PRESENTED BY

GTM PARTNERS

The New Playbook for Territory and Compensation Planning

Why leading organizations are reengineering how they plan, staff, and incentivize every part of the GTM engine.

Introduction

Go-to-Market (GTM) teams are undergoing a significant transformation. In an era where efficient growth is no longer optiona, legacy models built on siloed staffing, reactive compensation, and disconnected systems are proving insufficient. Shifting buyer behavior, economic constraints, and technology advancements are driving companies to rethink how they structure, scale, and support their GTM functions.

Where growth-at-all-costs once dictated hiring, territory design, and technology investment, today's leaders are focused on profitability, sustainability, and revenue efficiency. That means aligning incentives, unifying planning across GTM teams, and optimizing revenue per employee (RPE).

This report outlines four critical shifts shaping the future of GTM:

1

Unify GTM Team Planning:

Move from fragmented, siloed staffing strategies to an integrated approach that optimizes Sales, Marketing, Customer Success, and Product resources for maximum efficiency.

2

Align Compensation with GTM Strategy:

Evolve beyond traditional sales incentives to a model that motivates Marketing, Customer Success, and Product teams to drive revenue outcomes.

3

Leverage Technology for GTM Efficiency:

Using automation, AI, and analytics to streamline operations, enhance decision-making, and scale effectively.

4

Elevate Revenue Operations as a Growth Engine:

Transform Rev Ops from a tactical support function into a strategic driver of efficiency, alignment, and revenue growth.

Change #1: Unify GTM Team Planning

Eliminate Siloed Staffing Strategies

Traditionally, GTM teams have been treated as individual units, largely because their Profit & Loss (P&L) responsibilities are managed independently by their executive leaders. This approach leads to siloed staffing strategies, where each team focuses on its own metrics and resource allocation:

- **Sales:** Teams are staffed based on quota and pipeline calculations, aiming to ensure sufficient coverage to achieve revenue targets while maximizing efficiency.
- **Customer Success:** Staffing decisions are often driven by cost-per-client calculations, aiming for the lowest sustainable cost while maintaining customer satisfaction and driving expansion opportunities.
- **Marketing:** Resource allocation focuses on tasks required to build the pipeline and create awareness, factoring in specialized skill sets (e.g., content creation vs. marketing operations).
- **Product:** Staffing decisions are tied to product development roadmaps and technical requirements, ensuring alignment between product teams and GTM strategies.

Territory Planning Must Evolve

Previously, territory assignments for Account Executives (AEs) and sometimes Customer Success Managers (CSMs) were organized internally to clarify responsibilities.

The highest-performing AEs were given the best territories to ensure their satisfaction and minimize the risk of them leaving. When hiring a new AE, an existing territory was often split, sometimes without considering the real pipeline potential in those regions. This setup could leave both the original and the new AE struggling.

Logistically, it’s simpler to assign reps a set number of zip codes or entire states, but this approach lacks analysis of the true pipeline potential in those areas. The goal is to create Rules of Engagement that prevent AEs from conflicting with each other while optimizing territory assignments.

