Client Case Study:

How Aggreko gained complete transparency into the health of their accounts

September 2022

Introduction

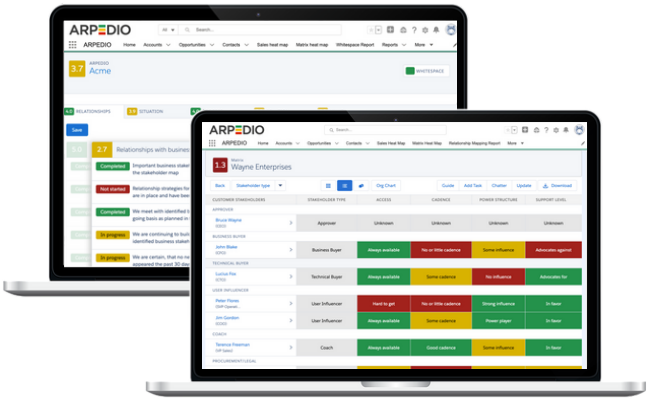
Not too long ago, Aggreko was one of those companies that used PowerPoint for account plans. And the struggle was real! Using PowerPoint for account planning leads to one very common challenge: The minute that you put your account plan together in PowerPoint it's out of date – and most likely out of mind too.

This was the situation Aggreko found themselves in. Meanwhile, the strategic account managers also found that there was no linkage between where they wanted to be, and how they were going to get there.

To overcome these challenges, Aggreko needed to upgrade their sales tech stack in order for them to take their account management program to the next level. They chose to team up with ARPEDIO and through close cooperation, Aggreko's own sales methodology was quickly integrated into ARPEDIO's tools. Thus, they were able to mirror their sales training in the tool and gain complete transparency into the health across all of their accounts. Aggreko is now not only focused on what they want to accomplish, but also *how* they are going to reach their targets.

About Aggreko and this study:

- Aggreko is a supplier of temporary power generation equipment and of temperature control equipment using the latest fuels and storage solutions. As partners in the energy transition, Aggreko is committed to achieving Net-Zero across their operations by 2030 and across all their services by 2050.
- This client case study is based on an interview with Jeff Raber, Head of Strategic Accounts at Aggreko.
- ARPEDIO solutions used: Account Planning and Relationship Mapping



Challenges

Before integrating ARPEDIO's tools, the strategic account managers at Aggreko were facing several challenges:

- Account managers put a lot of work into creating their account plans in order to present them at the annual sales meetings. During those meetings, they would talk about what they were doing with their respective accounts. However, once the account managers had given their presentation, they would put the account plan away, and most likely not open it again for the rest of the year.

- The account managers had an idea of what they wanted to do, but there was no structured approach in place on how to actually get there. Thus, the mentality eventually became "let's just try harder next year".

So, in spite of all the good intentions to work harder and develop the accounts, at the end of the day, all those plans fell short, and it was almost impossible to make noteworthy progress.

"We were one of those companies that used PowerPoint for account plans."

Jeff Raber, Head of Strategic Accounts at Aggreko

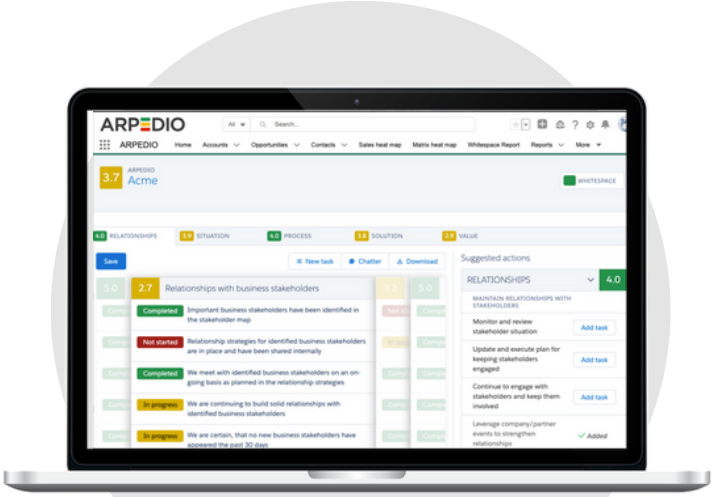
New Head of Strategic Accounts brings new focus and expectations

In June 2019, Aggreko hired Jeff Raber to transform an existing MSA building team into a strategic account team. The team was initially formed to build master service agreements, and specialized in negotiating pricing, terms and keeping contracts in place. But, as the leadership of Aggreko realized the need for a real strategic account team, it was decided to change it into a team that could develop and improve relationships with the customers. They needed someone who would go after decision makers, help them, consult with them about their business needs, and eventually come up with solutions.

