

# Go-To-Market Strategy & The Battlecard

Successfully Growing Your Cloud Practice



# Executive Summary

A company's go-to-market (GTM) strategy answers the questions: Why do you exist? How do you help clients? Who is your target market? What capabilities do you provide? What solutions are you focused on selling? What training, credentials and experience should your resources have? Why should clients care about you? Without a GTM strategy your management team and employees operate in chaos with no foundation to build upon. They are forced to be reactive, rather than proactive, in growing your Cloud practice. With an effectively implemented GTM strategy, you achieve alignment across key Cloud practice areas especially marketing, sales and delivery. Marketing can target website content and campaign efforts to the right prospects; sales can pursue the right opportunities for the services and solutions you want to deliver; and professional services can be prepared with the right resources, experience, and credentials to deliver on what has been sold.

A Battlecard is a tool that is used to capture a GTM strategy in a way that is easy for your organization to access and leverage. Having a Battlecard empowers sales and all client facing employees to identify and win desirable Cloud opportunities at prospects and clients. It also drives organizational alignment, from senior management, to department heads, to Cloud practice leadership, all the way down to new hires that need to understand what your company is about and how they can best contribute to its overall success with their actions and behavior.

This paper will provide you with an understanding of how to establish your GTM strategy and then capture it in the form of a Battlecard.



# Introduction

At TD SYNnex, we provide Cloud Practice Builder consulting engagements that address key Cloud practice growth challenges. Our service supports partners involved with all the major Cloud vendors (AWS, Microsoft Azure, Google Cloud, HPE Greenlake and soon to be others) for both commercial and public sector segments. There are versions tailored for start-up, early stage, and growth stage Cloud practices. All versions help partners to understand, prioritize and make important decisions across all Cloud practice areas including management, financials, sales, marketing, Cloud strategy, Cloud vendor alignment, professional services, managed services, and vertical focus.

Key to our methodology is to start with an Assessment Survey to identify gaps in a partner's Cloud practice readiness. We then leverage an agile methodology to create an individualized Action Plan that is used by our consultants to deliver education and provide guidance to address needs and gaps in Cloud practice readiness. We complete our engagements by providing a detailed Growth Plan for partner execution.

Using this approach, we have helped partners to overcome many different roadblocks to success. One of the most common challenges we see is a partner's ability to define and execute an effective go-to-market strategy. This insight provided the inspiration to write this white paper that provides clear and easy to execute guidance to partners on both GTM strategy and Battlecard development and usage. This paper starts with a definition of Go-To-Market Strategy, best practices for developing an effective one for your Cloud practice, followed by guidance for defining your own Battlecard.



# 01

## Developing Your Go-To-Market Strategy



# Developing Your Go-To-Market Strategy

As you read this, you may or may not have an up-to-date and concrete go-to-market strategy in place for your company or Cloud practice. Perhaps you have never developed a GTM strategy before. Regardless, we'll share some of the key elements and “ground rules” that we've found to be most effective for our partners when developing theirs. These will help you to get your GTM strategy started or to update one that you have had in place for your traditional VAR or technology solution provider business.

It is important to understand that there are many decisions to be made when defining your GTM strategy. Many partners don't feel comfortable addressing them, which results in stymied or slow growth and impedes market effectiveness. Yet, these decisions must be addressed for your business to move forward in a deliberate, controlled and accelerated manner. Some of the common decisions include but are not limited to the following:

- What is our unique value proposition?
- What challenges and opportunities do we help clients to address?
- What is the profile of our target client?
- Who should we be selling to at the prospect company?
- What vendors should we represent?
- What services should we provide?
- What are our door opener solutions, both knowledge and workload based?
- What is our Cloud “Superpower” and how can we prove our experience and expertise?
- What expertise and credentials do we need to establish our credibility?
- What are our Cloud solution sweet spots and key repeatable Cloud solutions?
- What third-party endorsements and awards should we promote?

Rather than trying to tackle everything at once during our consulting engagements, we work in a prioritized manner with each partner, explaining the options and providing guidance to support their decision making. Once decisions

have been made, plans can be created for all elements of your GTM strategy for growing your Cloud practice.

Let's look at the elements of GTM strategy.

