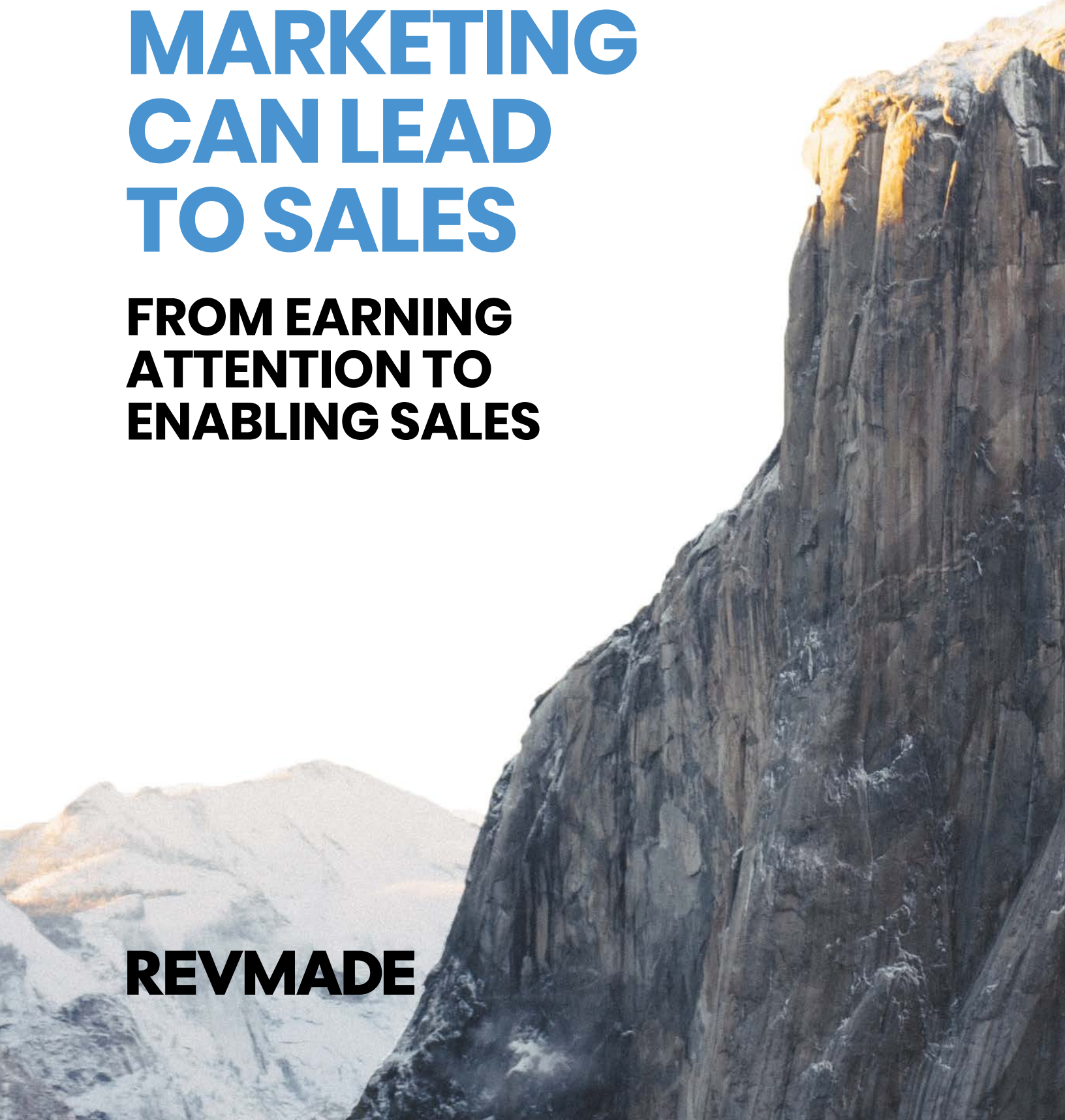


# HOW CONTENT MARKETING CAN LEAD TO SALES

**FROM EARNING  
ATTENTION TO  
ENABLING SALES**

**REVMADÉ**

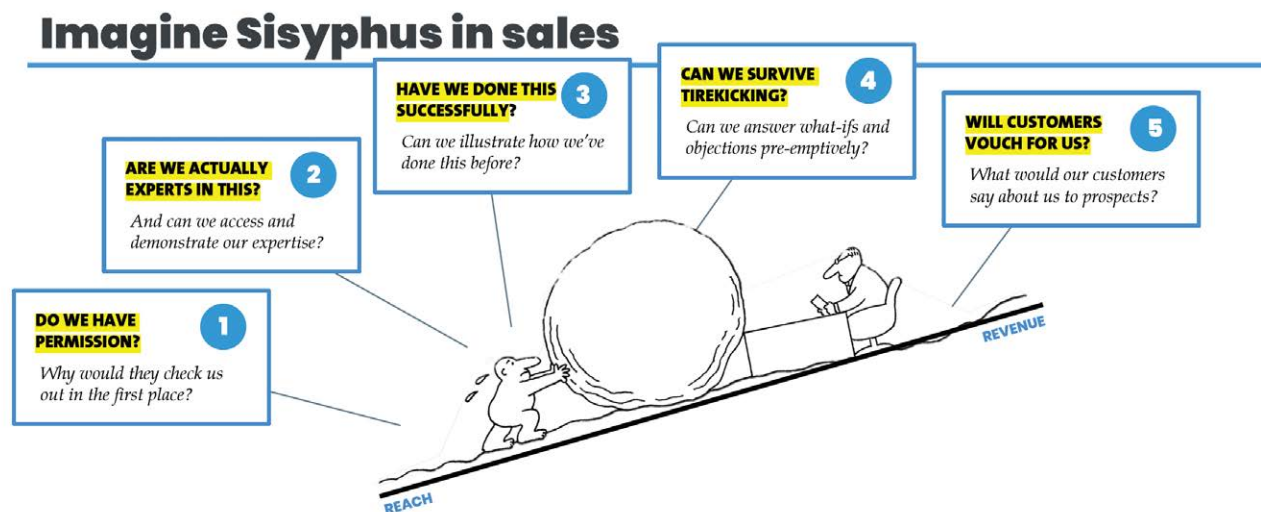


# THE SECRET TO MORE MARKETING FUNDING?

## INVOLVE YOUR SALES TEAM FROM THE BEGINNING.

**M**arketing and sales are often in conflict. As paraphrased in a [Harvard Business Review article](#) on the subject, “Marketing says, ‘We develop thoughtful strategies that can drive sales force success, but most salespeople won’t even take the time to understand them.’ Sales says, ‘Marketers are locked in the ivory tower. Their plans look good on paper, but don’t work with real customers.’”

But this doesn’t have to be the case. We used the Greek myth of Sisyphus to hone in on the five key challenges your salespeople are facing in their efforts to close their next deal. These are challenges that you as a marketer have the ability to help answer, and can lift your sales win rates, and customer retention, as a result.



We suggest you work with a sales partner in your organization - specifically someone who gets the need for change - to walk through the five stages we’ve outlined below. Each one of these stages can be solved with brainstorming and smart content, tailored to each of the specific challenges sellers face in their conversations with buyers.