When Jeff was brought in, he immediately had the team pull together their account plans. The next month when he checked in with them, he realized that the team hadn't done much – in fact, they were rather surprised that he actually referred back to their account plans. Consequently, Jeff started taking the teams' account plans and holding them accountable every single month. It generated small results, but the sales team still wasn't completely on board. They remained reactive and transactional in their selling approach.

Reality was that this had become the culture of the company. For the sales reps it didn't make much of a difference. Their idea of account planning mainly revolved around how much revenue they were going to make at the sub-set of customers. Bottom line, as long as they made their numbers, it didn't really matter how they got there.

Clearly, there was no strategic perspective in the way the team was developing customers or relationships, and one big question remained: how do you change a sales organization to think strategically about their accounts and act accordingly?



The ARPEDIO Account Planning tool

Solution

Jeff started looking at different tech solutions that could solve Aggreko's current challenges. As Aggreko was in the middle of changing their sales methodology, they already had a process they followed, and Jeff did not wish to compromise that.

However, most of the software companies that he reached out to had their own methodology. One day, Jeff was talking to some peers at the Strategic Account Management Association (SAMA), and they told him how they were successfully using ARPEDIO's tools for account planning and relationship mapping.

As Jeff took a closer look at ARPEDIO, one of the things that caught his attention was the possibility of putting Aggreko's own methodology into ARPEDIO's tools. This way, they could mirror their sales training directly in the tool, so they didn't have to change it. An added bonus was that it would also reinforce the sales training that Aggreko did.

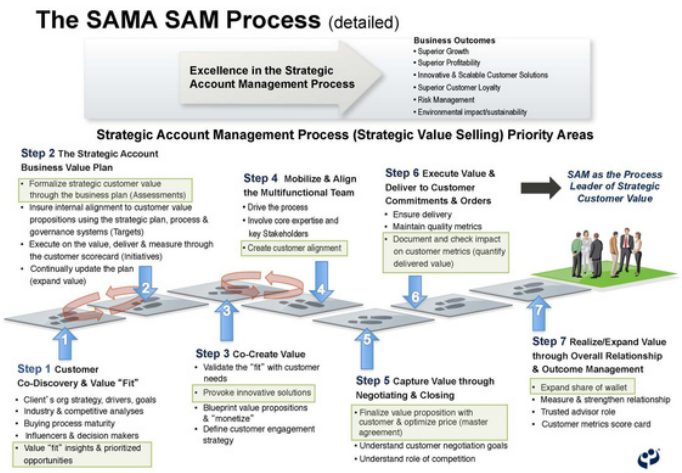
Ultimately, ARPEDIO was by far the most flexible solution.

Although Aggreko was a company with a high growth rate, they hadn't managed to establish a solid process for sales coaching. They would train the sales people in their sales methodology, but there was no actual follow-up on these best practices when the accounts were discussed with sales management. The ability to put Aggreko's own methodology into ARPEDIO's tools and thus reinforce the methodology they had been training in when assessing their accounts suddenly made this process much more tangible.

ARPEDIO already has a strategic account management methodology available in the tool, which follows the SAMA 7-step process. Jeff was familiar with the process and believed in that methodology for strategic accounts. "It can be a little more complex than what people usually use with their average sales reps, but by being able to take Aggreko's own sales methodology and put that in the tool for the sales reps, while having a different one for the SAMs, was a huge benefit, and one of the main reasons why we chose to use ARPEDIO's tool" Jeff states.

"To me, the one thing that stood out with ARPEDIO was that we could put our own methodology into the tool, and we didn't have to change anything."

