

# Interpreting Signals for effective selling



**D R A U P**  
POWERED BY ZINNOV

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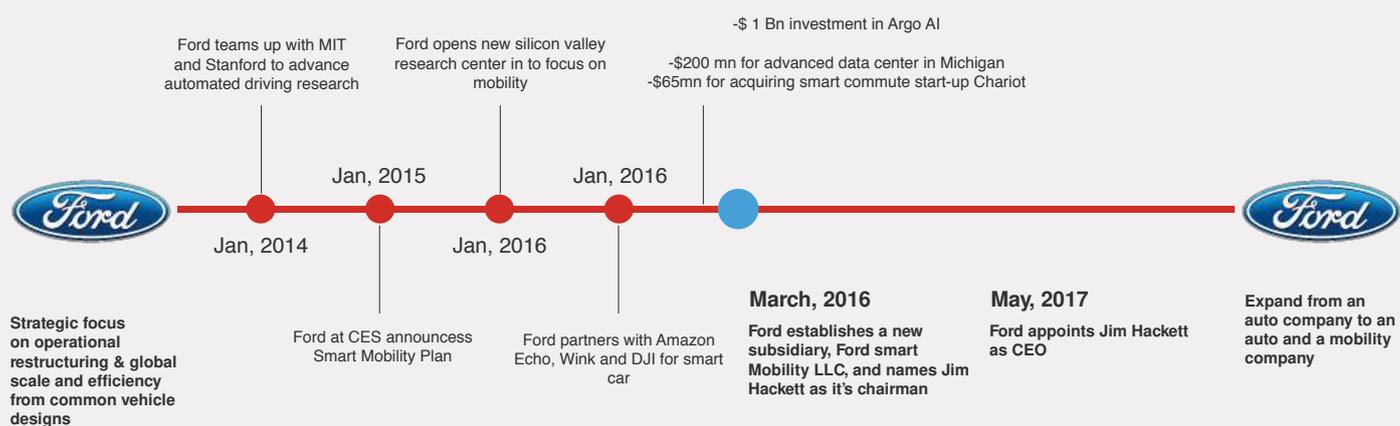
Fifty years ago, a typical Fortune 500 company was expected to last for around 75 years. Today, the lifespan of a Fortune 500 company has reduced to 15 years and that number continues to decline, according to a Forbes article by Steve Denning. In such an environment, organizations are forced to be agile and evolve quickly. As a result, their challenges, preferences and requirements are more fluidic than ever. This makes the world of Enterprise sales very complex.

Given the current dynamism, long-term account plans can quickly become redundant as customers keep evolving, as do their needs. Being able to know or predict an opportunity early is a great leverage that most sales team strive for. A study from IDC<sup>1</sup> reported that the first mover in a deal has a 40% higher likelihood to win than the rest of the competition. Predictability in sales is often a function of how well sales teams can predict their customers' challenges and requirements and be an early contender in the opportunities that exist or are being created. This leads us to the question of how best we can predict customer behaviour and forecast opportunities.

# Strategic Changes are a result of multiple interconnected signals

Significant events around which organizations pivot are usually a result of smaller, Inter- connected set of events. These events could extend across functions- R&D, Executive Movements, Hiring patterns, Market Movements, organization structures, investments, sales purchases and just about everything. We call these small changes or triggers as "Signals". When identified, analysed and understood in the right environment, these signals could be the leading indicators of major changes in an organization, many of which are high potential sales opportunities.

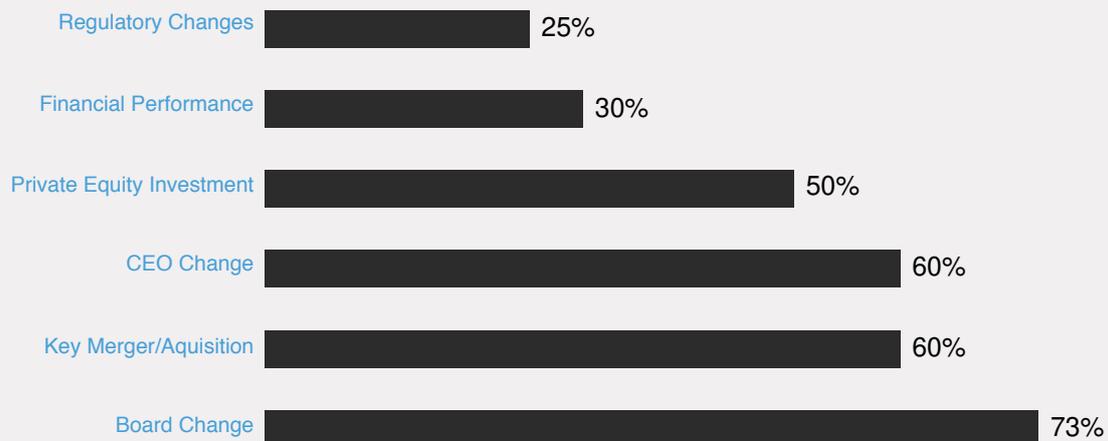
Case in point:  
**How minor changes occurring over a 3-year period led to Ford's turnaround in 2017**