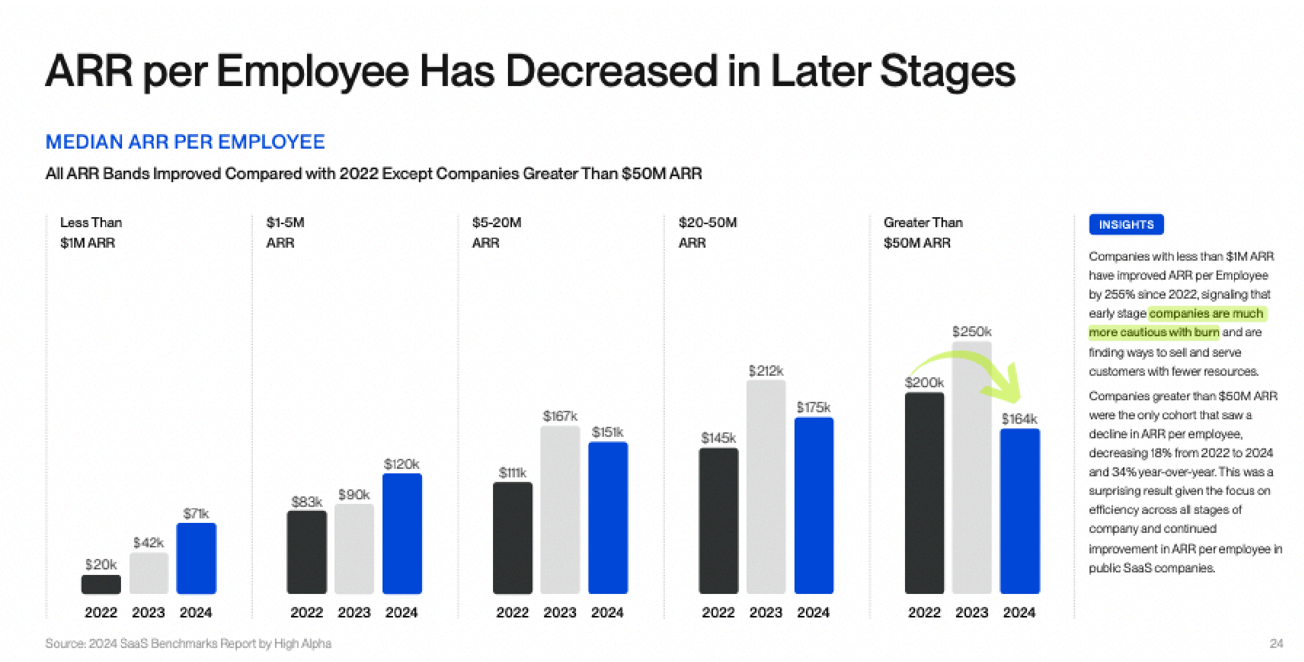
These strategies were historically designed to streamline travel costs for AEs, but they don’t always account for actual business opportunities or growth potential in the assigned territories.

Emerging Focus: Revenue Per Employee (RPE)

In the "growth-at-all-costs" era, staffing decisions prioritized rapid expansion within the constraints of available investment dollars. The goal was simple: grow as quickly as possible, often at the expense of efficiency. However, in today's environment, where efficient growth has become the priority, a deeper focus on revenue per employee (RPE) is reshaping how GTM teams are planned and resourced.

Recent research from High Alpha reveals several key trends:

- **Median Benchmark:** As of 2024, the median revenue per employee for private SaaS companies is $125,000.
- **Efficiency Increases with Scale:** Revenue per employee increases as company size grows, highlighting the scalability of the SaaS model.
- **Bootstrapped vs. Equity-Backed:** Bootstrapped companies consistently show higher revenue per employee than equity-backed companies—except for those with more than $20M in ARR. For example, bootstrapped companies with $1M–$3M ARR report $108,000 per employee, versus $73,333 for equity-backed peers.
- **Tradeoffs Between Efficiency and Growth:** While bootstrapped companies tend to operate more efficiently, venture-backed companies often grow faster, which may justify their lower revenue per employee in early stages.



AI's Role in Team Planning: Smarter, Faster, More Accurate

- **AI-powered territory design:** Instead of manually assigning zip codes, use AI to analyze historical win rates, buying signals, firmographics, and intent data to identify high-potential regions.
- **Predictive staffing:** Machine learning can forecast future headcount needs by analyzing sales velocity, pipeline health, churn risks, and marketing performance.
- **Workforce optimization:** AI tools can recommend the ideal mix of SDRs, AEs, CSMs, and marketers based on cost-efficiency and revenue contribution.
- **Revenue per employee modeling:** AI enables dynamic RPE benchmarking across roles and departments, helping leaders plan growth without over-hiring.

