



‘Strive Sessions’ Roundtable: San Francisco

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Created by:

Strive

Powering Hypergrowth™

Executive Summary

In July 2024, [Strive](#) hosted our 'Strive Sessions' Roundtable event in San Francisco!

The aim of the event was to bring together Investment and VC Partners, as well as Sales Leaders and Founders from the Go-To-Market community, to share best practices, discuss current challenges and network!

The dinner was led by Strive, with hosts on the day being [John Hitchen](#), [Dylan Hoyle](#) and [Naomi Walsh](#).

Our special guest speaker at this event, was [Drew Ganther](#), who shared his experience and learnings from his impressive career in the SaaS start-up space. Attendees included, amongst others, GreatPoint Ventures, Munich Re Ventures, Siera.AI and Cyolo.

With the headline topic of the evening being 'Going from \$1M - \$10M ARR', some of the core areas covered over dinner, which will be discussed throughout this Key Takeaways document, were:

- Demand Generation
- Product Market Fit
- Team Dynamics – and changes as you scale
- Creating the Sales Playbook
- Direct Sales v Channel

GREATPOINT
make no little plans

SIERA.AI



Munich RE 

 **RAFAY**

 **Cyolo**

Guest Speaker



Our Guest Speaker, [Drew Ganther](#) is VP of Sales at [OneLayer](#).

Having previously worked as VP of Sales at Grip Security, Drew has over 10 years' of experience working as an IC and Senior Leader in the SaaS space.

Drew has an exceptional ability to identify, coordinate, and communicate with cross-functional project teams to exceed customer expectations in delivering technical solutions that work, while maintaining highest level of customer service throughout the process.

[Drew Ganther](#)

"I've worked with Strive for the past 2 years, in which they successfully built out an Elite GTM team for us.

Not only do they find great talent, but their professionalism and level of urgency is what sets them apart. When I was approached to co-host their event, I was happy to help.

The event was a great success, with a mixture of attendees, variety of backgrounds and some fantastic conversation topics around the \$1-10m ARR phase.

We all know how valuable these networking events are to meeting new contacts and Strive do a great job of introducing people.

Thanks to Strive for hosting the night and I'm looking forward to partaking in future events!"

We asked our attendees for their feedback on the overall event as well as the content, post event:

Overall rating of the evening

5 out of 5

Overall content rating

4.8 out of 5

Testimonials



"Great venue, great format, great content.

Strive arranged an excellent event, which was facilitated to allow for informal, conversational, yet really informative content."

Ram Kumar
Siera.AI



"Strive co-ordinated a really impactful gathering of knowledgeable and engaged folks, in a setting that allowed their voices to be heard.

The topic were very near and dear to my heart and very relevant.

I loved the way people were seated around the round table and the way the conversation flowed. Great event!"

Mustafa Qutub
Rafay



"This was a great event! It was nice to be able to casually talk about tech and business like minded folks.

I would recommend future Strive events!"

Matthew Barmash
Salesforce



"I recently attended a fantastic networking dinner hosted by Strive, a company renowned for connecting exceptional talent to impactful roles.

The event was a superb extension of their mission, bringing together investors and professionals from diverse roles that influence go-to-market success.

The evening was not only enjoyable but also highly productive, as I had the opportunity to connect with individuals who are as passionate as I am about scaling go-to-market efforts for early-stage startups.

Strive once again demonstrated their expertise in fostering valuable connections and facilitating meaningful conversations."

Beth Ellis
GTM Starters

Establishing Product Market Fit

- The thoughts of attendees on the evening was that in a \$1 - 10M ARR business, Product Market Fit isn't truly found.
- At this stage you will still have Entreprenurial sellers and you are still establishing your ICP.
- Once a sales team have found revenue from a similar client (based on revenue, employee headcount, vertical, location, tech need), Sales leaders or Founders can often fall into the trap of a false ICP and lose sight of a potential Client who would buy their solution as a result. In some cases the solution was only sold based on the strength of a Sales Rep's established network. Always be open minded here
- The ICP and PMF at this stage will be constantly changing and evolving - don't rush into defining too quickly.



Direct Versus Channel

- When you work with the Channel, they are your voice too. They get to take your product out to market and come back to you with full product feedback; both positives and development needs.
- You have to make the deal work in the Channel and find the correct partners, but if done correctly it is more routes into market and how you can start to define your Product Market Fit.

Enablement of your Channel partner is key:

- How are you training them in your product?
- How are you teaching them your messaging and positioning?
- Do they know the narrative to your sales story?
- Have you equipped them with the correct literature and resources they need?
- Are they selling the Company on your behalf? Do you have a real champion that believes in you, allowing the Customer to believe in them?

Click For Further Info

Scale with Strive Podcast: 'A Blueprint for Sales Excellence' with Drew Ganther

Scale with Strive Podcast: 'Building a Channel led GTM Strategy' with Eva-Maria Elya

Scale with Strive Podcast: 'Scaling your SaaS Venture' with Pablo Dominguez

Sales Team Structure

A big topic on the evening was 'Who to Hire When' during this phase of your business with key discussion points being:

- When should you start to build out a Customer Success Team?
- When should Reps step away from the afterlife of an account?
- Who should be involved if there is a Strategic upsell or expansion opportunity - should this sit with an AE or Customer Success?
- The importance of a Sales Engineer within the Sales Cycle - use them to build a technical champion throughout the life cycle of the deal, as well as the afterlife of the account - use the trust and relationship they have established with the Client.
- The importance of hiring 'stellar' ICs early in the journey was discussed - it is these people who will help catapult the business to where it needs to get to.

Click For Further Info

[When to Hire Sales Leaders Document](#)

[The Seven Traits of Successful Sales People](#)

[Strive Solutions - How can we support you?](#)

Who Owns a Lead?

There was an open discussion around 'who owns a lead' when it comes into the business, including targets that could be set for the individual teams:

- Whilst Marketing are targetted for MQLs, should their target also have an SQL element to it, to ensure the conversion rate is optimal?
- Marketing should look to reverse engineer all their targets like Sales.
- Influenced Revenue: There was a belief that if businesses try to track this, that everyone tries to stake a claim on everything, whereas there was a suggestion that if you drop this, everyone is moving in harmony and doing the right thing by the lead and the Customer, rather than purely to hit a quota for leads.
- Lead Nurturing: How can your business best take a lead from a MQL to SQL to Opportunity to Demo / POV.
- Account Based Marketing opportunities.



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Founded in 2017, Strive is a specialist go-to-market talent partner whose network spans the globe.

With offices in the UK and US and a headcount of 30, Strive has the size to offer talent acquisition services at scale, whilst also the capability to deliver on strategic hires.

Working with leading VC's, Strive has helped scale their portfolio of B2B SaaS companies, placing key hires within the go-to-market function.

Scaling go-to-market teams for the world's leading, VC-backed SaaS companies.



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