Ford pivoted its core focus from operational restructuring to winning in the mobility space, within a span of 3 years. While at first glance the transformation seems rather sudden, when the series of events in those 3 years are observed, the signs of change were always there.

## What are these signals?

Zinnov, a leading management consulting firm, conducted a study on “Sensing Innovation signals” to understand which events in an organization impact its outlook. Based on discussions with 570 global executives including sales leaders, technology leaders and business leaders, the Study highlighted the major triggers that executives believe have the highest impact on an organization’s future strategy and buying behaviour.



Other signals that were highlighted in the study included Mass Hiring news, Large Customer Wins, Layoffs, Leadership Outlook, Outsourcing Deals and Regulatory & Political Changes.

## Signals extend beyond the obvious ones

Some signals are evident and easily available but might not necessarily provide a significant competitive advantage. For example, the news about a change of CEO and CTO in a competitor company is easily available but not of much advantage when it comes to taking on the organization in the market. On the other hand, some signals might not be obvious but if tracked and understood correctly can tell a lot about the direction of change in an organization.

An example of this could be a job posting in a newer technology segment; this could indicate an investment and a shift into newer technology segments and thus newer challenges for the business.

A study from IDC reported that three quarters of buyers look for social proof, that is to say that they reach out to their social network, as part of making purchasing decisions. The more senior the decision maker, the more likely this is. 84% of C-Level Executives similarly reach out to their networks.

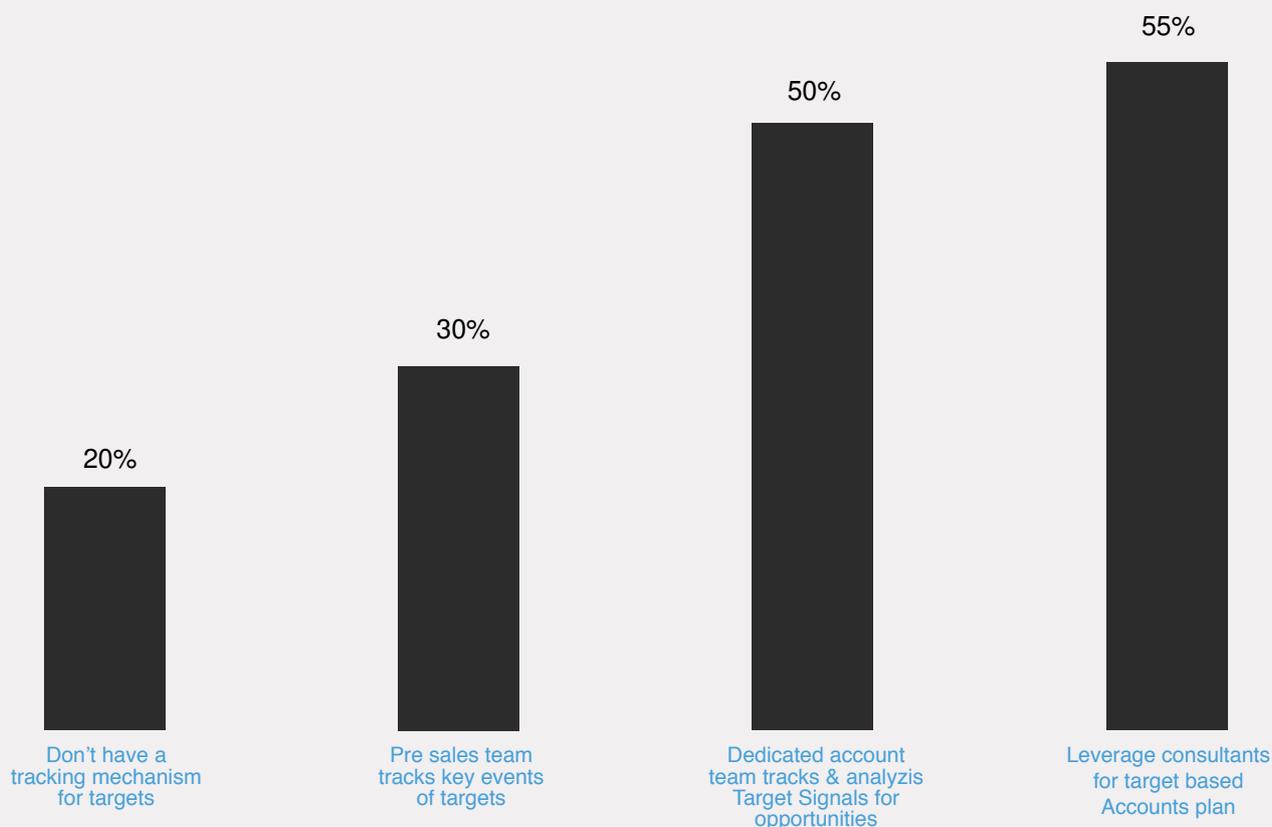
# Leveraging signals for predictive selling