Jeff Raber, Head of Strategic Accounts at Aggreko



SAMA 7-STEP PROCESS

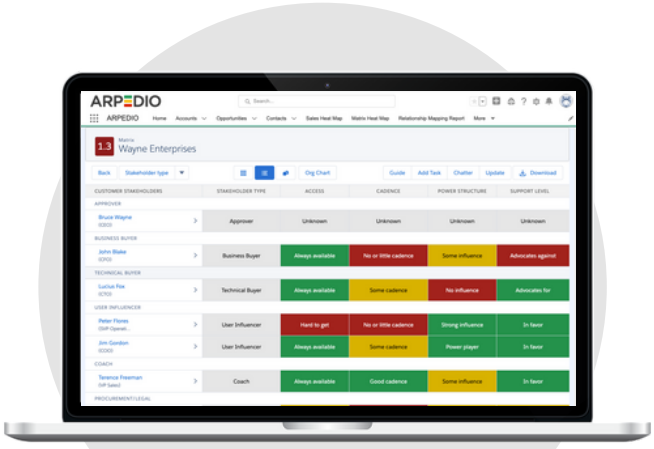
The SAMA 7-step process involves how to develop an account and all the different things you need to do in order to get where you want to be. By enabling you to adhere to SAMA's 7-step framework, ARPEDIO provides an anchored and repeatable foundation for success. The collaboration has brought a cutting-edge solution for SAMs to assess and progress through the value co-creation framework that has inspired and empowered the brightest account professionals worldwide.

Learn more about the SAMA/ARPEDIO partnership.

Adoption

The solution was rolled out not only for strategic account managers, but also for the sales reps that supported the strategic accounts. Within the strategic account manager community the adoption was very successful. This is a group of people who are supposed to be strategic minded in terms of planning what they're going to do and how they're going to do it, so for them, the adoption was frictionless and smooth. However, at the sales reps level, people tend to be more transactional in how they do business. The adoption of the new solution was more challenging on this level, as there's a tendency to focus primarily on the jobs to quote.

Nonetheless, one of the things that turned out to be an unexpected benefit was the enhanced visibility into the activity of the accounts; who's doing what, who's being proactive, who's not being proactive, how are we selling, which groups in the company are acting more strategically, and so forth. Jeff explains that they knew intuitively which groups were acting in specific ways, but being able to have the metrics around the adoption proved to be an unknown benefit.



The ARPEDIO Relationship Mapping tool

An unexpected (but crucial) benefit from using ARPEDIO: Uncovering the red flags

When viewed from a strategic account perspective, the realization that Aggreko was actually lacking behind in areas they weren't even aware of proved to be extremely insightful. As Aggreko initially went through their strategic accounts and assessed them all, they found that their scores were quite low when being matched up and compared to the SAMA 7-step model - they actually ranked lower than they thought they would. The fact that the strategic account managers graded themselves in an honest way was crucial in order to attain a realistic viewpoint of where Aggreko was actually at. Jeff says: "You might think that you're doing really well, but once you start scoring yourself and find out you're not that far along, it's actually a good thing to have that insight".

Learnings: Do not underestimate the necessity of change management

When rolling out a new solution in any company, a good change management process is vital. Once you adopt a new solution, it's easy to just assume that all peers and sales managers of the different sectors are on the same page. According to Jeff, he was of the belief that the adoption within the teams was going to be a lot greater than it actually turned out to be. Consequently, Aggreko didn't have a strong enough change management process to deal with the people that simply were not going to use the new solution, as they didn't believe they had the time. It's always different from company to company because some may already be using an account strategy that's working well for them, and with Aggreko, ARPEDIO assisted throughout the entire process and ensured internal alignment to help make the change management process as smooth as possible.

"What's important is to really think through those scenarios; have buy out with your sales management team as far as what happens if you don't get the adoption that you want, and think through all that before you actually get there"

Jeff Raber, Head of Strategic Accounts at Aggreko

Results

After the implementation of ARPEDIO's tools, the team has achieved a much better viewpoint on what they need to do in order to take their accounts to the next level. They are now able to go through the various areas of the sales process, and with the account health scoring system they know exactly where to focus and step in, as well as where to spend their time and resources so it creates the most value.

Overall, the implementation of ARPEDIO has helped Aggreko in:

- Not only focusing on what they want to accomplish, but also how.
- Aligning the team, and letting leadership know where to focus due to enhanced visibility into the activity of the accounts.
- Gaining complete insight into the overall health of their top accounts.
- Becoming more proactive by supplying the tools to assist when it comes to "what are we going to do next" and "what are the value-adding activities that I can do today to move the needle with my accounts".
- Putting PowerPoint account plans completely behind them - everything is now digitized, which has added transparency across the teams.

"Working closely with Aggreko was a real pleasure from day one, and I look forward to continuing our collaboration together over the coming years."

Nikolaj Lund, Customer Success Manager at ARPEDIO

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Any questions or reflections?

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