

klue

Competitive Enablement Maturity Model

A Roadmap to Accelerate your Competitive Program



5 Stages of
Competitive Enablement
Maturity

Get your Competitive Program on the Podium

Every day, product marketers and competitive leaders come to Klue to learn about what goes into building a best-in-class competitive enablement program.

In order to find out, we worked alongside some of the top competitive intelligence practitioners in B2B SaaS and other industries and surveyed hundreds of competitive leaders.

We discovered that companies with a successful competitive program are driving improvements across the entire business. These highly mature programs improve revenue performance in competitive deals, have a seat at the executive table, inform strategic decisions, and save time with more efficient processes.

So, what makes a successful program? Read on to find out.

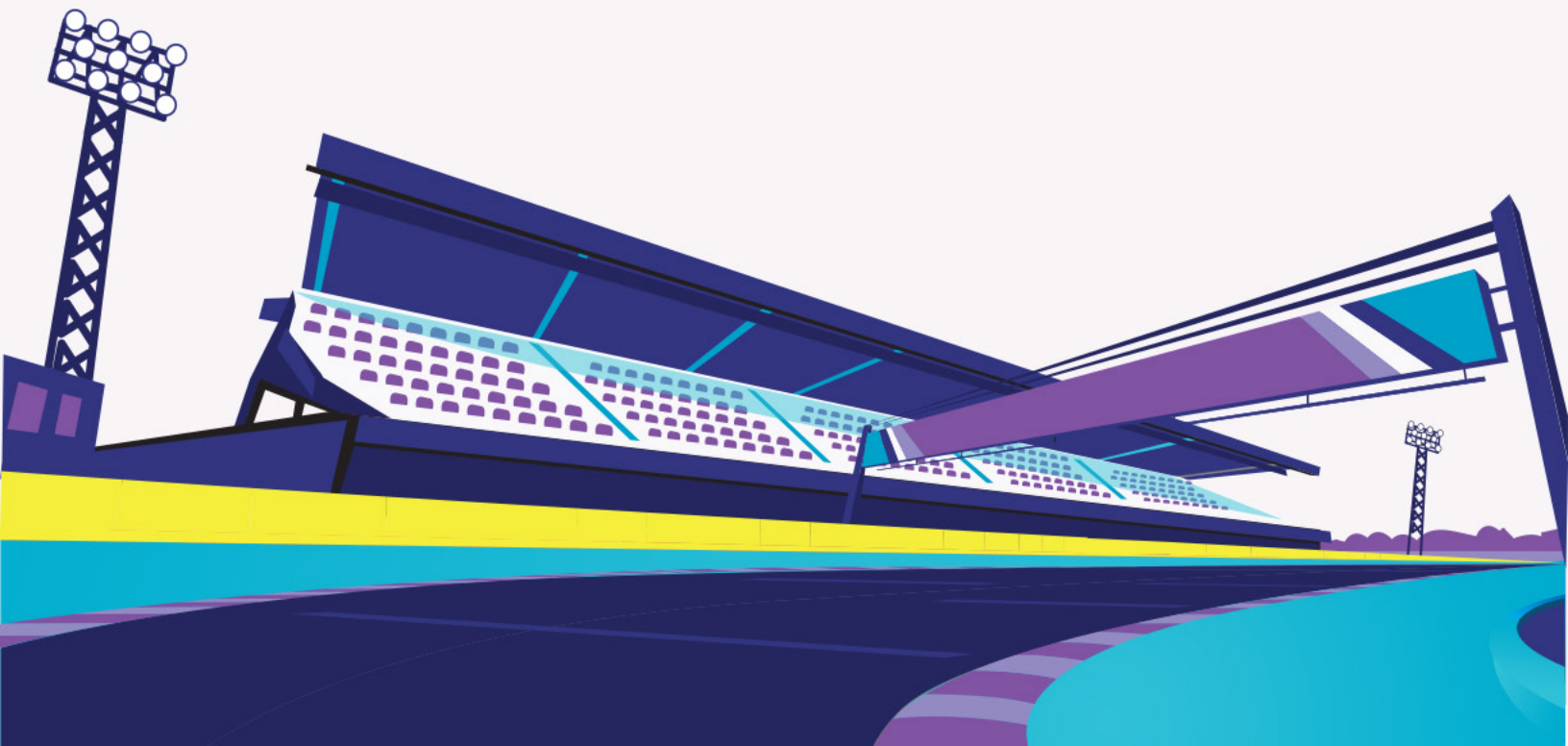


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Roadmap

Building the Maturity Model

We analyzed the data from the '2021 Competitive Enablement Report', consulted with leading competitive practitioners in the field, and tapped into the insights of our own in-house experts.

