

Why Spreadsheets Don't Work

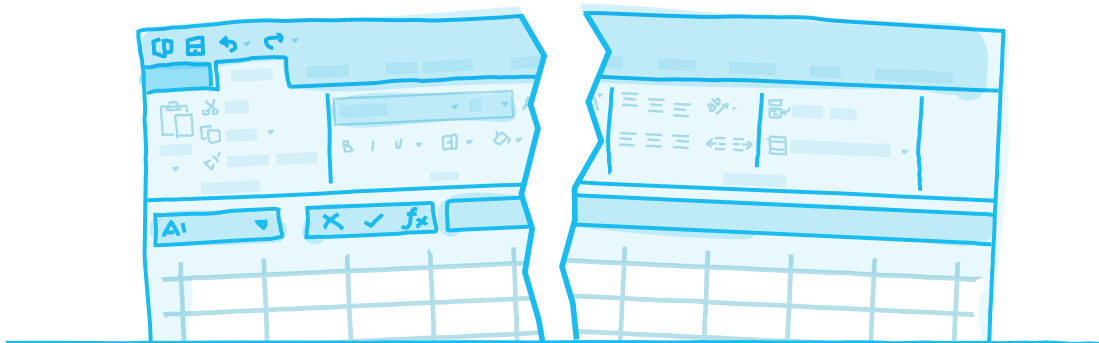
Why Alinean Selling Tools Delivers where Spreadsheets Fail



Many organizations have developed spreadsheet-based ROI / TCO tools to help financially justify their solutions to frugal buyers.

Often these spreadsheets are developed by a field subject matter expert, out of necessity based on one or more client requests, and then shared or distributed to customers, sales professionals and channel partners for use.

These spreadsheet-based ROI / TCO tools are meeting a great need, to help deliver formal business case justification to financially-focused buyers that now demand bottom-line proof. However, ROI / TCO spreadsheets are not the ideal platform to support these value marketing and selling efforts.



Here are a few of the most common issues we see with spreadsheet-based ROI / TCO tools:

Development & Maintenance Costs

Spreadsheet based ROI / TCO tools are expensive to develop, maintain and support, usually involving the creation of macros and Visual Basic programming to make the spreadsheets easier to use for sales reps, channel partners and customers. Beyond usability, getting the spreadsheets to support Word or PPT output reports is difficult.

A subject matter expert (SME) is usually responsible for the programming. Rather than spending time in the field helping to win deals, this key SME is now stuck doing the original development, and then maintaining the constant evolution. The spreadsheet maintenance is hard to pass on to other resources, causing issues should the SME move on to another position.

How much are you spending on ROI/ TCO spreadsheet-tool development and ongoing maintenance?

Alinean Value Selling Tools have an easy to use on-line Builder application, leveraging existing PowerPoint and spreadsheet content to build, update and evolve interactive value marketing and sales tools. No application programming is necessary when leveraging to create customized online ROI / TCO marketing and sales tools.

Adoption

Many customers, sales reps and channel partners are intimidated by financial justification.

Present customers, reps and partners with a complex ROI / TCO spreadsheet, even one that has been worked to make it more usable, and they won't evolve and adopt. Typical spreadsheet-based tools experience single digit sales / partner adoption, typically 3-5%.

With such low adoption, how many potential opportunities that need financial justification are currently stalled / delayed or go to the competitor who is better at value marketing and selling?

Alinean Value Selling Tools provide an easy to use and fun interface, providing financial calculations in a much easier "back of the napkin" format that sales reps, channel partners and customers can easily understand and leverage.

Alinean Value Selling Tools are specifically designed to overcome the value marketing and selling adoption challenge, delivering easy to use on-line interactive ebooks for customers, and easy to use online / iPad interactive tools for reps / partners, with proven adoption of more than 70%.

Version Control & Security

Controlling distribution and access to ROI / TCO spreadsheets is difficult, making version control and IP protection a challenge.