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## Definition of GTM Strategy

A GTM strategy is an action plan that specifies a company's target clients, their needs, and how they will be reached. It highlights how you will help your clients address their challenges and take advantage of their opportunities. The GTM strategy is the blueprint for how a company will deliver its products and services to the end client, taking into account such factors as pricing and distribution. It is narrower in scope than a business plan with a focus on marketing to, selling to, and delivering to clients. It's higher level than a marketing plan, which is more detailed and operational in its focus on marketing strategy, campaign execution, and anticipated results.

A GTM strategy can be used for a range of initiatives, including launching new products or services, introducing a current product to a new market, and even relaunching the company or brand. The GTM strategy helps a business to clarify the "why" for its initiative, understand who is being targeted, and lays out the plan and positioning for engaging with clients around the benefit of your products or service.

An effective GTM strategy will align all stakeholders and establish a timeline to ensure each stakeholder meets the defined milestones and outcomes, creating an attainable path to market success. Overall, GTM strategies provide the following benefits within an organization:

- A clearly defined plan and direction for all stakeholders.
- Reduced time to market for products and services.
- Increased chances of a successful product or service launch.

- Decreased likelihood of extra costs generated by failed product or service launches.
- Enhanced ability to react to changes and client desires.
- Improved management of challenges.
- An established path for growth.
- Ensured creation of an effective client experience.

Building an effective GTM strategy requires a definition of your buyer profile and client segments, key partners and vendors you work with, an understanding of the target market or vertical and their needs, your product, how your products and services uniquely addresses needs (value proposition), key resources, channels, pricing, and how the client buys.

The objectives that get incorporated into your GTM strategy can be broad and varied. From lead generation to margin optimization, launching new offerings to achieving client loyalty, understanding the buyer's journey to declaring your sales strategy. But overall, they comprise the plan for how you plan to get your product or service into the hands of your client.

# Capturing Your GTM Positioning in a Battlecard





# Capturing Your GTM Positioning in a Battlecard

Now that we have addressed what goes into a GTM strategy and its importance, the next step is to document it in the form of a Battlecard. Let's begin with some guiding principles. For the purpose of this paper, we are going to focus on leveraging a Battlecard for your Cloud practice.

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## Who should “own” the Battlecard?

To operationalize your GTM strategy framework, we recommend setting several ground rules for producing Battlecards and maintaining the GTM plan integrity. While company leadership, department and practice leads will help drive the GTM strategy, the most successful outcomes are achieved when the GTM strategy is “owned” by marketing or the Cloud practice leader. This decision may vary from organization to organization, but if you are unclear on who should drive, we suggest starting with marketing and/or the Cloud practice lead because they own overall messaging, will have context on existing positioning and what needs to be changed, and will be responsible for using the GTM strategy for positioning the company or its Cloud practice to clients and prospects. This also puts marketing and the Cloud practice lead in a good position to align sales and delivery with marketing and the Cloud team when it comes GTM execution. This leadership, combined with a structure to get input and confirmation from other areas of the company or practice, ensures effective development and execution.

The following sections will walk through our process for developing your practice's Battlecard.

Documenting your Battlecard helps make your GTM strategy actionable by providing this information in a simple, condensed, easy to understand and very accessible format. One that sales will keep at their fingertips when pitching prospects and writing emails/communications, that marketing will use when creating campaigns, and that client-facing delivery resources will use in deciding upon needed capabilities and in identifying new opportunities at clients. Additionally, it is a great tool to use for onboarding new employees.

The best practice for a Battlecard format is to be one-page and two-sided. Longer formats can work for specialized applications such as competitive playbooks and other applications outside the scope of this paper. We are going to walk thru the Battlecard elements by using the Battlecard template that we share with partners during our Cloud Practice Builder consulting engagements. In this case, one side of the Battlecard focuses on positioning while the other is focused on the discussion with prospects and clients. We will also segment the overview into the following categories: Products and Services, Company Purpose and Profile, Definition of Target Client, and Engaging The Client. Here are some thoughts to keep in mind when documenting content for each element.