# DO WE HAVE PERMISSION?

## Why would they check us out in the first place?

Let's say you have a new service "X". X is a big step forward for your company, and is providing you an opportunity to reach new customers. But these customers haven't worked with you before, and they don't know that your business should be in their consideration list. Let's face it: no one ever got fired for picking the tried-and-true option.

A traditional marketer's reaction to this scenario would be a broad spectrum marketing campaign promoting these new services. But you know what buyers don't need more of? Broad spectrum marketing campaigns. They don't need more noise in the buying process, and these campaigns neither add value or solve problems for them in the process.

The buyer is asking themselves why they need to take a risk, while your sellers need permission to have a conversation. So ask your sellers these questions:

- What are they proudest of when they brag about your company?
- What are the topics they want the brand to have credibility in when they introduce themselves to a prospect?
- What does client predict for the "Future of X", and what are the big ideas that get your client excited?

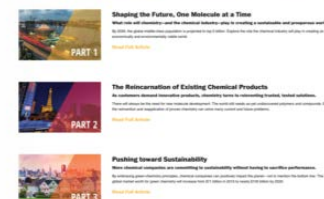
The answers to these questions should help you craft a content plan that includes thought-provoking ideas and opinions that stake a claim in the sectors where these new clients operate. Don't be shy about doubling down where your business and client ideas overlap!