A recent Corporate Executive Board study of more than 1,400 B2B customers found that customers completed, on average, nearly 60% of a typical purchasing decision—researching solutions, ranking options, setting requirements, benchmarking pricing, and so on—before even having a conversation with a supplier. In such a sensitive environment, it is an immediate need for the sales leaders to be essentially more proactive and early into the buyer’s mindset. ‘Sharing the right solution with the right customer at the right time’ is the mantra of winning sales’ teams and often what differentiates the “Sales Ninjas” from the “Frozen Middle”.

To identify the right selling moment, it all comes down to turning raw data about prospects into insights on sales behaviour and impact; spotting triggers that might lead to a large sales opportunity. Sellers who act on these triggers are 40%<sup>1</sup> more competitive on average. Even small changes in today’s ecosystem or in an organization can create a tidal wave of opportunity that often goes unnoticed.

The Zinnov study on “Sensing Innovation signals” found that among the technology solution providers that sell to Fortune 1000 clients, companies which proactively track and have a plan to act on enterprise signals have a significantly higher win ratio among peers.

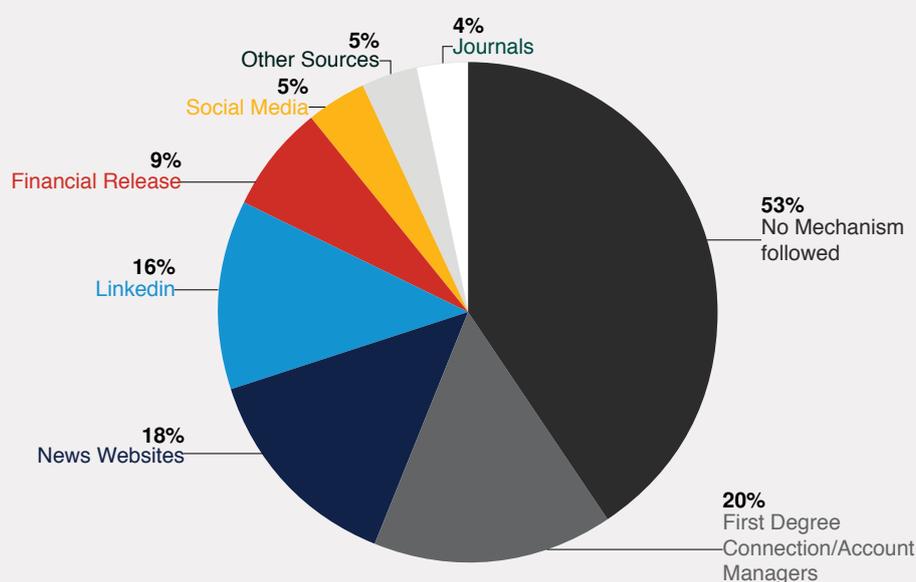
## Win Ratio of Sales Team



# Capturing and Interpreting signals is challenging

The signals are abundant and across diverse listening channels- Company releases and PR, news, executive statements, social networks, financial statements to name a few. The current mechanisms to capture these triggers are rudimentary and not quite effective. A Zinnov study<sup>3</sup> found that 53% of companies have no mechanism to track important changes that affect their clients' business.