The results of this research helped build the competitive enablement maturity model outlining the five different stages of competitive programs.

OBJECTIVES



PEOPLE



PROCESSES



TECHNOLOGIES



KPIS & METRICS



What makes it unique?

It's the first, and the only maturity model for competitive enablement

Until now, people have been left to guess what the most important factors are that go into building a game-changing competitive program. There's been no benchmark for product marketers and competitive leaders to assess success.

It's developed alongside thought leaders and experts that have built successful programs

Nobody wants to be told what to do by someone in an ivory tower that's detached from reality. That's why we collaborated with experts that have actually built competitive programs and advanced them to become a strategic asset to the business. Their input, along with our report data, determined each stage of the maturity model.

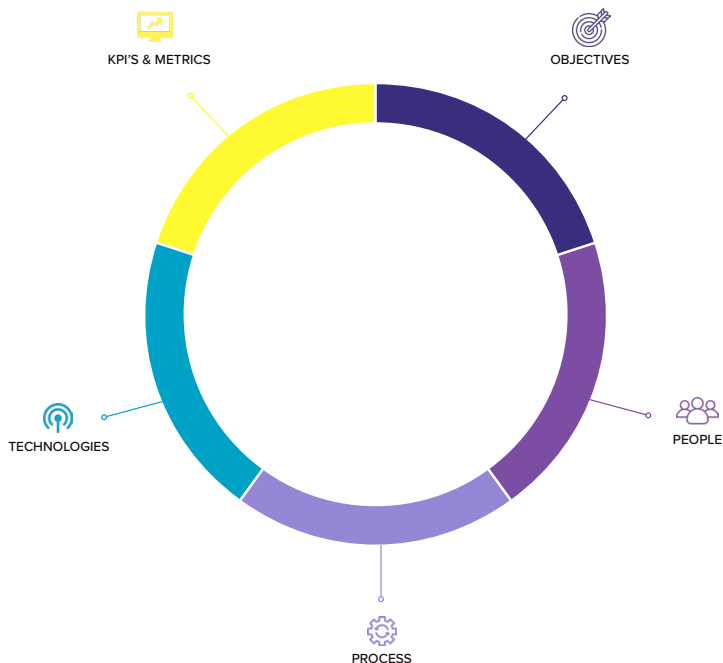
What does this all mean for you?

The maturity model is the methodology you can use to quickly assess and locate exactly where your competitive program is currently at. With the defining features of each stage clearly outlined, this model provides guidance to help you to self-identify as to where you are now, and what actionable next steps you can take to elevate your program to the next level.

The Defining Features of Competitive Enablement Maturity

Our findings show the most critical components that determine if your program is winning Grand Prix in Monaco or breaking down at every turn are: **objectives, people, processes, technologies, and KPIs & metrics.**

Let's take a look at these features and why they matter for your competitive program.



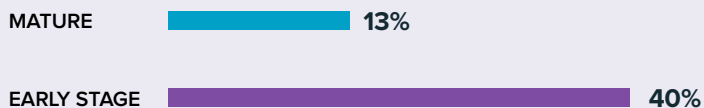


Objectives

Mature programs establish business objectives and program objectives. These programs set out to improve revenue performance and clearly outline how they will influence strategic decisions. They also set program objectives to proactively standardize and scale support to different teams to help them confidently compete in their role.

However, early stage competitive programs are three times more likely to rely on reactive, ad hoc projects than mature programs.