AI enables GTM leaders to shift from guesswork to precision. Planning becomes proactive, not reactive.

Key Shifts to Consider

To drive efficient growth, organizations must rethink how they plan, staff, and allocate resources across Sales, Marketing, Customer Success, and Product teams. This shift requires moving from siloed cost-cutting to integrated, strategic resourcing.

1. Unify Staffing Strategies Across Teams

Break down silos between Marketing, CS, Sales, and Product to plan staffing around shared revenue goals.

2. Reframe "Cost Centers" as Growth Drivers

Evaluate CS and Marketing not by what you spend on them, but by their impact on RPE, retention, and pipeline quality.

3. Use Technology to Model Future Needs

Especially beyond $50M ARR, automation and AI should power scenario planning and resource optimization.

4. Base Territory Assignments on Data

Move beyond geography to optimize rep deployment by pipeline potential and market opportunity.

Change #2: Align Comp with GTM Strategy

Incentivize the Right Behaviors

Historically, sales teams have driven revenue, with a significant portion of their compensation tied to variable performance-based incentives. These compensation models are designed to focus on margin management and are carefully structured to motivate sellers toward behaviors that drive desired outcomes. However, this approach evolves as organizations increasingly adopt variable compensation models for demand generation and customer success teams.

While a well-executed Go-to-Market (GTM) strategy sets the stage for success, it can quickly unravel if compensation structures fail to incentivize the right behaviors across all GTM teams. Misaligned compensation plans not only undermine strategy but can also drive counterproductive outcomes.

Sales teams, in particular, have long mastered the art of exerting just enough effort to hit quota goals, often without regard for the downstream challenges created within the GTM system. Organizations must carefully balance variable compensation to avoid overspending without a commensurate return on investment.

Risks of Poorly Planned Variable Compensation Across GTM Teams

- **Unsellable Products:** Product bonuses tied to release dates, not customer fit.
- **Unusable Pipeline:** Marketing fills the funnel with low-ICP leads to hit volume goals.
- **Churnable Revenue:** Sales reps prioritize quick wins over long-term value.
- **Misplaced CS Resources:** CSMs chase squeaky wheels instead of nurturing accounts with expansion potential.

Strategic compensation planning ensures all GTM teams drive high-quality, long-term revenue instead of short-term, inefficient gains.

AI's Role in Aligning Incentives with Impact

Incentivize the Right Behaviors

- **Comp plan modeling:** AI can simulate the impact of different compensation plans on behavior, pipeline quality, and customer retention—before rollout.
- **Risk scoring for incentives:** Use AI to flag high churn risk accounts or low-quality leads that shouldn't trigger variable payouts.
- **Cross-team attribution:** AI helps fairly credit pipeline and expansion revenue across Sales, Marketing, and CS using multivariate analysis—not gut feel.
- **Outcome forecasting:** Predict how changes in incentive structure may impact not just attainment, but CAC, LTV, and churn.

AI makes compensation a strategic lever—not a source of misalignment.

Key Shifts to Consider

To unlock sustainable growth, compensation must do more than reward sales—it must guide behavior across the entire GTM motion. These key shifts will help ensure your incentive structures drive alignment, accountability, and high-quality revenue.

1. Comp for ALL Teams Should Align with Strategy

Incentives should support the overarching GTM strategy, ensuring every team works toward unified goals rather than siloed objectives.

2. Focus on High-Quality Revenue, Not Just Any Revenue

GTM teams must be incentivized to deliver sustainable, high-value outcomes that align with ICPs and drive retention and expansion.