## CASE IN POINT: CHEMOURS

After the company's spin-off from the Dow and DuPont merger, newly-formed Chemours was on a mission to get on radars and earn credibility among a skeptical audience in a high-stakes field. It was a relative unknown among a field of reputable leaders that would be difficult to go head-to-head against for new business.

**KEY BUYER INSIGHT FROM SALES:** Scientists have a reputation as a tough audience, and a tendency to stick to trusted sources. That makes it difficult for sales teams from new entrants to be taken seriously, if listened to at all.

**SALES-ENABLING CONTENT IDEA:** In partnership with our client C&EN BrandLab, Chemours developed an editorial series predicting how chemistry will impact the future of 10 popular topics in chemistry circles; distributed in the most-trusted publication in chemistry.



# 2 ARE WE ACTUALLY EXPERTS IN THIS?

## And can we access and demonstrate our expertise?

If the buyer knows about your business, that's a good first step, but now you need to prove you can solve their most pressing needs. Do you have the experience, the experts, and the ability to get the job done? Yes! But buyers aren't going to take your claims at face value, you'll need to offer proof. Otherwise you'll find them thinking "Are you actually experts or do you just play one in your marketing campaigns?"

A traditional marketer's approach here could either take the form of another campaign focused on promoting your company's expertise, or (at worst) a batch of PowerPoint slides in your next proposal. The former, as before, only creates more noise, and the latter comes too late in the process - you need to establish your expertise as early in these sales conversations as possible.

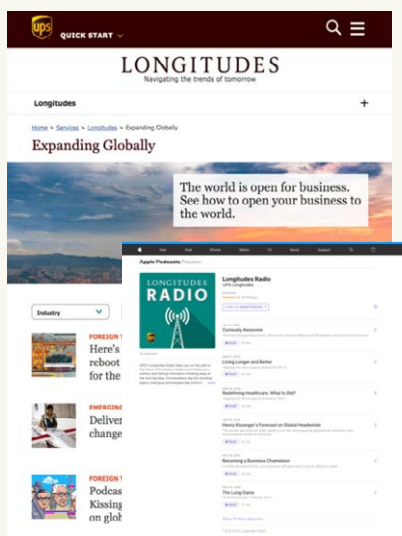
Your sellers need a concrete demonstration of the expertise that they will be selling. Ask your sellers:

- What are the problems your clients cite most often?
- What resources does your client rely on most?
- Who do they bring into sales calls most often?

Use the answers from these questions to craft a space for your experts to be front and center. Expert blog and industry coverage can give your business the reputation as a credible educator in the market, and a go-to source for buyers to rely on.

## CASE IN POINT: UPS LONGITUDES

If someone asked you five years ago "What is UPS?", what would you have said? Probably something along the lines of a "delivery company" or a "package service." To UPS that was an understatement of a multi-billion dollar freight and logistics company. Its ambitious goals were taking the company into the cutting edge of autonomous vehicles, the blockchain, and sustainability. UPS found that it had to overcome a rock solid but limiting consumer reputation.



**KEY BUYER INSIGHT FROM SALES:** We're not just the brown trucks and brown boxes, we're the brains behind it, too. Buyers need to be able to get a sense of who the people are behind the business.

**SALES-ENABLING CONTENT IDEA:** We helped UPS develop a publication and podcast focused on how companies can solve increasingly complex logistical challenges. UPS Longitudes was created "to share UPS's best and brightest ideas with the world," especially those ideas that customers wouldn't ordinarily associate with UPS. popular topics in chemistry circles; distributed in the most-trusted publication in chemistry.

# HAVE WE DONE THIS SUCCESSFULLY?

## Can we illustrate how we've done this before?

No company has a 100% execution rate, but to win in B2B you'll need to prove to buyers that sending business your way isn't a risky proposition (or at least is less of one than working with your competitors).

A marketer's approach here is almost always going to be a proposal-oriented case study. And case studies aren't a bad thing! But format and approach matters - you'll want to have a content approach here that matches your buyer's preferences and expectations.

Your sellers should be able to give you insight into a buyer's ambitions. Build on this basis by asking:

- What are your buyer's success metrics?
- What is the ideal outcome your client aims for?
- Which brands does your client envy in their space?