## Mechanism to track relevant events



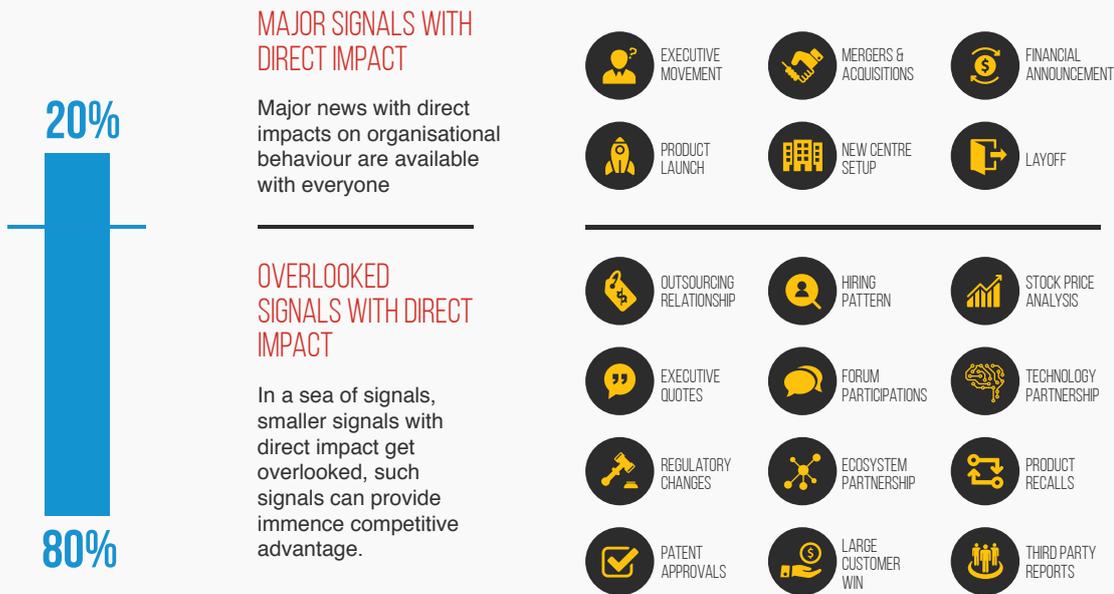
Even with existing mechanisms, there are restrictions on scale and depth of each.

1. **LinkedIn** : Limits the listing and reach to your existing connections and not effective for new outbound leads
2. **News Websites**: Contain lot of noise and not important information about targets being tracked
3. **First Degree Connections/ Account Managers**: Limited in scale and the information flow is restricted and slow
4. **Social Media**: Contain lot of noise and useful to track information only about executives
5. **Journals/ Financial Releases**: Only limited information and needs high intensity manual processing to identify signals.

Further with the abundance of available news sources, there are many challenges that come with filtering and leveraging these signals to empower sales

# 1. Overload of data

In the well -connected and information-rich world that sales leaders live in, there are multiple streams of information about targets. Does capturing real-time information about traffic, tweets, accounts, change in organizational structure and more on a real-time solve the problem? Mere capture of information is not enough. There is a need to remove noise and identify the information that is critical for decision making.



Even with significant focus and investment into tools & research, most pre-sales and account teams track only ~20% of the important signals.

## 2. Contextualising the data

While extracting signals from the huge data pile, the focus needs to be on ensuring that they are relevant to the business. Contextualizing the signals specific to the customer base, behaviour, type of product/ services into ordered groups and sequences helps in analysing the relative impact a signal could create.

## 4. Action plan around Signals

Great sales leaders or the Sale Ninjas often succeed because they have robust and dynamic account plans around these transient Opportunities. The availability of a focused action plan that is aligned with the signal helps in understanding the buyer/influencer persona and needs, and helps create a huge impact at the time of sale. As this whole process beginning from identifying the signal all the way to the decision-making process can be quite time-consuming and tedious, it is often skipped and instead, an intuition-based approach tends to be followed.