# Front of Battlecard

CLOUD SALES BATTLECARD		COMPANY LOGO	
<p><b>ABOUT AVAILABLE CLOUD SOLUTIONS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>List available cloud solutions</li> <li>Capability 1</li> <li>Capability 2</li> <li>Capability 3</li> </ul>	<p><b>XX%</b></p> <p>Replace with key statistic</p>	<p><b>XX</b></p> <p>Replace with key statistic</p>	<p><b>\$XX</b></p> <p>Replace with key statistic</p>
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## Products and Services

These elements of the Battlecard address the Products and Services that you have defined as your target offerings. They represent your strengths and focus in the marketplace, as well as the investments your Cloud practice has made in vendor selection, resource development, financial optimization, critical path for growth and success, and alignment with the needs of your target client.

### Available Cloud Solutions

These are the big-picture solutions they you offer vs. spot solutions for very specific situations. It can include vendors you work with as well as applications and solutions.

- What Cloud workloads do you deliver?
- What technologies do you combine with IaaS vendor offerings to create solutions?

- Do you have any of your own proprietary solutions that rely on IaaS consumption or align with your vertical focus?

### Cloud Solution Sweet Spots

These are common solutions that you are skilled at, experienced in delivering, and that align with the target markets you want to service.

- What workloads are you skilled at and focused on delivering? Migration, Storage, Back-up, Data Management, Analytics, Containers, Machine Learning, etc.
- Do you have “door opener” solutions for acquiring new clients? These are typically solutions that are quick to implement, low cost, low risk, and provide an opportunity to build trust with the client. They can also be knowledge-based workloads (such as POCs, Readiness Assessments, and Well Architected Reviews). Both categories of engagements provide opportunities to build trust with clients and to “land and expand” with your advanced Cloud services.
- Do you offer solutions that pair well with Cloud or current key technology offerings, such as hybrid solutions?

### Available Vendors

This would be technology or services vendors, including and beyond the Cloud hyperscalers (AWS, Azure, GCP).

- What hardware or other software vendor credentials or relationships do you have? How do they support your clients’ Cloud needs?
- Do you work with other services vendors to support your delivery and standing in the market?
- What credentials or awards do you have with these vendors that clients should know about?
- Have you created your own proprietary solutions?

## Value Proposition and Positioning

These element of the Battlecard are key to positioning your company and Cloud practice as being worthy of further consideration, if not selection as the chosen vendor for the client. They answer many of the key questions that clients what to know about when seeking a partner and solution for addressing their needs.

### Competitive Advantages

Competitive advantages are credentials that separate you from your competition. They act as competitive differentiators.

- Why should prospects, clients and vendors select you over your competition?
- What have you been recognized for as a business, as a technology partner, as a community member, etc.?
- Have your employees achieved advanced vendor or industry certifications?
- Do you have employees that come from your target verticals, or with experience working with multiple clients in a vertical?
- Do you have accelerators, processes or technologies that enable you to provide better service or value than your competitors?

### Key Statistics

Key statistics, or KPIs, are metrics that speak to the impact you have on your clients or that validate the quality or success of your business.

- What common problem for clients or a vertical are you impacting (cost savings, processing time, security, accessibility, unsupported operating systems, etc.)?
- What credentials has your company achieved (Inc. 500 Fastest Growing, #1 company to work for, number of employees).
- What direct, positive impact are you having on common client challenges (reduction in down-time, protection of data, faster workflows, etc.)
- What is your Customer Satisfaction Score across your engagements?
- How many certified resources do you have?

## Key Solution Selling Points

Key solution selling points can be used by sales reps to open doors or communicate the value propositions that will build confidence and trust with clients.

- What does your target client want most from you?
- What is your track record?
- What is unique about the way you deliver and support solutions (methodology, risk reduction, professionalism, etc.)
- What do you offer that is challenging to get elsewhere?
- What solution benefits can clients expect to get from you?

## Company Purpose and Profile

**These elements of the Battlecard provide a definition of who you are as a company and what you are about. They represent your unique history and the way you have positioned the company and Cloud practice to best address the needs of the clients you wish to serve. They are deeper than credentials in that they communicate the promise, purpose and essence of how and why your company exists, including differentiators that should be taken into consideration when the client is selecting you as their chosen Cloud solutions provider.**

## Organization Profile

Your Organization Profile is your story about who you are and how you got here. These may be related to demographics, history, geo-focus, milestones and more.