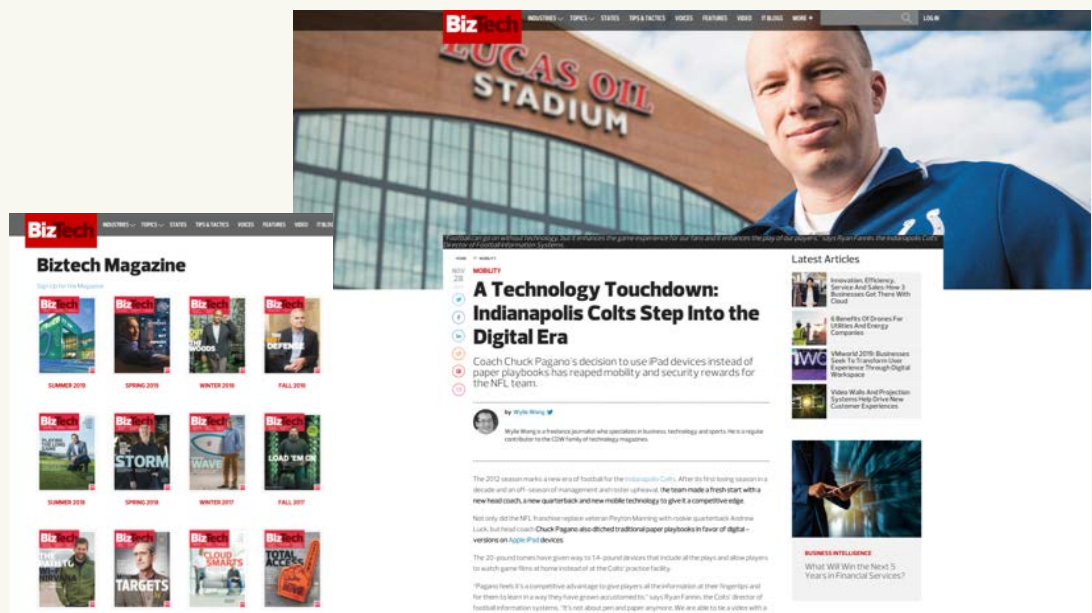
Take the answers to these questions and feed them into case studies that subtly show a vision of the engagement: a before and after that positions the customer as the hero of it all.

## CASE IN POINT: CDW

CDW, the technology reseller, needed to demonstrate not just that they had the right technology, but that they also had a track record to solve complex business problems.

**KEY BUYER INSIGHT FROM SALES:** Clients thought of them as printer and cable providers – not experts that know how IT works as a holistic practice.

**SALES-ENABLING CONTENT IDEA:** CDW created Fast Company-style customer features designed to make rockstars out of buyers.



# 4 CAN WE SURVIVE TIRE-KICKING?

## Can we answer what-ifs and objections preemptively?

Given enough time, your sellers should have a pretty good handle on what lines of inquiry from buyers lead to the biggest chance of losing a sale. It could be a poor service line, a bad case study, or simply bad PR. Whatever it is, you need to have a remediation plan ready to go for sellers before they walk into the firing line.

Marketers don't always thrive here - so much of a traditional marketers toolbox is meant to shine light on strengths, not weaknesses. So content that helps counter these talking points is paramount—especially when you hear about buyers saying “I love this but...”.

Ask your sellers:

- What are the tough questions they need the most help answering?
- What are the best narratives that you can use to pivot into to help change the conversation?

Your goal has to be to create an FAQ on steroids - applied to every reason any customer has ever, or will ever, say “no”!

## CASE IN POINT: HEIDOLPH

Heidolph, the science and technology company, needed to understand how customers were using their products to better market to prospects that had yet to sign a contract.

**KEY BUYER INSIGHT FROM SALES:** A knowledge base could help during “tire-kicking” periods and when a devil’s advocate unearths a million questions to be answered

**SALES-ENABLING CONTENT IDEA:** Spinning Science was a contest-driven content campaign designed to capture use cases in real life.

The image displays a collection of marketing materials for the 'Spinning Science' campaign. At the top is a desktop browser view of the Heidolph website, featuring a registration form with fields for 'Last Name', 'Email Address', 'Business Phone', 'Job Title', and 'Company'. Below the website is a social media post from C&EN (@cenmag) announcing the contest, which offers a \$250 gift card to participants who enter online at [cenm.ag/spinningscience](http://cenm.ag/spinningscience). To the right is a tablet displaying a social media post from Evonik, discussing the demand for propylene oxide and the availability of a whitepaper. In the foreground is a promotional flyer for the 'Spinning Science' contest, which includes the C&EN and Heidolph logos, the contest title, and a call to action to 'ENTER ONLINE' at the same URL.