## 3. Evaluating the Impact of Signals on opportunity

Uncertainty is reduced to a large extent when a sales person gets alerts about signals. But does every signal necessarily mean that the customer has a need for the products? And is it possible to send the sales rep after every customer? It is critical to identify the customer who has high potential and allocate the time of the sales rep wisely to them. This requires sorting and prioritizing of the signals in the order of impact created by them. Once shortlisted the Sales Ninja could narrow the customer down and build a deeper understanding of them.

# DRAUP – Key to leveraging Signals, in order to empower sales

DRAUP's Signals aim at breaking the barriers and bridging the gap between data and actions by helping sales teams track significant real-time signals and identify potential opportunities arriving out of every signal. The signals are categorized, contextualized and quantified by incorporating machine learning, human-curation, and years of selling expertise.

## DRAUP SIGNAL PROCESSING

Draup analysis signals for all accounts in its universe and wraps multiple layers of context to identify opportunities in real time

News aggregators, Company Bulletins, Social Media, Professional Networks, Blogs, News Publications, Forums, Financial Publications, Indexes, Research Journals, Events, etc.

UNIVERSE OF ACCOUNTS

SIGNAL IDENTIFICATION

SOCIAL

OPEN DATA PLATFORMS

CURRENT ACCOUNT DATABASE

GOVERNMENT DATA

INNOVATION DATA

COMPANY FILINGS

MANY MORE SOURCES

DEEPER ANALYSIS OF ACCOUNT

STAKEHOLDER IDENTIFICATION

CONTEXTUALISATION

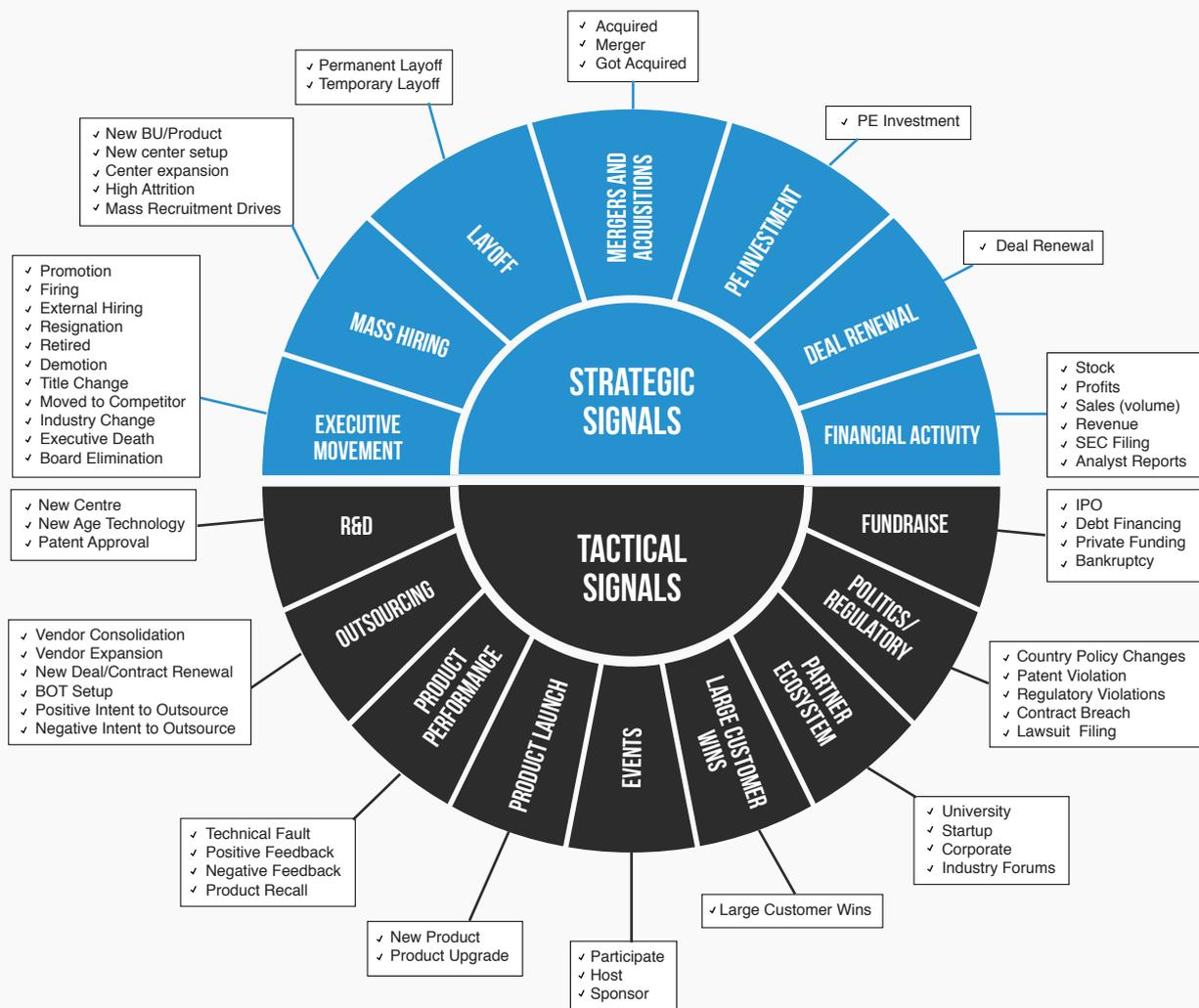
IMPACT EVALUATION

OPPORTUNITY IDENTIFICATION

RECOMMENDATION

# Real-time capturing

DRAUP captures every minuscule piece of information in real-time on financial performance, products, R&D, investments, executive movements, partnerships, internal changes, job postings, layoffs, social events, outsourcing relationships and more to provide you insights and a 360 degree view on the potential impact created by every small signal.



DRAUP interlinks all the loosely connected insights and helps you to identify strong business potential opportunities. The platform helps you to leverage the intelligence about the prospect and increase your potential to create more touch points with the customer.

## Contextualization

For effective selling, the context surrounding any signal needs to be understood. Targeting the opportunity becomes more accurate in the presence of context. DRAUP strives to analyse the signals and provide context to it at two levels: Services (Product Engineering Services, Digital Services and Digital Products) and Verticals (Automotive, Enterprise Software and Consumer Software). For example, a leading automotive OEM announced that they were hiring 1000+ engineers to bolster their self-driving car program. This is a clear case of ramping up capabilities in the domain and indicates a strong signal to sell Engineering and Digital Services in Autonomous technology for the Automotive vertical. This information if interpreted with other variables around current outsourcing spread of company, current buying potential and inclination to partner in the past, can significantly help select the right offering and the right moment to pitch. DRAUP provides contextualised interpretation at this level for all the signals.