3. Implement Specific, Measurable Targets for All GTM Teams

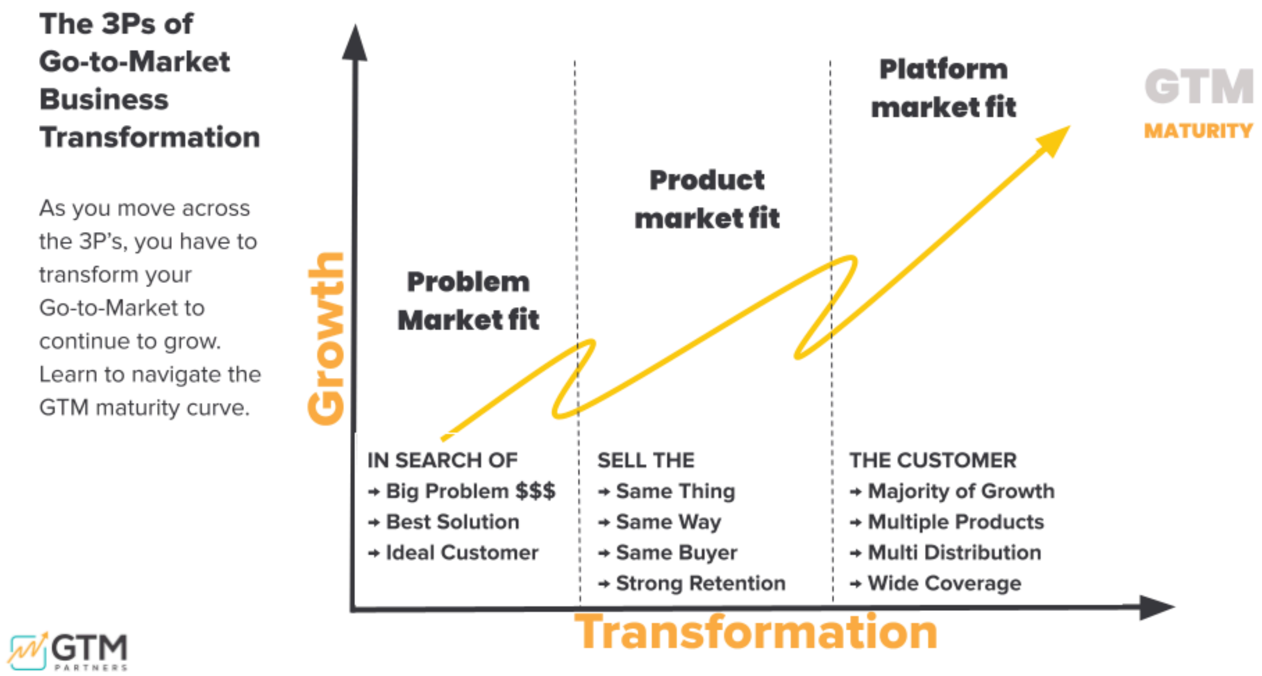
Compensation plans should include metrics that explicitly define each team's contribution to long-term organizational success, reducing ambiguity and fostering accountability.

These metrics should be pressure tested to confirm that they cannot be achieved without adhering to the GTM plan.

Change #3: Leverage Technology for GTM Efficiency

Over the past three years, organizations have made strong progress in simplifying and integrating their Go-to-Market (GTM) tech stacks. However, reducing technology spend comes with real risks. Reverting to manual execution can be time-consuming, misallocate resources, and introduce errors and bias—creating the illusion of data-driven decisions that are, in reality, shaped by inefficiencies.

To make smart technology investments, it's essential to align spending with your organization's GTM maturity. A GTM maturity assessment can help ensure your investments are intentional, effective, and positioned for long-term success. Here's how to guide those investments through the lens of the 3Ps: Problem-Market Fit, Product-Market Fit, and Platform-Market Fit.



Problem Market Fit: Build Your Technology Stack with Scaffolding

At this stage, your organization isn't ready for complex automation, but competing without technology is increasingly difficult. Focus on small, targeted investments in short-term contracts that support your immediate needs and lay the groundwork for scalability. Many solutions are designed for SMB's, offering flexible payment and scaling options to remain affordable while enabling you to build strong, scalable fundamentals that won't hinder growth later.