With spreadsheet-based ROI / TCO tools, its difficult to get customers, sales reps and channel partners to download the latest versions, and retire and replace old versions, making it difficult if not impossible to keep the field up to date.

Although the ROI / TCO spreadsheet can be password protected, it's too easy for the tool and important content to fall into competitors' hands.

What are outdated versions and IP leaks costing you?

Alinean Value Selling Tools include integrated security, single sign on (SSO) integration and version control to assure that only authorized users have initial / on-going access and that the latest versions are leveraged/ used for each conversation / engagement. All of your IP remains yours exclusively, with SSAE-16 Type 2 SOC 2 management and security.

Alinean has the first value marketing and selling tools leveraging the latest research on the neuroscience of decision making.

Customer Intelligence

With ROI / TCO spreadsheets, it is difficult to automate the collection of discovery data from each engagement, wasting incredible customer intelligence and insights.

How valuable could the ROI / TCO discovery data and insights be to future sales and marketing efforts, as well as product strategy?

Alinean Value Selling Tools automatically collect and aggregate all of the discovery data and key analysis results from each of your conversations / engagements:

- Automatically aggregating / averaging the discovery data and providing these back to the ValueStory App as benchmark insights for each subsequent conversation / engagement.
- Providing data mining reporting for your team's back-office research – great content for insight based white papers.

This data is exclusively yours and protected under Safe Harbor.

Usage Reporting

With ROI/ TCO spreadsheets, it is difficult to track usage in order to understand who is using / who is not using the spreadsheet, and where / when the spreadsheets are being leveraged by prospects and in deals.

How much better could you manage, track and drive rep / partner / customer adoption with better usage awareness?

Alinean Value Selling Tools help track usage amongst customers, sales reps and channel partners.

Alinean Value Selling Tools include turnkey usage reporting including demographics about the number of new / total user registrants, customer conversations / engagements and e-mailed / downloaded reports. As well, intelligence is provided about each customer, including demographics on industry, location, size, roles and challenges.

Integration with MAP & CRM

Any marketing / selling tool needs to integrate with existing systems and processes.

Unfortunately, spreadsheet-based ROI / TCO tools don't connect / integrate properly with MAP / CRM solutions.

How much better could you capture, nurture and drive leads and opportunities with MAP / CRM integration?

Alinean Value Selling Tools integrate with MAP and CRM solutions, sharing in real-time the lead profile, discovery data, key analysis results and even a copy of the downloaded report. ValueStory MAP / CRM integration facilitates much more effective lead capture, lead scoring, opportunity nurturing, and more effective sales follow-on engagements.

Effectiveness of Storytelling with Justification

The latest neuroscience research indicates that not only do you need to provide the rational reasons for a customer to make a purchase, but you also need to be sure to connect with your buyer emotionally - conveying why their current issues are serious, and what makes your value actionable now and unique.

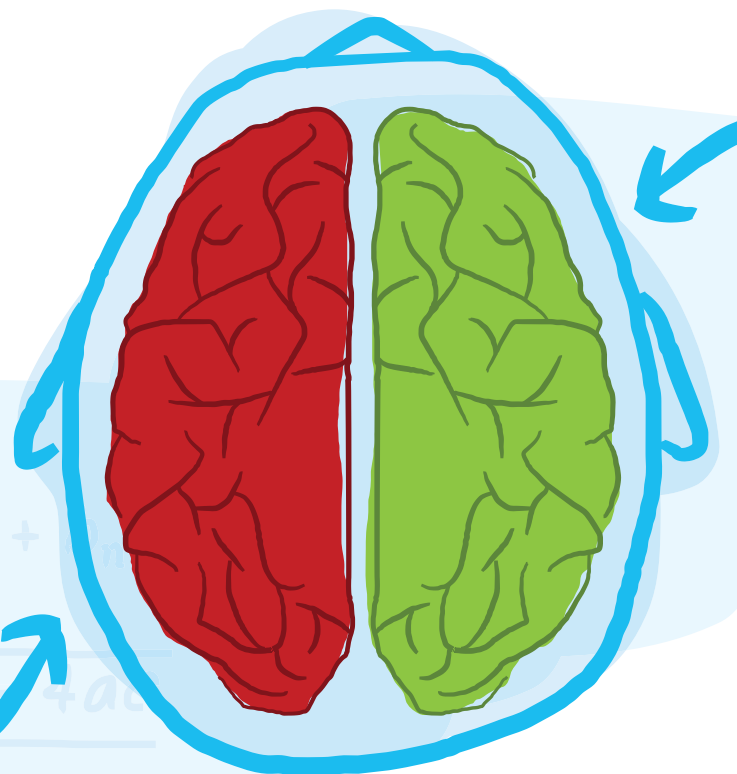
Leveraging emotional selling makes your value messaging much more memorable and provides the "gut" instinct to act sooner vs. later, and in your favor.

