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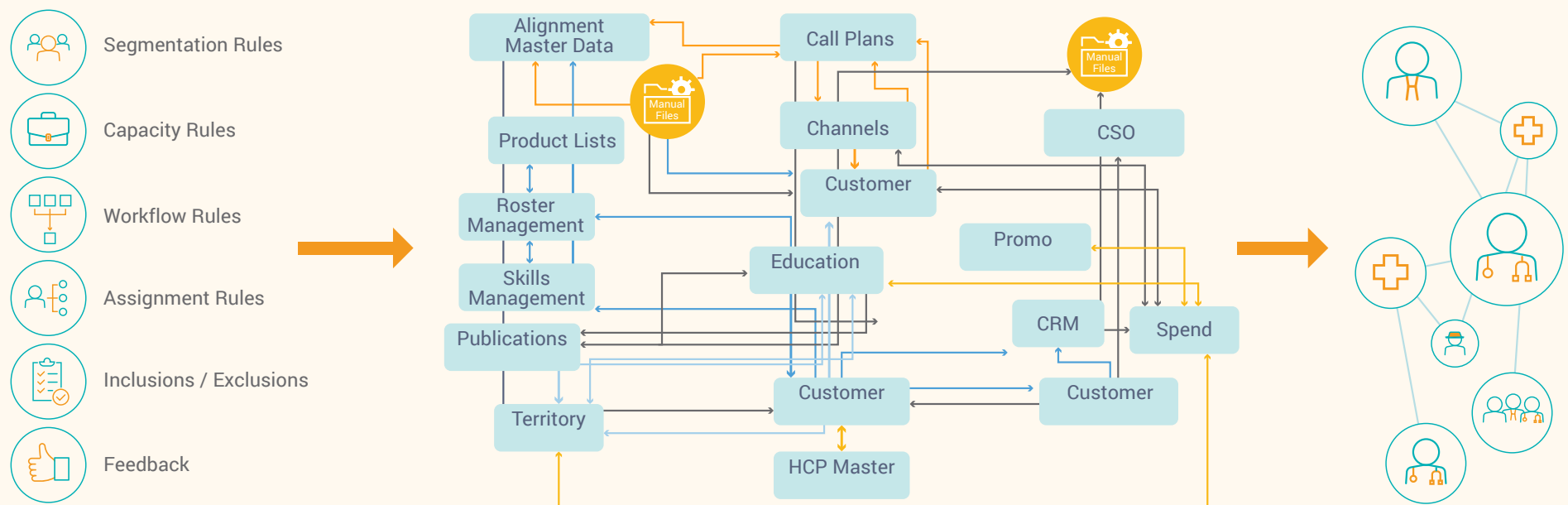
Digital Alignments: An Industry Imperative

The Case for Digital Alignments

In the modern age, technology has significantly changed the way biopharma commercial teams operate. Life sciences organizations have rapidly shifted to digital channels to maintain relationships and engage their customers. However, digital hasn't entirely made its way into operational processes such as territory alignments and targeting.

These processes remain geographically bound and manual, patchworking customized legacy systems and spreadsheets. Companies who outsource their entire territory alignment process to third-party service providers find themselves stuck in this face-to-face model and unprepared to shift to a new approach.

Current Alignment Process in Most Pharma Companies Remain Manual and Cumbersome



Having different solutions to design, manage, and align territories can be expensive, time-consuming, error-prone, and non-compliant. This operating model fails to handle changes or capture local intricacies and insights needed for an agile approach to sales planning.

What is a Digital Alignment Solution?

To better respond to market changes and remain efficient, pharma companies need to consolidate operational processes and reduce dependencies on spreadsheets, legacy systems, and other manual interventions. Digital channels need to be included through the entire process, not considered as an afterthought.

A digital alignment approach designed for pharma integrates key sales planning processes across channels into one solution so you can have better visibility of your territories and targets. This approach comprises territory design services, territory management, roster management, multichannel activity planning, and field feedback with your CRM.

