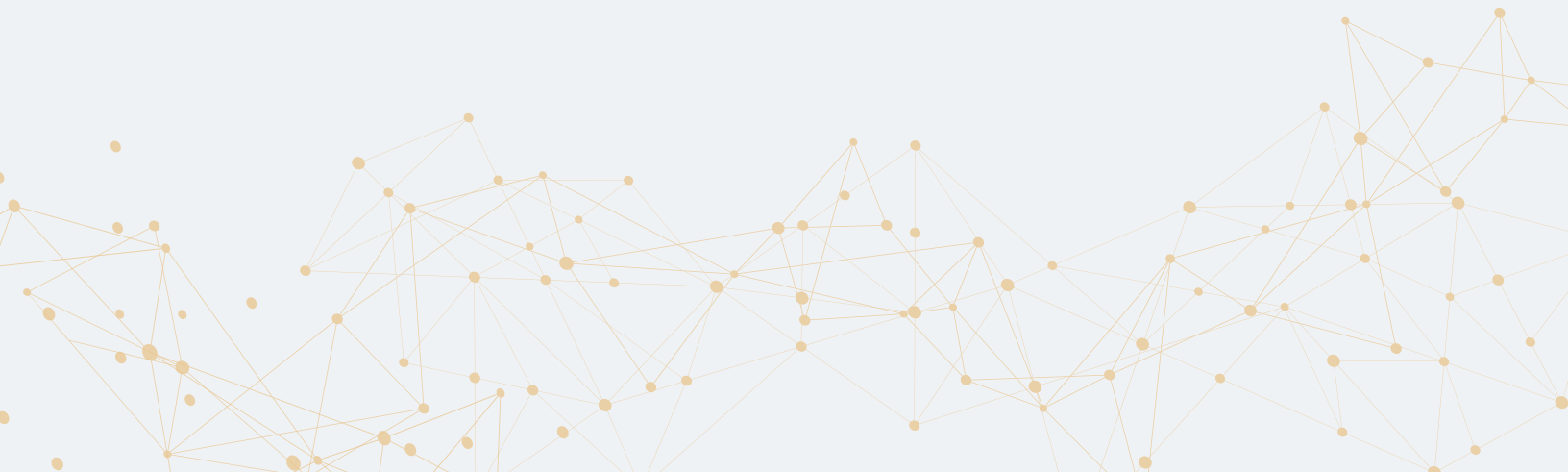




6 Tricks to Closing More SLED Deals

 THE ATLAS
MarketEdge


POWERALMANAC



Introduction

We are in a moment of massive financial opportunity—new federal funding bills have been passed, including a game-changing infrastructure law, which is being rolled out to state and local governments. Across the nation, agencies of all shapes and sizes are working feverishly to modernize their systems and enable a better citizen experience while managing a more remote workforce. When you size up the opportunity, it's truly astounding—there's \$9.8 trillion being spent in government (to put that into perspective, the figure is the third-largest GDP of any country in the world).

With that much money in play, the competition is fierce for government contractors. New businesses registering are up 53% yet there are 14% fewer awards (Source: GovTribe). That means we have more players and fewer winners. **To succeed in this environment, we believe it is sales and marketing intelligence that will help set contractors apart and accelerate their revenue growth.** What types of intelligence are we talking about? And how can it be used to achieve greater market success? Let's get into it.



Start with Strategy

Before we dive straight into the data, it's important to realize that if your BD, sales and marketing teams are not aligned on a go-to-market strategy, you're already behind the eight ball. These teams must talk to each other and prioritize target accounts, identify your buying personas and develop Ideal Customer Profiles. We all know this is a critical stepping stone, but we still continuously run into businesses that have not tackled this important first step.

From there, take a lesson from the B2B world. Leading sales and marketing organizations invest in buyer intent data to establish detailed persona maps and ideal customer profiles. When you have limited bandwidth, these frameworks do the heavy lifting when it comes to targeting the right people at the right time with the right message. Curious how the top organizations are winning at this game? Keep reading!