Our competitive program relies on ad hoc, reactive projects



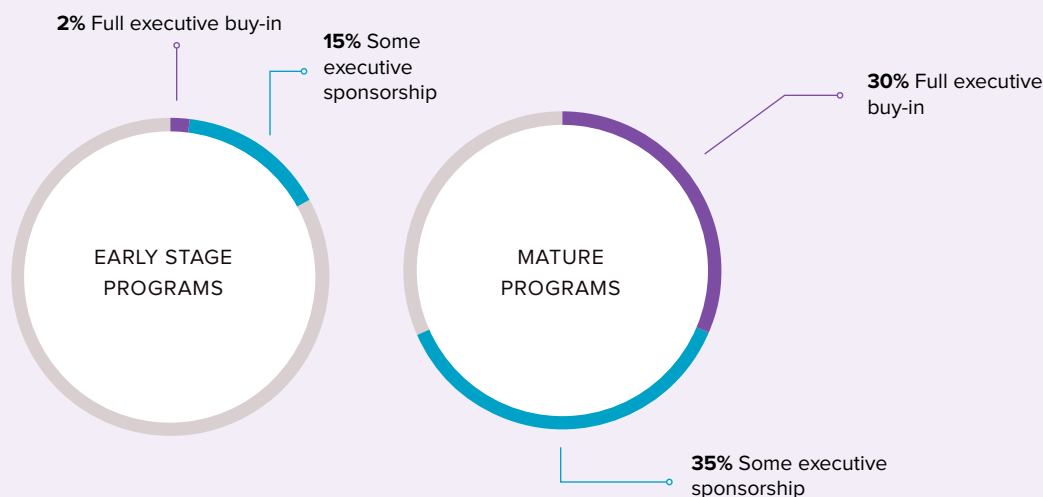


People

The most successful competitive programs don't stop with just getting the attention of the exec team, they earn their full support. Establishing executive buy-in gives your program sustainability, a strategic voice, and a seat at the table.

Only 2% of early stage competitive programs are getting full executive support.

How would you rate the executive buy-in for your competitive program?



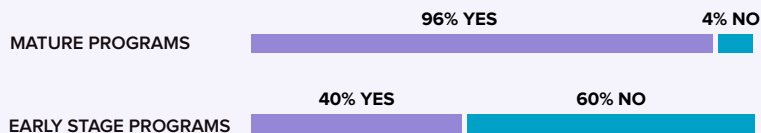


Processes

You don't win a race by winging it. And competitive programs don't impact the business without a process attached to how they operate. The most effective competitive programs are regularly collecting and distributing intel to their user-base and ensure that they have a central accessible location with up-to-date information.

Mature programs almost unanimously (96%) have these standardized processes in place.

Does your competitive program have standardized processes in place?



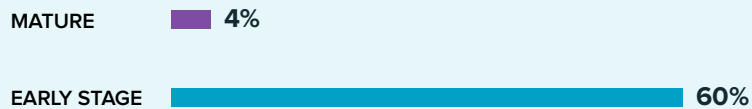


Technologies

It looks just a little different under the hood of a go-kart and a Mercedes. Competitive programs are no different — the most mature have technology in place to scale their efforts.

Nearly two out of three early stage programs are using little to no technology.

Our competitive program has little to no technology in place



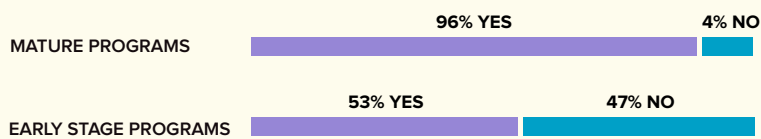


KPIs & Metrics

Mature programs establish KPIs, report on them regularly, and measure their impact on revenue. Reporting on KPIs — like revenue performance improvement — helps the business understand if the competitive program is progressing in the right direction.

Almost half of early stage competitive programs revealed that they don't have any KPIs or reporting metrics in place. They're out there driving blindfolded.

Does your competitive program have KPIs or reporting metrics?

