequently, Betz estimates an 80 percent reduction in interdepartmental e-mail volume, making the communications they do have in e-mail more focused and one-to-one. "I used to get about five to ten fairly technical questions a day via e-mail, which I'd have to answer individually," Betz says. "Now, I receive only about two or three a week."

The knowledge being captured inside Socialtext by account managers and consultants out in the field has also helped improve product feedback and speed the time to which the development team can improve SciVal. Like many software products (including Socialtext itself), one SciVal solution — SciVal Spotlight — now runs on what is called an agile iteration cycle. That means updates and upgrades to the software happen in weeks instead of months.

Now that product managers can read the additional stream of product feedback, they know what new features to prioritize. "In the past, product feedback that the sales and marketing team used to collect from customers would often take over a year to be implemented," Betz says. "This faster development cycle is so great for rapidly meeting the needs of our customers, and within Socialtext, we can easily share product feedback and the corresponding enhancements with each other."

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It has also improved their ability to on-board new employees, who can see and learn from the content that has been edited and revised inside Socialtext. Because content inside Socialtext is tag-able and searchable, it becomes institutional knowledge that transcends the tenure of any one employee. "The soft knowledge aspect is really important," Betz says. "They can see the progression of things. What did a slide deck look like a year ago compared to this year? Knowing these things gives us better context for what work we do out in the field."

## Conclusion: Cross Departmental Collaboration Improves Customer Satisfaction and New Opportunities

The publishing industry and research community move quickly. By giving its people access to real-time information that's never stale or dated, Elsevier gives its employees the best chance to win new customers and serve their current ones more effectively. As the market changes, so too will the content and resources that helps sales, product, and marketing professionals at Elsevier adapt to the needs of their expanding market.

"With Socialtext, we can keep everyone in synch and informed of critical changes in the market that their colleagues encounter when meeting with customers," says Yukun Harsono, Vice President Product Marketing. "Because Socialtext is flexible and easy to use, they can work with their colleagues on crafting the material and insight they need to win in this new market."

## About Socialtext

Established in 2002, Socialtext is the first company to deliver social software to businesses. By unlocking knowledge, expertise, ideas and data, Socialtext eliminates information silos across the enterprise to drive superior business performance. Socialtext's enterprise social networking products — including microblogging, blogs, wikis, profiles and social spreadsheets — provide simpler ways for employees to share vital information and work together in real-time. Delivered in a variety of hosted cloud services, as well as on-site appliances, enterprise customers are provided with flexible deployment options that meet their security requirements. Built on a flexible, web-oriented architecture, Socialtext integrates with virtually any traditional system of record, such as CRM and ERP, enabling companies to discuss, collaborate, and take action on key business processes. More than 6,500 businesses worldwide have accelerated their business performance with Socialtext, including Oxford University Press, Egon Zehnder, Getty Images, Symantec, Meredith Corporation, NYU Stern, OSIssoft, and Epitaph Records. To learn more, visit [www.socialtext.com](http://www.socialtext.com).

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+1 (650) 331-7307 [sales@socialtext.com](mailto:sales@socialtext.com)