If this is resonating, here are some steps you can take—get your sales and marketing teams together (business development as well, if you have that function separated). In one concise document, you should:

1. Identify your target markets, and explain why.
2. Identify key messaging that maps to those markets, and explain why.
3. Identify priorities for product development, and explain why.
4. Define the size of your market (also called total available market, or TAM)

“Historically, the B2G market has had really static data to react to—RFPs, budgets and strategic planning docs—things that aren't predictive and don't give you a look into the hearts and minds of the decision makers who are choosing when to spend, what to buy and who to work with. They are definitely not predictive. So, if data is the new oil, first-party, buyer intent data is the fuel that sales and marketing orgs need right now in order to move the needle in the market.”

Elle Hempen

Co-Founder, The Atlas MarketEdge

You Don't Have To Be a 'Data Nerd' To Use Data & Intelligence

Let's start with a level-set. We need to establish the difference between first-party data and third-party data, and understand why you should prioritize first-party data.

Third-Party Data - Account Level Intelligence

Third-party data can be defined as engagement and search data gathered from an outside source. This separate entity tracks IP addresses as they hit multiple websites and platforms, then maps that intel back to a specific domain (company name) and then produces analysis so that you (the buyer or collector of this data) can understand how these companies are searching, what's capturing their attention and what piques their interest. This form of intelligence is powerful! But, it takes high volumes of this type of data in order to effectively drill down and have meaningful intelligence at the account level.

First-Party Data - Decision Maker Intelligence

This form of data provides more detailed visibility into the individual who is sending these signals. While third-party data gives you account-level insights (i.e. the city of Miami is interested in a new procurement solution), first-party data allows you to understand who within the city or state is doing the searching. In other words, with first-party data, you can see that a senior IT official is searching for x, while simultaneously an elected official is searching for y. This level of detail paves the way for building a pitch that lands in front of the right decision maker at the exact right time.

What can you do with First-Party Data?

- 1) You can understand who makes decisions within a government system.
- 2) How many people you need to target within one organization.
- 3) Do you have names and contact information for your target personas?
- 4) If there's too many options to tackle all at once, you can prioritize certain personas over others.

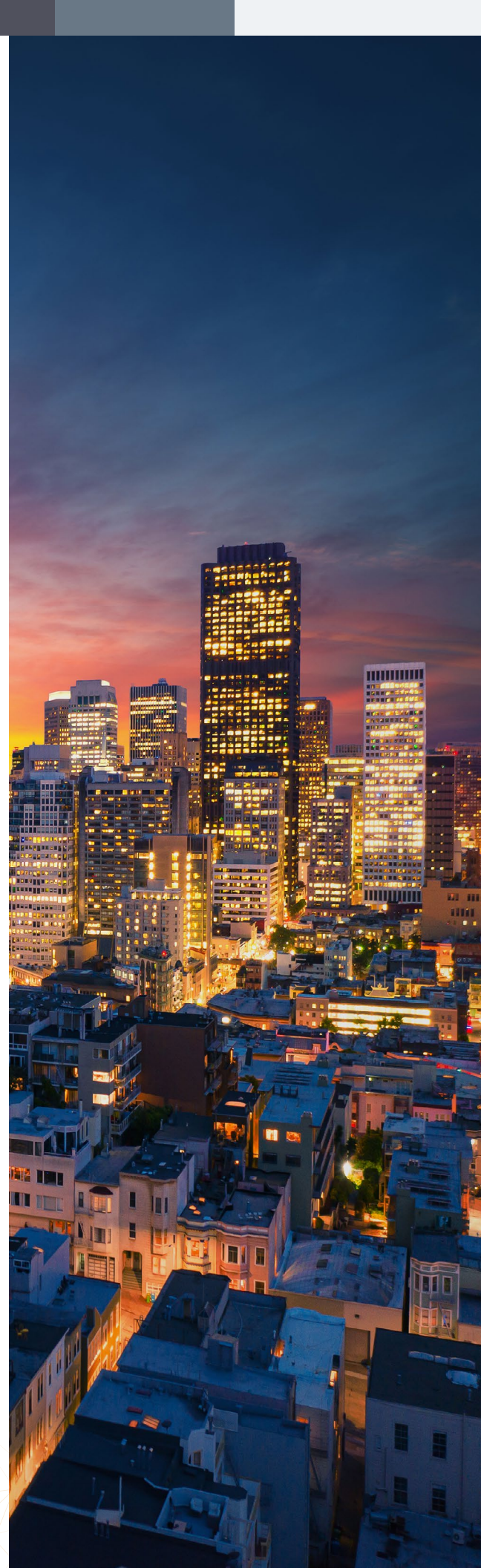
TIP:

Data is only as good as it integrates into your workflow. Use unique identifiers so that you can pull data from various sources into one CRM or platform.



"It's not about making what you do in sales and marketing perfect—it's about optimizing how you sell and how you market. If you have good data and put it to good use... then you're going to improve the probability of success in every part of your pipeline."

Rob Mester
CEO of Power Almanac



Avoiding Analysis Paralysis

The proliferation of data, and sorting through what's useful, can be the source of extreme overwhelm for some companies. Data can be paralyzing in some cases and misleading in others. What are the keys to turning data and intelligence into a coherent and actionable strategy?

Solution: Build your data stack by breaking data into distinct segments across the sales and marketing journey.

You need a large amount of data upfront to determine your go-to-market strategy, but once you get into the tactical piece of execution, you need to think about how different data types impact each stage of your funnel.

1) Intent Data = Top of Funnel

Intent data is directional and predictive. It can signal emerging trends 9-12 months ahead of the RFP. This type of data allows you to match your messaging to trends, it helps you prioritize the accounts you want to go after and ultimately will help you customize your messages to be hyper-targeted and relevant.

2) Contact Data = Middle of Funnel

Now that you have a direction and a message, you need to get that message out to the right people. Get them into your funnel and get them engaged while they are still in the solutions identification phase.

3) Contract Data = Bottom of Funnel

Once you have the intent data and contact data in play, understanding how accounts like to buy, who's operating already in your market and who you're competing against will take your strategy across the finish line.

Pulling together a data stack that touches each stage of the funnel will optimize every decision and will ultimately result in closing more revenue.

"There is an endless amount of data out there, and most of it is irrelevant. Don't get distracted by the noise. Don't boil the ocean."

Rob Mester
CEO of Power Almanac

Epic Fails and What to Avoid

1) Titles are a terrible predictor of

responsibility. Organizations will hire outside contractors or interns to scrape the internet to find contact information based on titles. Then, they'll launch campaigns based on bad data and inaccurate information.

When the results are less than ideal, they'll chalk up their lack of success to content issues rather than realizing they have been pushing their messages to the wrong people.

2) Don't limit your approach. We'll use cybersecurity as an example, but this principle is true for nearly every topic or vertical across state and local government. While you might think

cyber-security is a uniquely IT function, what we're seeing is that public works officials and others are also seriously thinking about cyber security, and are therefore actively looking for solutions. If you limit your approach to only include government IT leaders, you could be missing your opportunity for a full-court press approach.