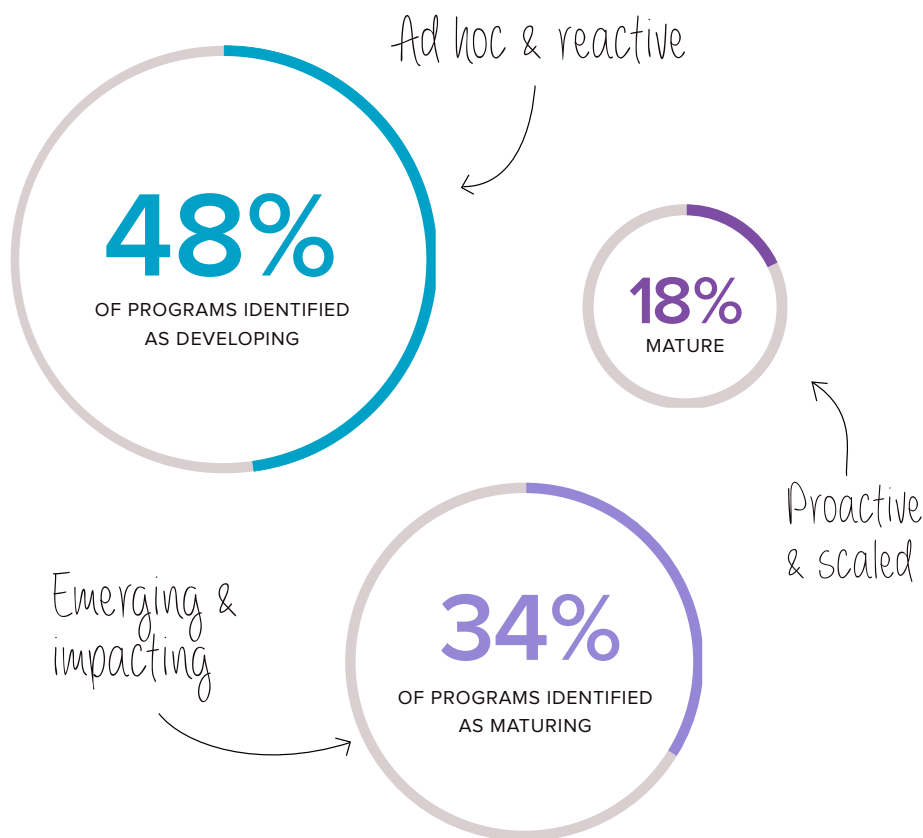


Competitive Programs Aren't Satisfied With Second Place

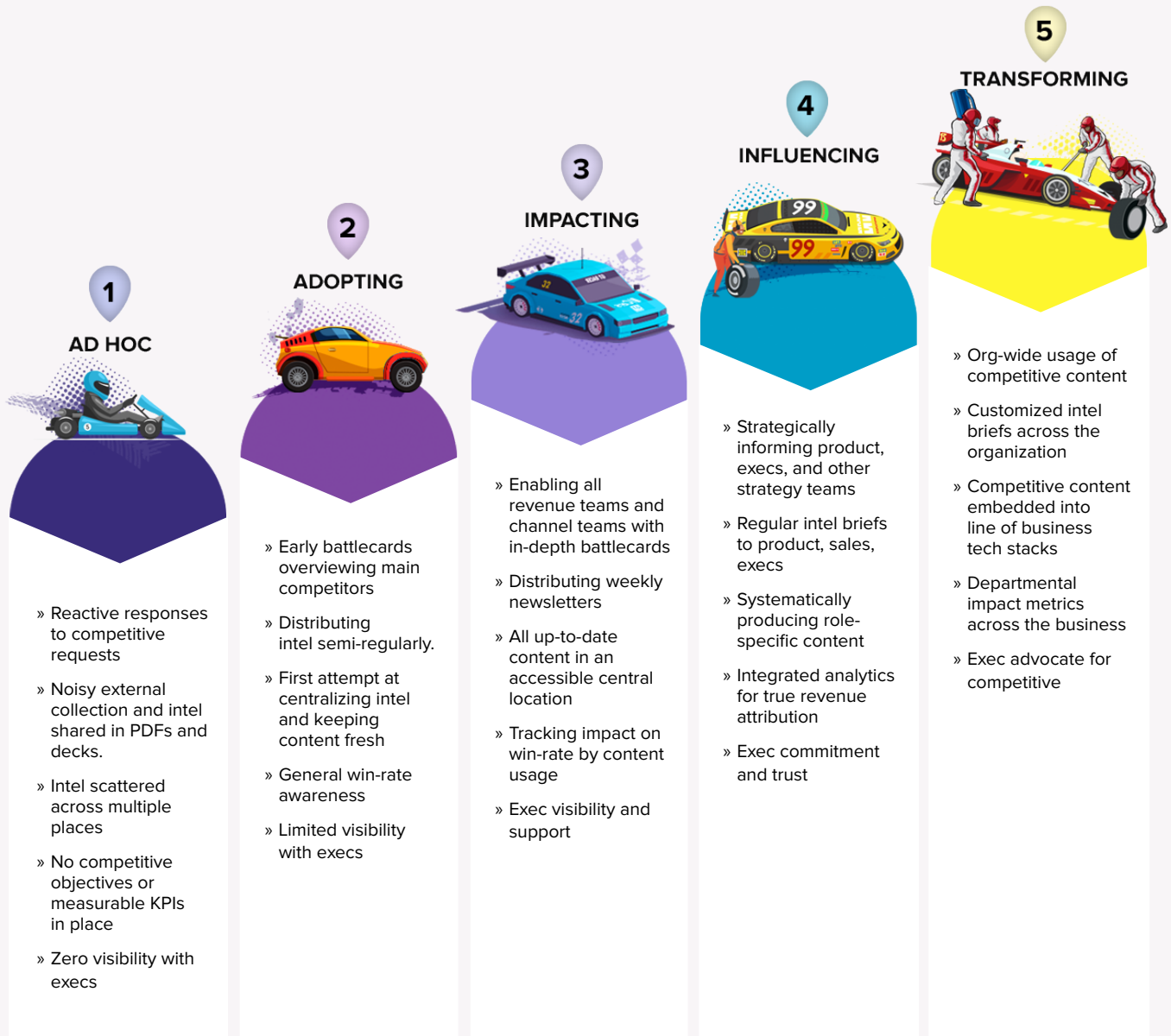
True competitors hate losing, and competitive program leaders are no different. In fact, less than one in five (18%) survey respondents feel that they currently have a mature competitive program in place at their company.