# WILL CUSTOMERS VOUCH FOR US?

## What would our customers say about us to prospects?

The holy grail of selling is buyers that ask for your business before the buying process even begins. If your account team is following through, then many of these buyers ought to be repeat customers. But what about—to return to the consideration stage—those buyers who don't know about your business yet? It's time to think about how your most loyal customers can help do your marketing work for you!

Buyers are constantly moving on to “the next thing”, but you have to give sellers a reason to be in touch - even when they're not selling. Ask your sellers:

- How does their customer describe the completed work?
- Has anything changed since the beginning of the project?
- What is next for the customer, and how can you help as a thought partner (instead of just a vendor)?

This is an incredible opportunity for you to both lift up your client as well as shine a light on your own organization's efforts successful work. Not to mention, an opportunity to remind your existing client about why they love working with your company in the first place!

## CASE IN POINT: IMPEXIUM

Impexium found that it needed to shore up its business development pipeline, and reviews from early customers could be key to closing new business.

**KEY BUYER INSIGHT FROM SALES:** We're partners at sale, vendors at renewal.

**SALES-ENABLING CONTENT IDEA:** A celebration of customers as disruptors, run in an influential publication and social media.

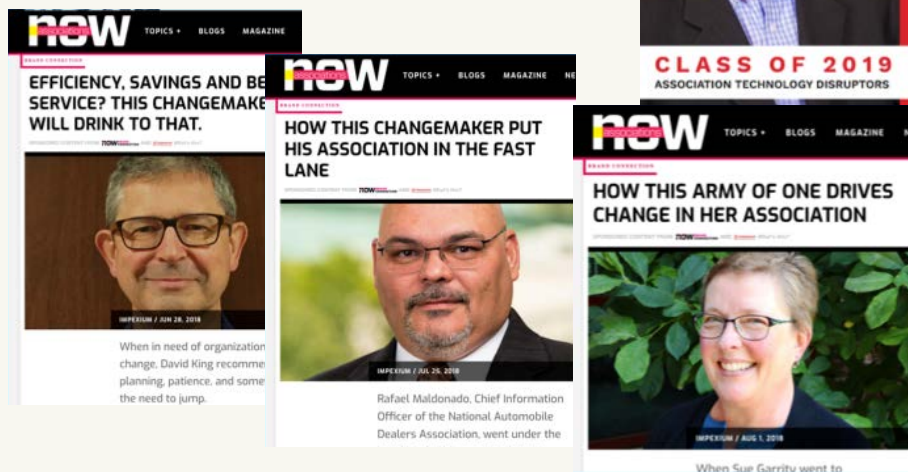


“Associations don't get enough credit for their positive impact on education, the environment, healthcare... we take great satisfaction knowing we play a part in our client's success as they impact lives around the globe.”

—Patrick Dorsey,  
EVP of Marketing at Impexium

**CLASS OF 2019**  
ASSOCIATION TECHNOLOGY DISRUPTORS

impexium



Three magazine covers from Impexium magazine are displayed. The top cover features a man's portrait and the headline "EFFICIENCY, SAVINGS AND BE SERVICE? THIS CHANGEMAKER WILL DRINK TO THAT." Below the headline, it says "When in need of organization change, David King recommen planning, patience, and some the need to jump." The middle cover features a man's portrait and the headline "HOW THIS CHANGEMAKER PUT HIS ASSOCIATION IN THE FAST LANE". Below the headline, it says "Rafael Maldonado, Chief Information Officer of the National Automobile Dealers Association, went under the". The bottom cover features a woman's portrait and the headline "HOW THIS ARMY OF ONE DRIVES CHANGE IN HER ASSOCIATION". Below the headline, it says "When Sue Garrity went to".



# LET US HELP YOUR ASSOCIATION ILLUMINATE THE PATH TO DIGITAL REVENUE GROWTH.

Revmade was created to empower organizations to thrive in the new attention economy.

Our team works with brands, associations, and media companies, helping them transform content into a business asset that serves organizational goals and drives revenue.

Our philosophy is simple: We're in the midst of a fundamental shift in the media landscape. We help our clients take advantage of it rather than fall victim to it. Our work happens alongside client teams and helps to transform organizations to meet audience relevance and revenue goals.

**REVMAD**

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