Finally, this is a great time to invest time with a few key strategic technologies as partners. Depending on the maturity of the organization you're working with, they may be open to collaborating closely, understanding your business needs, and customizing their evolving solutions in ways that are advantageous to you.

Transitioning from Problem to Product Market Fit: Start Investing Smartly, but Watch Margins

The shift from Problem to Product Market Fit often creates downward pressure on revenue generation and GTM efficiency. This is a natural consequence of the change curve, where investments in technology and processes outpace the immediate revenue gains they're intended to generate. To navigate this phase effectively:

- Develop a technology investment roadmap aligned with projected revenue improvements.
- Hold vendors and internal teams accountable for delivering measurable results.
- Account for the additional resources required to manage an expanded tech stack, ensuring these costs don't erode your margins.

By aligning your technology strategy with your GTM maturity, you can make informed, scalable decisions that drive efficiency, reduce risk, and set the stage for sustainable growth.

Product Market Fit: Scale with Strategic Technology

Once scaling is proven, it's time to invest more heavily in technology that drives speed, reach, and complexity management. Focus on tools that accelerate pipeline growth, product development, and revenue generation—especially through automation and AI.

Key Practices:
- *Track ROI* – Regularly evaluate performance and optimize accordingly
- *Avoid Random Purchases* – Require business cases that connect tech to GTM outcomes
- *Ensure End-to-End Alignment* – Build a cohesive, scalable tech ecosystem that supports every stage of your GTM motion

Transitioning from Product to Platform Market Fit: Rewrite the Playbook

Moving from Product Market Fit to Platform Market Fit often requires disrupting the very business model you've spent years refining. This stage demands a redefinition of your value proposition—such as expanding the buying committee, increasing customer maturity requirements, or consolidating customer tech stacks through partnerships or acquisitions. As a result, established systems and processes may become strained or obsolete.

Evaluate Your Tech Stack

Your existing tools must support a broader, more complex business model. Can your current systems scale with your evolving strategy?
- **Assess Compatibility:** Tools that worked at Product Market Fit may fall short at Platform Market Fit.
- **Prepare for Overhauls:** Prepare to replace outdated systems, hire more advanced talent, or increase investment in scaling tools.
- **Accept Short-Term Inefficiencies:** Transitions bring disruption. Expect margin pressure and temporary drops in efficiency—align leadership early .
- **Experiment and Iterate:** Embrace a test-and-learn mindset. Old playbooks may no longer serve your goals.
- **Plan for Margin Impacts:** Budget for the growing pains. Monitor progress closely to keep disruption in check.

By preparing for these realities, you can confidently navigate the shift to Platform Market Fit and position your company for scalable, long-term success.

Platform Market Fit: Orchestrated Chaos

Platform Market Fit requires managing two parallel tracks—mature business lines that need efficiency, and emerging areas that need room to explore.

- **Scalability and Efficiency:** In mature segments, invest in automation and optimization to reduce costs and enhance performance.
- **Flexibility for Growth:** In newer areas, allow space for testing buyer personas, messaging, and go-to-market motions. Avoid rigid processes that could stifle innovation.

Navigating the Chaos:

- **Segment Tech Investment:** Divide your tech strategy between proven systems and agile, experimental tools.
- **Create Guardrails, Not Walls:** Guide emerging teams without imposing strict controls.
- **Monitor Without Over-Measuring:** Let new areas evolve before applying pressure to perform.
- **Embrace Uncertainty:** Accept that parts of the platform will be in flux—resist the urge to standardize prematurely.

Balancing stability and experimentation is the key to thriving in the Platform Market Fit phase. By doing so, you can build a GTM engine that's both resilient and innovative.