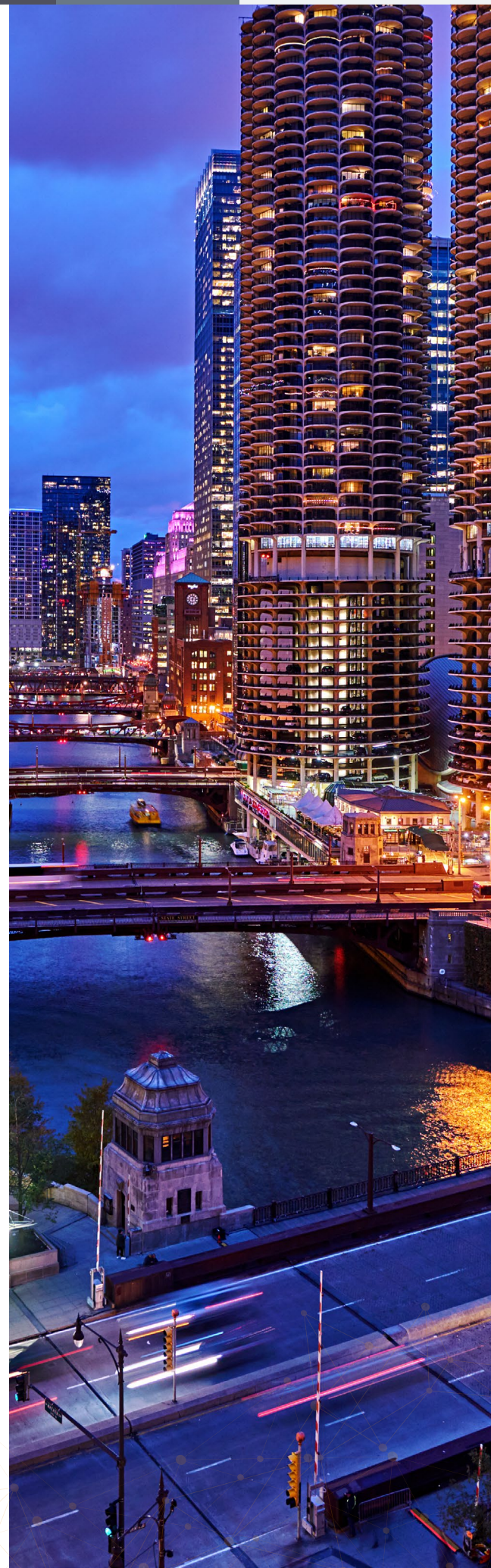
3) Remember, this is a long game. Start your pursuit ahead of the RFP, and begin putting efforts together around opportunities that will be coming online down the line. By extending your pipeline, you create more opportunities for alignment with your teams and increased space for targeted message development.

Closing Thoughts

Use data, and use it correctly. But don't just keep it to yourself. Any time you can use data to help your prospects, you're creating a win-win opportunity. When you do your outreach, think about how you can serve your prospect—what intel can you offer that would genuinely benefit them? As you use data to gain market insights, don't discount how valuable those insights could be for your prospects. Leading with support and empathy will set you apart and will help you cut through the noise.

“Government leaders, especially in the state and local market, are overwhelmed. They are just trying to make the best decisions for their communities. So the more knowledgeable you can be about the pain points they're dealing with, while finding ways to give them value-added intel, the more trust you will build. Serving as a partner to government leaders—helping them solve problems—will set you up to gain a competitive edge.”

Elle Hempen
Co-Founder, The Atlas MarketEdge



More about our Thought Leaders

THE ATLAS

MarketEdge



Elle Hempen, Co-Founder of The Atlas MarketEdge

Elle Hempen is a co-founder of The Atlas for Cities and has spent her career making it easier for the public and private sectors to work together to solve problems. The Atlas recently launched an enterprise product, MarketEdge, which is an active intelligence platform that gives contractors the edge they need to close more deals. For the first time, companies using MarketEdge have access to first-party search and engagement data from authenticated local government decision makers.

Prior to co-founding The Atlas, Elle served as the Director of Strategy & Partnership at re:focus partners, where she managed a \$3 million grant program. She also served as Special Assistant and Communications Director in the U.S. EPA's Office of International and Tribal Affairs, where she managed an initiative that facilitated city-to-city learning on urban innovation, designed a program that supported environmental entrepreneurship and developed a strategy that educated stakeholders about EPA's international success stories.

Ron Mester, CEO of Power Almanac

The common theme running through Ron's career is giving clients a competitive edge. As a CEO of market research, software and AI companies, he leads teams to deliver hard-to-get data, actionable insights and highly differentiated tools and technology. Ron spent the first 11 years of his professional career as a management consultant advising Fortune 1000 companies and public sector organizations. During this time, he also served three mayors as a member of the San Francisco Mayor's Fiscal Advisory Committee. Today, Ron serves on the advisory board for both CivicPulse and CivStart. He loves brainstorming with companies about how they can grow their local government business and how Power Almanac can keep delivering more value.