Modern Alignments Process



Shifting your sales planning solution to meet the needs of the market can help you connect disjointed processes, reduce unnecessary managed service costs, and optimize your resources and territories across digital and face-to-face channels.

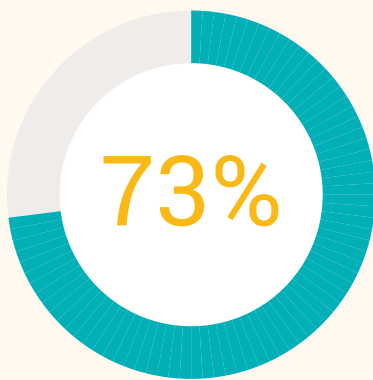
Benefits Beyond Efficiencies and Cost Savings

In addition to process efficiencies and cost savings, this alignment approach helps your organization reap benefits to ensure agility and flexibility. Here are four benefits of switching to a digital alignment approach:

1. Gain Global Visibility and Local Flexibility

Global headquarters must have a good view of local territories to make better data-driven decisions on resource allocation and go-to-market strategies.

However, due to the way different affiliates manage their territories, global headquarters do not always have a single view of how each performs. In Europe, 73% of pharma companies surveyed reported having different alignment processes per affiliate.¹ Process inconsistencies arise because of local complexities, such as regulations, geography, and channel preferences.



of companies
surveyed report
having different
alignment processes
per market



A single alignment and targeting solution across geographic boundaries harmonizes these processes for both global and local teams. Affiliates can target customers considering local specificities using rule-based targeting and then provide inputs for headquarters. Global headquarters can receive consistent information from regions, resulting in a comprehensive view of markets and territories.

The insights gathered in this exercise also allow global teams to share learnings and best practices with affiliates, improving collaboration among teams.

1. Source: Align Territory Alignments Survey



2. Keep up with Roster Changes and Maximize Coverage

There are around 450,000 field sales employed worldwide in the industry. The average annual turnover rate for these roles is approximately 9.4%², leaving about 37,000 vacant territories without a rep every year. Especially during a global pandemic, short-term absence, unplanned sick leaves, and the new hire onboarding process can further increase the number of vacancies. Every day that you have an unattended customer, your company loses potential revenue.

These roster changes do not immediately show up in your CRM as information sits in other functions such as human resources. Having visibility and the ability to reallocate your reps to cover vacant territories quickly maximizes your coverage, and therefore, your opportunities in the field.

Automating your roster management process with CRM gives you capabilities to be agile to these changes. You can grant CRM user access, assign products, territories, and targeting goals across all channels to your reps in one solution. Consolidation of these capabilities into one solution reduces the time-to-field for reps, simplifies your onboarding process, and maximizes your sales potential.



