



Bridging the Gap: Transforming a Use Case Into a Sales Enablement Tool

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Last month, we explored personas, and how they can allow you to better focus your sales and marketing training and materials, improving your overall effectiveness. Now, we'll look at another tool: use cases.

An important and familiar marketing and sales tool is the customer case study. Customer case studies present an account of what happened and how you enabled a specific customer. They illustrate key findings, chronicle a process and series of events. But, in addition to the customer case, there is another kind of case that serves as a valuable sales enablement tool—a use case.

A use case, often created for product development, is commonly used to capture functional requirements; however, another way to think about this tool is as a usage scenario. A use case provides one or more scenarios for how a solution, achieves a specific business goal. From this perspective, another way to think about a use case is as a usage scenario. Therefore, with a little modification, a use case can be transformed into an extraordinary sales enablement tool.

To create a usage scenario from a use case, you'll need to work from the typical elements included in a use case. These elements include: defining the end user, the end user's business goal, the interactions between the end user, the goal that needs to be accomplished, and/or the problem that needs to be solved.

Let's examine each of these components a little more thoroughly.

What we mean by the end user

The end user is the person inside the customer organization who is going to use the system, product, or service, or for whom it was created. This person may or may not be the ultimate buyer. There may even be other people who are part of the buying process, such as a C-level person or someone in purchasing. But for the purpose of usage scenarios, the key person in the story is the end user.

Articulating the problem and the goal

A business goal suggests that you understand the business problem. Solutions are built in order to solve a business problem that through its resolution, the customer can achieve a critical business goal or outcome. A business problem represents a concern that is affecting your customer's bottom line—such as existing customers are leaving us because support processes are failing. Your offer is designed to be the solution for this problem. By using your solution, not only can you solve the problem but you enable your customer to realize a specific business goal, such as reducing customer turnover by 15%.

Defining the relationship between the end user, problem, goal and solution/offer

It's important to remember that a usage scenario is actually a story. Therefore, just as with any other story, you need to clarify the relationship of all the elements to each other. A good story includes a plot. A plot is the "why" for the things that happen in the story and draws the reader into the story. Well-crafted usage

scenarios engage the end user and enable the sales person to help the end user relate the usage scenario to their very own situation.

Tips for Creating Usage Scenarios

When writing a usage scenario to be used as a sales enablement tool, focus on describing three key points: the value the solution provides to the end user; the way the solution works; and the interaction between the end user and the solution.

Remember, with a usage scenario you're stepping into the end user's situation and telling the story from their point of view. When you transform the use case into a usage scenario, you have the opportunity to name the case in a way that reflects the end user's goal. The document you create should also include two sections: a summary section that overviews the usage scenario and the conditions that need to exist in order for the usage scenario to apply.

Most of the document should focus on the description of the primary scenario and the ways that your offer enables the end user to achieve their goal. Conclude the usage scenario with a description of what occurs when the scenario is complete and the end user has a successful experience.

Here are five writing tips to help develop usage scenarios:

- 1. Be explicit about the scenario; be sure to describe the scenario and preconditions in a story format.**
- 2. Be clear about who is the end user, the problem they are trying to address, and the goal they need to accomplish.**
- 3. Write the use case from the end user's point of view. Describe how by using your solution they can achieve their goal. The tone and feel of the story, and even its meaning, should be from the end user's perspective.**
- 4. Write in natural language. Avoid technical terms and jargon.**
- 5. Focus on only one scenario per case.**

Usage scenarios serve as sales enablement tools that help the sales team engage with prospective customers. As a result, both the team and your company are positioned as knowledgeable resources regarding the prospect's business problem and business goal and you establish the role your company can play in solving the former and achieving the latter.