- What is your mission statement and purpose?
- What is your company history, record of growth, size of workforce, geographic focus?

- What client segments do you work with (Enterprise, Mid-sized, SMB, Small Business, etc.)
- Do you have recognized special company designations (minority-owned, woman-owned, special credentials)
- What do you want to be known for?
- Who are your notable clients?

### **What Makes You Different Than Competitors?**

Competitive Differentiators can be difficult to define without duplicating some of the points made in other sections, but it is important that they be identified and known by marketing and your sales team.

- Do you have business or delivery methodologies, processes, forms, or procedures that you have developed that really make a difference in meeting client needs and delivering projects quickly, efficiently and effectively?
- Do you have proprietary “accelerators” that provide risk reduction, cost savings, time savings, quality advantages, or vertical benefits?
- Do you have code that you’ve developed, such as code for doing integrations to common solutions in a vertical’s environment?
- Do you have recognitions, awards, or other credentials that instill confidence from clients?
- Why should prospective clients care about your company?

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## Definition of Target Client

These element of the Battlecard provide your organization a clear understanding of your target customer, enabling you team to filter from the broad population of potential customers to the ones that you have positioned the company to help. They help to avoid wasted time, money and effort in pursuing opportunities that do not align with your focus and strategy.

## Key Client Pain Points

Your employees need to understand the client problems that your organization has been built to solve. Said differently, employees should be clear on the type of work and clients you wish them to target, otherwise there will be a disconnect between what marketing targets, sales prospects, and services is prepared to deliver.

- What client challenges should you be on the lookout for?



- Are there industry changes or challenges in the competitive landscape that represent opportunities for your clients?
- Are you focused on taking advantage of or addressing specific industry trends, changes to laws or regulations, government policies, etc.?
- Has the economy created client challenges or opportunities that you are well positioned to help address?
- What are the common pain points clients must address to be viable in the future, such as security or remote working?

### Key Verticals/Target Markets

Your sales reps and marketing resources need to know what they are hunting for if they are going to have a chance of finding it. While there may be exceptions to the rule, prioritizing targets will help to make sure that GTM efforts are successful.

- What does an ideal client in a vertical or target market look like? Company size, industry, geo-location, project types, etc.
- Do you have resources on your team with vertical experience and expertise? Maybe they came from the industry or worked with all or many of your clients in a vertical. Perhaps they are writing articles, being quoted, blogging, speaking at industry conferences, or writing white papers that support the fact that you have this vertical specialization?
- Are you part of a vendor program that focuses on this client vertical or segment? Do you participate in the vendor's vertically focused events, or have relationships with their vertically focused thought leaders or business development resources?
- Do you have well-recognized, referenceable clients with case studies in the vertical?
- Do you have credentials (tier level, competencies, certifications), awards or other recognitions for your target verticals or segments?
- Do you have Intellectual Property (IP), code (i.e.: for integration to common vertical applications), forms, templates, processes, procedures that would clearly be beneficial to your target market?

## Engaging The Client

**These elements of the Battlecard empower your employees to engage with prospect and clients in a meaningful, strategic and aligned manner. They empower your team with consistent messaging that has been designed or proven to be most in effective connecting your messaging with your target audience.**

### Who Should We Talk To?

It is important that sales representatives are calling on the right decision makers for Cloud solutions. It may be different than for hardware or other legacy technology purchases. As an example, do sales reps only speak with technology managers or IT Procurement when the Cloud solution decision making is influenced or made by line-of-business buyers?

- What are the various buyer personas, roles and/or titles involved in a typical Cloud technology purchase decision?
- Where should the sales rep start their prospecting and how does that evolve?
- Does your sales rep know how the client typically purchases Cloud solutions (a committee, team or individual decision maker, etc.)? Who has the final sign-off on the purchase decision?
- What are the key concerns for each of the decision maker or buyer role?
- What is the best way to approach them?

### Keywords the Client is Using

For sales reps not experienced in selling Cloud, whether they are new hires or veteran team members, it is often helpful to provide keywords that a client may use that indicate an interest or need for a Cloud solution. These keywords often indicate a pain point or opportunity that can be addressed with a Cloud solution.