450,000

field sales
globally



9.4%

average field
turnover per year



37,000

vacant territories
per year

2. Source: Why is Turnover So High In Medical Sales?

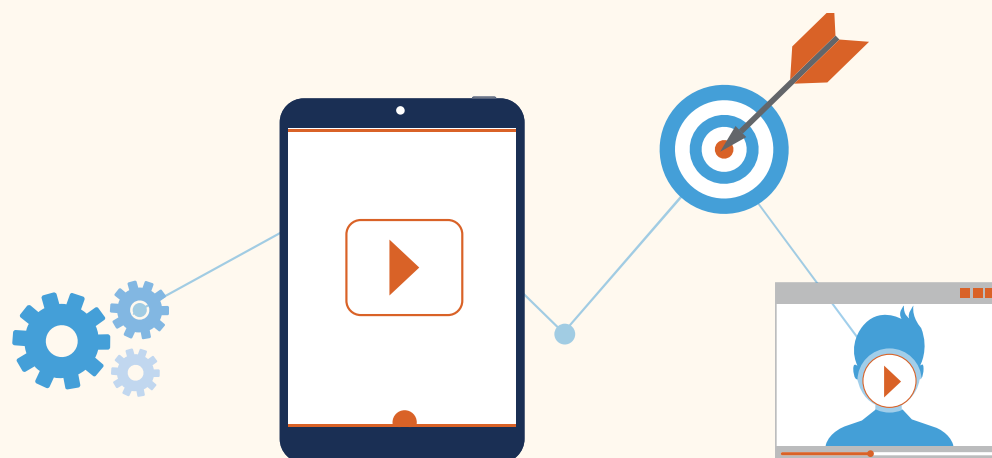
3. Target Your Customers with Precision

Traditionally, pharmaceutical companies aligned their customer segments and field sales geographically to optimize travel and expense for face-to-face meetings. The shift to digital engagement reveals new opportunities to align field reps based on characteristics such as speciality, experience, and account importance.

Most territory management solutions have limited rule-based alignments that require heavy customizations and do not allow companies to have digital segmentation and targeting. For instance, a leading animal health company had to consider 500+ products across five different business units, and thousands of animal species in addition to their usual segmentation criteria.

“ The complexity of our business overwhelmed the solution we were using. We needed a more dynamic solution for our field force to focus on the right customers.³ ”

Commercial Program Director of a
Leading Animal Health Company



Switching to an alignment solution with a robust rule engine enabled this company to automate its alignment based on detailed segmentation data. The commercial teams were then able to target customers more precisely without the need for customizations and manual interventions.

With a global pandemic, the need for geographic alignments and restricting reps to accounts by location is fading. The opportunity to match reps to accounts based on performance, priority, and speciality is a huge opportunity for pharma companies to create new alignments that drive the best outcome.

3. Source: [Managing Complexity with Smarter Alignments](#)

4. Remove Administrative Burden of Alignments

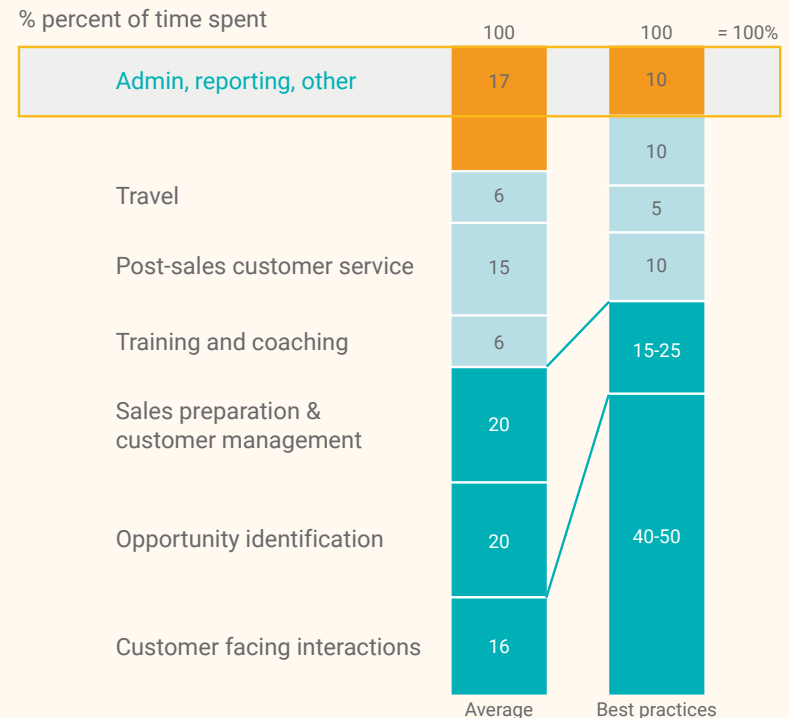
Field teams spend 17% of their time on administrative and reporting tasks, mostly on manual processes such as territory alignments. Ideally, they should be spending more time on customer-facing interactions.⁴

Now, more than ever, rep input is critical for territory alignment processes due to their knowledge of their respective territories and customer relationships. Most companies pull reps out of the field for an average of four days each quarter, resulting in missed customer engagement opportunities.