And while the overwhelming majority are in the early stages of developing their competitive program, 86% of them are NOT satisfied with where they're at maturity-wise.

Sprinkle in the fact that respondents have seen the importance of competitive intelligence increase significantly since the pandemic, and there's a huge opportunity to elevate both your competitive program's impact on the business and your role in the org.



The Five Stages of Competitive Enablement Maturity



The Keys That Drive Success

Before we dive into the different stages of maturity, here are two of the biggest takeaways that we discovered during our research.





Sales trust is foundational to your competitive enablement program's success.

Earning and maintaining trust with sales is critical at every stage of your competitive program. Why?

First, the sales team is the lifeblood for collecting high value intel from the field at every stage of maturity, and having their collective buy-in allows you to gather information at scale. Ensure that they use your competitive content effectively to improve sales performance so you can gauge how your competitive program impacts revenue.

There's also a lesser known result of enabling sellers well — they'll become your ticket to earning a strategic voice in the company. Nobody wants to be order takers, and if your program is getting vocal support from sales with quantitative metrics to back that up, then execs are going to notice. Helping sales win competitive deals proves your impact on revenue in the short-term, which will allow you to take on longer-term strategic plays. That's where you can really get into the fun stuff.

“Frankly, building trust with sales should be an objective across all stages of maturity.”

Kimberley Bauer, Carbon Black



Intel collection is the foundation, but with content it's quality over quantity.

One of the biggest takeaways from our analysis is that maturity isn't just about how advanced your competitive intelligence gathering tactics are, but about how repeatable and scalable your processes are at enabling the necessary teams with usable information.

Yes, collecting quality internal and external intel is crucial for your program's success. But it has no value if it goes unused, collecting dust. A mature program turns intel into actionable competitive content by adding context and why it matters, then gets that content into the hands of the right people, and has a process attached to how they should use it to beat their competition.

“As a large organization, the most important aspect of our competitive program is enabling hundreds of employees to use competitive intel for their respective roles.”

Enterprise UK-based printing company

Maturity Model

The 5 Stages of Maturity

Level 1 | Ad Hoc



Level 2 | Adopting



Level 3 | Impacting



Level 4 | Influencing



Level 5 | Transforming



AD HOC

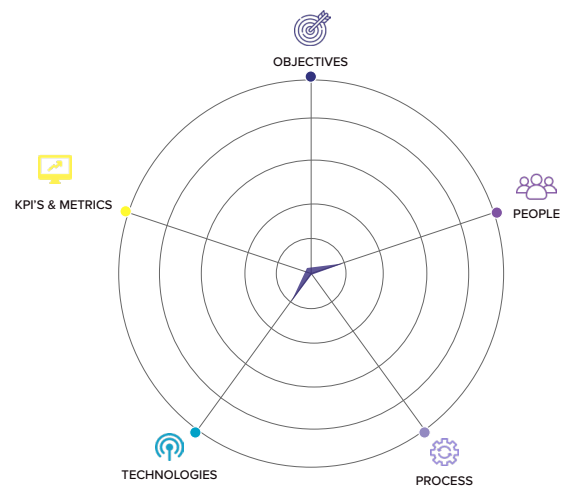


Reacting to the past

You're never going to win an F1 race in a go-kart. But you're not going to win an F1 race if you didn't START in a go-kart.

'Ad hoc' competitive programs are reactive and often too late. At this stage, competitive research is done on a one-off basis or in response to sales requests.

At this level, product marketers are assigned to these projects as one of their many responsibilities, and simply gathering intel is the name of the game. People across the org are doing independent research and intel is scattered everywhere. Consider it the wild west of competitive intelligence.



Defining Features

OBJECTIVES



No program or business objectives and purely project-based competitive research like pricing research and messaging audits

PEOPLE



A product marketer with minimal resources. Little to no visibility with the exec team.