## Quantifying

DRAUP devised "Opportunity Index – a predictive scoring of opportunities" for this purpose. It is a quantitative metric generated by using the signals, and quantifies the lead/opportunity score dynamically by analysing your targets holistically. Higher the Opportunity Index, greater is the sale potential. This helps in comparing the lead quality on a relative basis and prioritizing them.

## Categorizing

Using advanced neural networks, DRAUP's Cognition engine classifies every signals into two categories – strategic and tactical.

When the leadership of a leading online retailer based out of the US decided to take over the leadership of a new age AI solution, it was a clear and strong signal that the best practices of strong innovation and sustainability would be adopted in the new businesses. It also indicated a potential transformation of their retail business that could happen by integrating AI with retail. Information such as this may lead to a significant change in an organization's/ stakeholders' behaviour or structure or interactions with external/internal ecosystem. DRAUP classifies such signals as "Strategic Signals".

On the other hand, a "Tactical Signal" is a signal that will independently have limited impact on an organization's/ stakeholders' behaviour or structure but if coupled with favourable scenarios can lead to greater impact. For example, the Google CEO said that 187 employees were to be affected by Trump's immigration order. The political move by the Trump Government alone might not directly impact Google's opportunity index but when combined with the scale of the Software Industry, it generates huge implications and potential action items for sales team in their target accounts.

## Leveraging the Intelligence to win deals

Once prioritized, gathering the right information about the prospect is critical. And the sales reps waste tons of valuable time in searching information related to the prospect. DRAUP interlinks every signal to information with deeper meaning to the prospect and provides the next actionable information. The information provided is highly contextualized and positions the sales rep to create and win the opportunity.

Case Study:  
**Leveraging DRAUP signals to win opportunities**

Modelled the detection, processing and recommended response to a signal – Executive Movement, in a Fortune 500 Automotive organization.

DRAUP platform’s signal processing capability combined with the other features on the platform can help sales leaders navigate to the right opportunities and the appropriate response to the signal, in order to win .



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