Frustrations with these manual processes can also affect employee morale. In a survey conducted by Veeva⁵, a majority of companies report their last territory alignments were painful or very painful to execute. Even 36% of companies outsourcing alignments say they had to miss end-of-year time off to do these tasks.

Digital alignment solutions enable your reps to give real-time feedback through their mobile devices. It removes their need to spend time out of the field. It also simplifies data collection, making it easier to process alignments.

The Best Sales Organizations Give their Reps More Time with Customers



4. Source: McKinsey: For Top Sales-force Performance, Treat your Reps Like Customers

5. Source: Veeva Align Territory Alignments Survey



SPOTLIGHT:

Astellas Switches to Digital Alignments

Astellas moved on from siloed solutions and spreadsheets to a single global solution. This switch allowed them to be more informed about their customer interactions, minimize alignment complexity, and manage their field force's multichannel activities.

Since switching to a modern territory alignment solution, they:

- Shortened alignment times from **12 weeks to less than two weeks** - an 83% improvement
- Became more agile with change requests moving from a **quarterly to an on-demand basis**
- Reduced process, from **90+ steps down to ten**
- **Lowered dependence on spreadsheets by 60%**, decreasing the risk of data errors

Astellas achieved these results while undergoing their most extensive territory restructuring in a decade. They have reduced their aligned customers from an average of 15,000 accounts per territory down to 1,500 for key account managers and 500 accounts for individual sales reps.

[Watch the video](#) below to see how Astellas became more agile and customer-centric in their commercial operations.



Moving Towards Digital Alignments

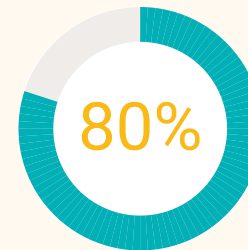
Only 10% of pharma executives had complete confidence that their operating models could rapidly respond to changing market conditions.⁶

Digital channel adoption can be a catalyst for creating an agile sales planning organization. And while most pharma companies have digital initiatives underway in customer-facing functions, their operational processes are still slowly catching up.⁷

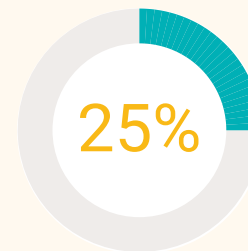
Fully embracing digital helps you design more flexible operating models to adapt to change. The key is infusing it deep within your organization not only in the front office but also in the middle and back-office processes such as territory alignments.

Shifting your alignment and targeting operational processes by moving to a single global alignment solution integrated with CRM leads to fewer dependencies and more autonomy in your operations. It also ensures alignment across sales organizations, both in home-office and customer-facing roles. And ultimately, it allows your company to better respond to changing market dynamics.

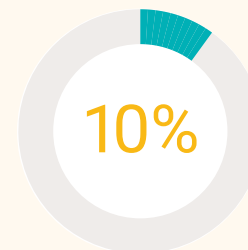
Most Major Pharma Executives Do Not Have Confidence in Their Current Operating Models



agree that advanced operating models are an enabler of strategic growth



believe that their company's operating model can support growth



are confident that they can rapidly respond to changing market conditions

6. Source: Accenture: Breathing New Agility into the Pharmaceutical Industry

7. Source: Accenture: Breathing New Agility into the Pharmaceutical Industry



About Vault CRM Align

Align is a sales planning solution that enables collaborative field force management, roster management, and field force feedback.

About Multichannel Vault CRM & Align

The seamless integration between Vault CRM and Align allows commercial teams to operate in a more agile and dynamic way. Field teams can create alignments in days instead of weeks, target the right customers with the most effective channels, and provide rep feedback directly from Vault CRM.



Get in touch

For more information,
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