PROCESSES



Focused on collection and reactively responding to external requests from sales. Intel is stuck in the minds of individuals. Providing reps feature-comparison tables instead of structured battlecards.

TECHNOLOGIES



Distributing content through static PDFs and decks. Relying on public data and noisy web-scraping tools.

KPI'S & METRICS



No defined KPIs beyond reporting on the status of one-off research projects.

“ One of the challenges we had was that there were lots of decks and presentations, but all were slightly modified. You never knew what was accurate and what wasn't, and it was distributed all over the place.”

Chris Owen, Director of Product Management, Saviynt

What's Next?

- » Proactively identify your main competitors and monitor their changes
- » Create program objectives and measurable goals
- » Identify a clear owner of competitive enablement
- » Centralize the existing intel
- » Build battlecards overviewing main competitors
- » Share intel bi-weekly with sales and assess their initial confidence on main competitors

Putting objectives and measurable goals in place — for the competitive program and the larger business — is a critical starting point for ad hoc programs to get away from their reactive nature. Ad hoc programs need to look beyond collecting raw information and instead add context and meaningful insights for the business.



ADOPTING

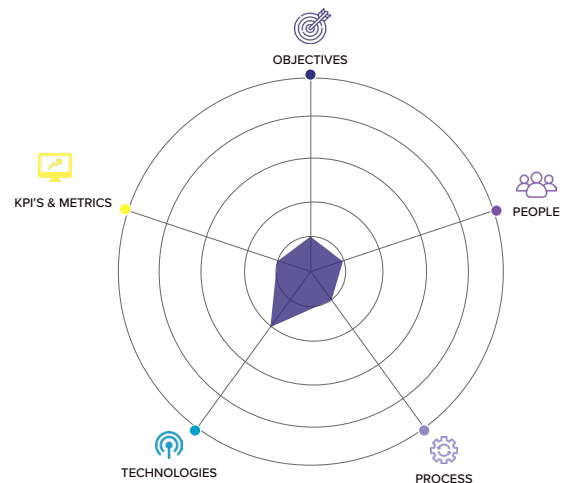


Getting the basics together

Alright, you're in the race. You're not competing for the podium just yet, but you're beginning to close the gap on the field.

At the 'Adopting' stage, you're in the initial phases of building out a competitive program. You're starting to centralize competitive intel in one place and aiming to keep information up-to-date. Although insights are being shared with sales, there still isn't a regimented cadence with how this is distributed.

The program now has some basic objectives outlined for the business such as improving win-rates, understanding your differentiation in the market, and building messaging. Establishing these KPIs and reporting on them sheds a bit of light on your program's effectiveness, but it still isn't clearly demonstrating your impact on revenue.



Defining Features

OBJECTIVES



Basic objectives to improve win-rates and to build differentiated messaging. Aiming to have up-to-date intel in a central location.

PEOPLE



An individual is in charge of the program, but it still isn't a priority. Limited visibility with the exec team.

PROCESSES



Actively collecting external data, semi-regularly updating battlecards and comparison grids, and in the early stages of centralizing information

TECHNOLOGIES



Sharing intel through Slack, email, and Sharepoint. Looking for CI tech to save time in the short-term. First attempt at battlecards that provide an overview of main competitors.

KPI'S & METRICS



Reporting on KPIs such as win-rate improvements and usage metrics.

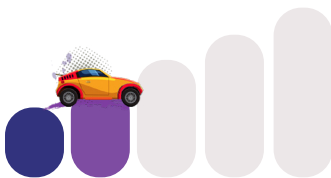
“One of the biggest jumps in our competitive program happened once we crowdsourced collecting intel. It allowed us to gather information at scale and ensured that information wasn't getting stuck within the minds of a few individuals.”

Patty McDonald, Global Solution Marketing Director, Symphony RetailAI

What's Next?

- » Share intel with all revenue teams
- » Map win-rates in your CRM to battlecard and other competitive content usage
- » Develop further depth of insights on competitors and make accessible through content layering and linking.
- » Start crowdsourcing intel from the field to improve the quality of competitive insights
- » Identify emerging competitive threats and enable teams to proactively respond to them
- » Use quarterly internal surveys to assess improvements in users' confidence on competitors and requests.

Establishing more sophisticated sales performance metrics that can better tie competitive efforts directly to revenue is crucial to leveling up an adopting competitive program. These programs should expand their support to all revenue teams.