Unfortunately, spreadsheet-based ROI / TCO tools are heavy on the numbers, the rational reasons to buy, and extremely light on value storytelling, the emotion to get the buyer to take action now.

How much more effective could your marketing and selling be if you were able to leverage neuroscience to better motivate quicker positive decisions?

Alinean Value Selling Tools are the first value marketing and selling tool leveraging the latest research on the neuroscience of decision making, providing the perfect balance of emotional + rational selling - a combination of visual value storytelling combined with compelling insights and credible financial justification.

Research indicates that not only do you need to provide the rational reasons... **you need to be sure to connect with your buyer emotionally, and with trust.**



Third Party Validation

Research from IDC indicates that less than 1 in 8 prospects trust financial justification from solution providers unless they include third party research and validation. Third-party credibility is required to convince skeptical buyers that the business case is not biased and completely self-serving.

Unfortunately, most ROI / TCO spreadsheets are homegrown and lack this third-party research, validation and credibility.

How much more effective could your value marketing and selling efforts be with third-party credibility?

When Alinean is engaged to help you develop your unique tool, we leverage our ValueMatrix™ and expert analyst team to help develop, harmonize and certify your value messaging and quantification.

Alinean Value Selling Tools is presented as a third-party tool, powered by Alinean, following a trusted methodology and toolkit for presenting and calculating credible financial justification.



ROI / TCO spreadsheet-based tools are a good start towards meeting your customers' needs for financial justification. However, these ROI / TCO spreadsheets fall short in a number of key areas.

By advancing your current ROI / TCO spreadsheets to Alinean Value Selling Tools, you can substantially:

1. Eliminate significant spreadsheet development and maintenance costs
2. Drive better customer, sales rep and channel partner adoption and usage
3. Better control versions and secure / protect your value-IP
4. Gain substantial customer intelligence and insights on usage
5. Integrate with the lead capture / nurturing and opportunity management of your MAP and CRM solutions
6. Leverage the latest neuroscience on decision making to add value messaging and storytelling to financial justification
7. Implement 3rd party validation and credibility.

Schedule a Demo

Visit alinear.com to learn more and schedule a demo

Explore Our Customer Showcase [Learn More](#)

See how others just like you have benefited from Alinean Value Messaging, Tools and Trainings.

Visit the [Frugalnomics Survival Guide](#) at alinear.com to learn more about value marketing & selling best practices.



Alinean empowers B2B vendors to better connect, engage and sell to today's economic-focused buyer via the development and delivery of value messaging, interactive sales / marketing tools and sales training. Alinean-powered value storytelling, financial justification and ROI / TCO creates more compelling value-focused conversations and proposals — generating more demand, challenging the "do-nothing" buyer into action, accelerating sales cycles, increasing deal size and improving competitive win rates.

Leading B2B firms leveraging Alinean tools include: HP, IBM, Microsoft, Dell, Intel, OfficeMax, IDC/IDG, AT&T, BMC Software, ADP and SolidWorks.