- What words align with the Cloud solutions you offer?
- What are common problems or opportunities that on-prem solutions don't solve or address?
- What is the opposite of the benefits that Cloud solutions solve?

- For clients in your target vertical, what keywords identify with common problems clients face in that vertical?

### Elevator Pitch

Having an elevator pitch is critical for your organization to introduce who you are and the value your company brings. Creating one requires a solid understanding of your overall Cloud positioning and focus, something that sales reps often struggle with defining on their own. Rather than have each sales rep or client facing employee invest time in creating their own unique elevator pitch, it is more effective and time efficient to have a central resource create an official elevator pitch. Elevator pitches should be brief (30-60 seconds), persuasive, share your skills, and be audience aware.

- What is your company name, practice focus or category you play in?
- What problem are you attempting to solve?
- What is your proposed solution?
- What are the key benefits of your solution?

### Real Partner Outcomes

It is said that past results are an indicator of future success, or that success breeds success. Being able to convey how clients have benefited from your services is one of the best ways to instill confidence with prospects and to differentiate your company from the competition. Case studies are one of the most effective ways to convey these stories and your impact. Arming your sales reps and client facing resources with brief anecdotes or metrics of client success stories enables them to effectively convey “third-party endorsements” for hiring you.

- What are the most significant results you have achieved for clients broadly or in a vertical?
- What impact did your work have on the client’s business?
- Do you have success stories of engagements with well know client names or brands?
- What expectations do you want to set with prospects for the results you can delivery for them?

## Resources to Share

The support you provide to your sales reps and other client facing employees does not have to be limited to the two sides of the Battlecard. In addition to the printed version, you should also provide all employees with an electronic version. Doing so will provide an opportunity to include web links to other valuable resources to support the sales process.

- Do you have case studies that support your positioning?
- Do you have other forms of content, such as white papers, eBooks, articles, blogs, etc. that support the sales process?
- Are there marketing assets, such as one-pagers or presentations, that can be used in the sales process?

## Team Support

Sometimes bullet points and links are not enough to address sales rep needs when proposing Cloud solutions. For this reason, it is important to make it clear and easy for your team to identify key resources and how to get in touch with them. Providing a resource list addresses this need.

- Who is the key contact for pre-sales support?
- Who is the key contact for vendor specific information, internally or at the vendor?
- Who is your key contact for marketing support?

## Objections

It is said that objections are requests for more information. It is important to provide your sales reps with the most common objections and your best responses. This will help them to be prepared and to turn a prospect's concerns into a reason to do business with you.

- What common objections come up at the various stages of the sales cycle?
- What would be a best practice answer to address the concern and deliver a value proposition for working with you?
- How have your other clients addressed the same concern?  
What results did they get?

# Conclusion

At TD SYNEX we are very proud of our strategic and planful approach to Cloud practice building. Documenting your GTM strategy in the form of a Battlecard empowers your employees and helps your organization to grow more quickly and operate more effectively. Not only does it align your actions with strategies, but it also reduces risk and increases your likelihood for success. For business leaders it can be difficult to step back from working “in” their business so that they can work “on” their business. But it must be done to have a proactive growth strategy. Developing your GTM strategy and documenting it in a Battlecard is one of the most important ways to work on your business.



# About The Author

Kevin Turner is Head of Cloud Practice Builder Consulting Services at TD SYNEX. He leads the team responsible for the development and delivery of consulting engagements to help TD SYNEX partners define and pursue a critical path for growing their Cloud practices. He has an extensive background in entrepreneurship, Cloud computing, Cloud practice and channel development. Kevin has been a principal player in a number of technology consulting and solutions firm from start-up to exit. One of his firms, an early Salesforce partner, was acquired by Salesforce to become its professional services organization.

Kevin received his BBA in Marketing from University of Michigan and his MBA in Entrepreneurship and New Venture Management from DePaul University. He is past president of the CRM Association of Chicago, a mentor and advisor for the Junto Institute for Entrepreneurial Leadership, a guest lecturer for the Startup Institute and various Midwestern universities, and an Advisory Board Member for the Sales Leadership and Technology program at DePaul University's College of Business. He is a proud recipient of DePaul University's Distinguished Alumni Award.