IMPACTING



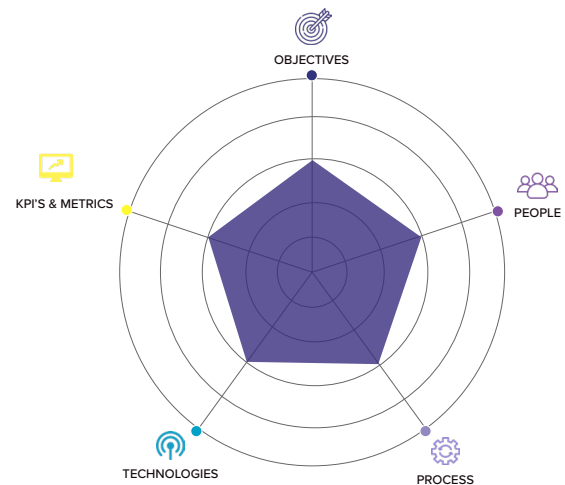
Improving the bottom-line

Your program is putting salespeople in a position to overtake the competition in head-to-head deals

Competitive enablement programs at the 'Impacting' stage are focused on serving all revenue teams at scale and reporting in greater detail on their impact on revenue performance.

At this stage, there's a dedicated competitive enablement team — that can still be a team of one — along with clear roles and responsibilities between the program owner, contributors, and support teams. By improving the efficiency of supporting tactical needs, the program can also take on more proactive strategic initiatives.

Impacting programs prioritize improving CRM data hygiene for faster and more accurate reporting, integrating their competitive program with internal data sources, and using a win/loss program to help inform competitive strategy.



Defining Features

OBJECTIVES



Clear objectives to enable all revenue and channel teams. Aiming to fully centralize intel, gain wider visibility, and tie efforts directly to revenue.

PEOPLE



Individual dedicated to leading the program given the increased support and visibility from the exec team.

PROCESSES



Crowdsourcing intel from the field and sharing it back out to revenue teams and establishing a repeatable win/loss program. Identifying emerging threats to the sales pipeline and enabling teams to respond to them.

TECHNOLOGIES



An accessible central platform for all revenue teams that is integrated with high value internal data sources. Multiple, linked battlecards on each competitor with actionable information on how to beat them.

KPI'S & METRICS



Reporting on KPIs with better attribution such as comparing competitive win-rates between those who use battlecard content vs. those that don't, deal velocity/size, and discounting trends.

“Once you satisfy the lower levels in your hierarchy of needs — whether that's getting your battlecards in order or establishing a baseline rhythm with your field teams — things can get really interesting.”

Justin Topliff, Sr. Product Marketing Manager, Highspot

What's Next?

- » Share quantitative and qualitative insights in regular briefings across the org
- » Integrate competitive metrics into business intelligence tools for true revenue attribution
- » Expand sharing intel briefs with sales, customer success, product, market, and exec teams
- » Start predicting and preparing for your competitor's next moves
- » Use your understanding of the competitive landscape to forecast future market trends
- » Have a strategic voice present at all executive conversations

The key to improving maturity beyond this stage is being able to measure and report on the program's direct attribution to revenue. With this in place, programs develop even greater trust with execs and earn a louder voice in strategic initiatives.



INFLUENCING

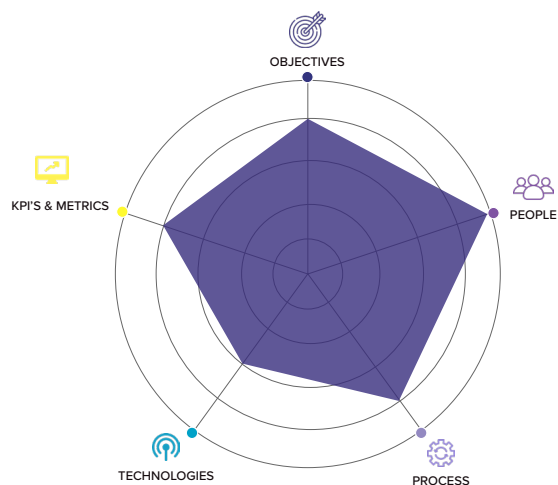


Strategically guiding the company

Your competitive program's engine has been fine-tuned and is now firing on all cylinders.

Competitive enablement programs at the 'Influencing' stage have enough credibility with executives to inform high-level strategies like the company's product roadmap and acquisition decisions. There's significant investment and advocacy from execs in competitive enablement.

The reporting metrics in place measure true revenue attribution of the program by integrating competitive metrics into business intelligence tools. Influencing programs are delivering a regular cadence of executive, product, market, and competitive intel briefs in addition to their support for revenue teams.



