Reo.dev

GUIDE TO WARM ACCOUNT ENTRY FOR DEVTOOL SALES EXECS

Bridging User to Buyer in DevTool Sales with GTM Strategies

Achintya Gupta
Piyush Agarwal

INTRODUCTION

IN DEVTOOL SALES THE USER IS OFTEN DIFFERENT FROM BUYER. BUT HOW DO YOU USE YOUR DEVELOPER GTM MOTION TO BRIDGE THIS PATH FROM USER TO BUYER.

The organizations that focus on developers face a common challenge of having to build the path from an interested community of developer users to the actual buyers of the product. These developer-focused organizations have spent a tremendous amount on activating the bottom-up developer motion and building a community of developer evangelists who are either actively using the open-source or trial versions of the product, talking about the product on communities, and evangelizing the product in general. However, such developers generally have limited buying power themselves, and the actual buyer of this tool is a different persona, especially in cases where the expected ticket size is larger or the buyer organization expects a senior technology, business, or product official to be involved in decision making.

At Reo.Dev, we meet GTM leaders of developer tool companies every day and learn from the best in how they solve this problem. We have seen a few themes and tactics emerging:

TACTIC I

ANALYZE THE DATA PATTERNS OF THE BOTTOM-UP DEVELOPER MOTION TO LEARN TEAMS, HIERARCHIES, AND DECISION MAKERS

Many sales and marketing teams make the mistake of reaching out to developers using or evaluating their product directly. Since this persona is generally not sales and marketing friendly (or at least not friendly to ‘bad’ sales and marketing), a direct outreach to developers rarely works.

A more effective technique is to analyze data from the bottom-up dev GTM motion to understand the patterns to fine-tune the outreach efforts to the buyers/decision makers:

Learning the ‘right time to make a sale’

In Developer tools leveraging bottom-up dev GTM, a very important metric to measure is whether it is the right time to make a sale. Because if you go in too early, the developers in your prospective organization might have just started evaluating or understanding your product, and the buyers might not be ready (or even know yet) about your product. And if you go in too late, the prospect might have moved on to competitive products or might not need your help anymore.

TACTIC I

However, studying the data can be a great way to understand the 'right time to make a sale.' A few indicators include:

- Developers are studying the advanced features or going into depth of the product
- Multiple developers from an organization have started working or evaluating your product
- You are seeing repetitive activities from the same organization in shorter time periods.
- Developers from the organization are spending time on your docs or asking questions in your communities.

Studying organization, designations, and location of the developers interacting with your product

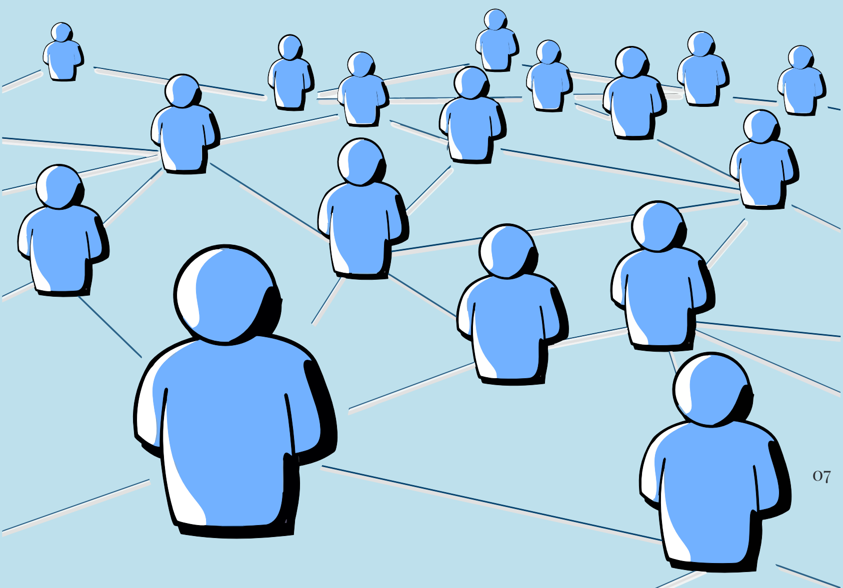
A few patterns that could be recognized from here include whether the buyer or a senior decision maker is already interacting with your product. Or in cases where your developer users might be from large organizations in multiple locations, by studying the location of the users, one can understand which office or team might be evaluating your product. This can help you narrow down the prospects who might actually know about your product and might know about an ongoing product evaluation.