Defining Features

OBJECTIVES



Objectives are to increase market share, retain and expand customers. Aiming to strategically inform product and executive decisions.

PEOPLE



Senior leader in charge of the program, others fully invested in competitive enablement. Possesses a strategic voice in exec conversations.

PROCESSES



Weekly intel briefs customized for sales, CS, product, market, and exec teams. Predicting your main competitor's next moves and proactively preparing against that. Leading larger strategic campaigns to steal customers

TECHNOLOGIES



Competitive metrics integrated into business intelligence tools for true revenue attribution. Integrations with market data and primary research tools to create a view of current and future competitor trends.

KPI'S & METRICS



True revenue attribution in place such as deal assist metrics and content attribution. Reporting on market share by location, industry, and segment.

“The idea of enabling every department with competitive intel is foreign, but exciting.”

Sophie Pagalday, Locus Robotics

What's Next?

- » Inform how every department competes in their respective roles
- » Increase the knowledge of competitors across the entire organization
- » Competitive content shared on every department's tech stack
- » Measure content usage across every team
- » Have a member in charge of competitive strategy on the exec team

It's time to transform the way that every department in the org competes in their respect markets. In order to level up, programs have to distribute customized competitive intel to every team and have the content shared embedded within each department's tech stack. Consider it wall-to-wall competitive enablement.



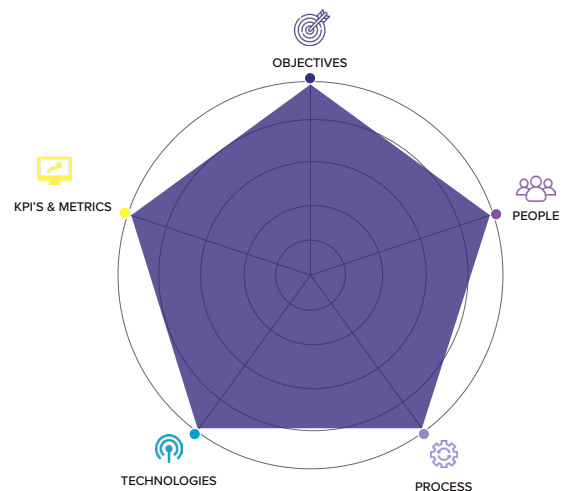
TRANSFORMING



Improving competitiveness org-wide

Every team is in pole position to knock off their respective competitors. Move over, Toto Wolff, there's a new leader in town.

'Transforming' programs have earned broad executive trust and buy-in that a senior executive steps up to become a vocal champion and advocate for competitive enablement across the org to help individuals make decisions more accurately. At this stage, everything is about scale of adoption throughout the organization.



Defining Features

OBJECTIVES



Providing a personalized view of relevant compete content for every team and department.

PEOPLE



Center of Excellence to quickly spin up competitive teams in lines of business or departments.

PROCESSES



A vocal executive champion to advocate for the program's vision and impact across businesses and departments at town halls and corporate events.

TECHNOLOGIES



Compete content embedded and delivered in departmental tech stacks.

KPI'S & METRICS



Adoption metrics across the company elevated to KPI level as leading indicators of success, in addition to revenue attribution metrics.

“Competitiveness should inform how every team operates on a day-to-day basis.”

Tamara Grominsky, Chief Strategy Officer, Unbounce





Conclusion

Congrats, you've made it past the checkered flag!

We've worked with experts in the field to put together this maturity model so that you can identify what you can do to accelerate your competitive program's impact on the business.

The defining features of each stage in the maturity model can help inform not only where your competitive efforts currently are, but also what's next.

Wondering where to go next?

Book a demo and let's talk about what this report means for your practice and your company

[GET A DEMO](#)



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The Co-creators

We'd like to thank the competitive experts who helped co-create this maturity model by contributing their insights and experiences:

Justin Topliff, Highspot

Terri Allegretto, Verizon

Rahim Kaba, OneSpan

Sherry Schneider, Lincoln Financial Group

Kimberly Bauer, Carbon Black

Barbara Doane, Emburse

Pete Codevilla, Red Hat

Neil Martin, Dell Technologies

Fiona Schrader, Dell Technologies

Ruth Wood, Beekeeper

Jennifer Hartwell, Boomi

Paul Senatori, Sitecore

Sophie Pagalday, Locus Robotics

Anders Lofgren, Hitachi

Cody Bernard, Drift

Hope Lynch, Cloudbees

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Ready to level up? Klue can help. [Book a demo.](#)