TACTIC II

USE YOUR DEVELOPER COMMUNITY TO BUILD BRIDGES TO THE DECISION MAKERS

Another great tactic we have seen amongst Developer Tool leaders is that they leverage the pool of their developer champions built through their PLG and community motion to get warm entries to the decision-makers.
We have seen such DevTool leaders front-end their DevRel teams to help bridge the trust gap between the sales teams and developers. The DevRel teams are already connected to the developers and are a known face to them. Where sales teams' communication might be ignored by a champion developer, a DevRel team's communication, that is often more supportive and built around helping developers see their efforts come to light, can be more useful.

Here, what works best is giving your DevRel teams the same visibility into the sales and GTM funnels, as the rest of the sales teams. This helps them identify accounts that are important and get the desired context to orchestrate communication.



TACTIC III

LEVERAGE THE DEVELOPER GTM MOMENTUM TO CUSTOMIZE YOUR PITCH STORIES TO THE BUYERS

Creating account-based views of your bottom-up developer activity can help you get context that can really differentiate you from the competition. You can use this information to build trust and familiarity in your sales pitches and also bring forward the knowledge of the challenges the organization might be facing that your product can solve better than the competition.

An early customer of ours commercializes a popular open-source project through their cloud offering. When they analyzed the open-source project using Reo, they learned that a certain group of developers in a large enterprise account had been tracking the open-source project they were commercializing for the last 6 months, and recently one of the developers had forked the Github repo and created multiple issues. Realizing that this organization might be actively needing their product, their sales team went to the CTO with a strong story around the advantages their product offered on top of the open-source offering.

Postman uses this approach a lot too. Here is an excerpt from an interview with their CEO where he discussed using data of developer bottoms up for enterprise sale.

> So it (analyzing data for sales) allows us to be intentional with every aspect of the business. And sometimes even talking to customers, right? So when we go to customers, and they're curious about the scale of adoption, that Postman has in their accounts, we actually use this data to tell them. And it really helps us.
>
> Typically when you're going into enterprise, you have a lot of these unknowns, and we do a very hypothesis-based planning exercise, we look at, "Okay, this is our hypothesis and this is the data supporting it. And what is the data that is not supporting it?" And then we are able to just have much more conviction. So it touches every aspect of the business.

TACTIC IV

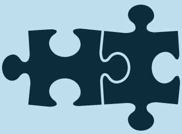
EMPOWER DEVELOPERS TO EVANGELISE THE TOOL INTERNALLY

Developers are good at evaluating the tool and using it themselves, but not at selling it internally. The purchase decision maker will want a business case for paying for the tool - so what can you do to empower developers to make your case?

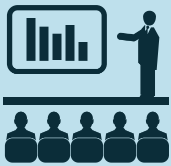
Make it easier for developers by providing them data/intel on:

Number of developers hours saved by your tool and hence cost impact

Dollar value added by your tool



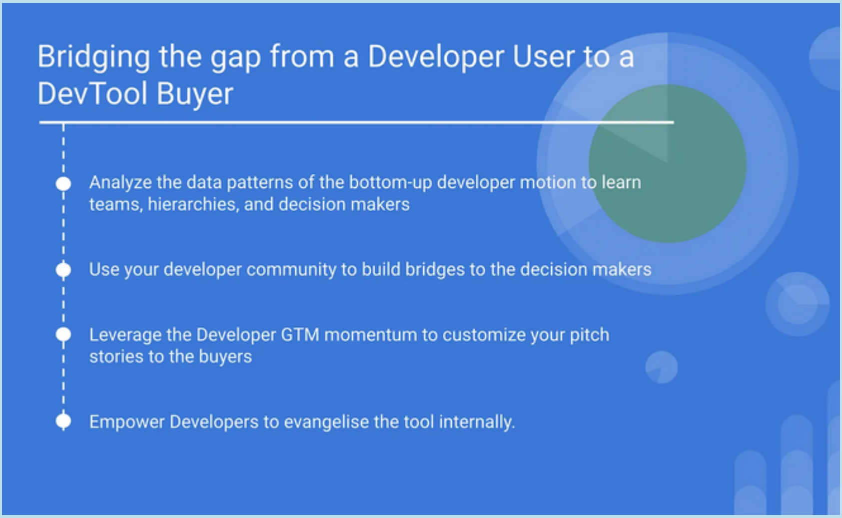
Easy comparisons between your tool and other options.



Collaterals, video guides and product demos to champion your product internally

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

BRIDGING THE GAP FROM A DEVELOPER USER TO A DEVELOPER BUYER



Developer tools is one fascinating industry, where, due to the product and community driven behaviour of developers, who play a very influential role in the decisioning; the analysis of bottoms up data, utilizing developer communities, and customizing pitch stories to buyers can create strong impact right upto the bottom of the purchase funnel. Hope the above tactics and best practices help you in leveraging your developer momentum to build a path to the actual buyers and decision makers.