No matter where you are on the GTM or product maturity curve, avoid silos at all costs. In a post-COVID world, effective leaders are moving away from gut decisions and embracing data-driven, tech-enabled insight as the cornerstone of modern go-to-market success.

Case Study:
Zones' Technology Investment Success

Zones, a $2 billion IT solutions provider, worked with Fullcast to optimize its account management processes and unlock more revenue from existing accounts. Initially, account managers used intuition to prioritize accounts, but they then invested in a tech solution to systematically segment customers and allocate resources.

By integrating capacity and coverage planning with territory planning, their customer acquisition and development (CAD) team optimized resource allocation.

The results from working with Fullcast were impressive:

- **90% reduction in implementation time**
- **30% increase in quota attainment**

This strategic tech investment replaced manual processes with data-driven decisions, boosting efficiency. While thrilled with the outcome, Zones likely reflected on the revenue lost by delaying automation and process optimization.

Key Takeaway

Strategic technology investments aren't just about scaling efficiently—they're the foundation for sustained growth. Learning from examples like Zones, your organization can make smarter investments to drive results and avoid missed opportunities.

AI's Role in Scalable, Strategic GTM Tech Stacks

- **Vendor evaluation powered by AI**: Use AI scoring models to assess potential ROI, integration ease, and user adoption likelihood of new tools.
- **AI agents in GTM workflows:** Agents can qualify leads, book meetings, route accounts, and generate content—freeing up humans for high-value work.
- **Tech usage audits:** AI can flag underutilized platforms, duplicative tools, or redundant features across the stack.
- **Unified GTM insights:** AI-powered dashboards stitch together data from sales, marketing, product, and success to enable real-time strategic decisions.

The future tech stack isn't just integrated—it's intelligent.

Key Shifts to Consider

To unlock sustainable growth, compensation must do more than reward sales—it must guide behavior across the entire GTM motion. These key shifts will help ensure your incentive structures drive alignment, accountability, and high-quality revenue.

1. Unified GTM Data Across the Funnel:

Collecting and unifying GTM data is no longer optional; it is a critical requirement for decision-making and driving outcomes.

2. Ensure Technology Flexibility:

Whether you centralize your systems, use point solutions, or maintain tools with overlapping functionality, it's imperative that data flows seamlessly between teams.

3. Use Technology as an Efficiency Enabler:

GTM technology is a foundational element for achieving efficiency and alignment in modern Go-to-Market strategies.

Change #4: Revenue Operations Should Drive More Revenue

While revenue operations teams have experienced contractions in team size, 80% of companies report seeing tangible benefits from investing in Rev Ops, citing significant improvements in business outcomes.

Why these changes are critical today:

As businesses navigate the challenges of 2025, including shifting market dynamics and constrained funding environments, one of the few levers they can reliably pull is the optimization of internal structures. This includes addressing inefficiencies in Go-to-Market operations—an area where Revenue Operations has become a driving force for transformation.

By tackling persistent pain points in Go-to-Market strategies, organizations can unlock critical improvements across key metrics: pipeline creation, conversion rates, sales velocity, revenue generation, average contract sizes, customer maintenance costs, churn reduction, expansion revenue, and Net Revenue Retention.

Investing in and empowering Revenue Operations teams ensures alignment across departments, enabling businesses to drive sustainable, efficient growth—even in uncertain conditions. The strategic impact of Rev Ops goes beyond tactical execution; it reshapes how businesses achieve their goals in a leaner, more effective manner.

Case Study: Degreed

The Degreed team had a lean Revenue Operations group of six that supported over 50 sales representatives and a global sales organization with more than 500 employees.

As a newly profitable SaaS organization, this upskilling platform leveraged Fullcast to optimize its territory management processes. Fullcast enables concurrent modeling of expected revenue across its sales organization and enhances the management of inbound leads.

By implementing this specialized solution, the Revenue Operations team orchestrated a **30% increase in quota attainment**—an extraordinary achievement given the challenges of today's market.

Degreed's example highlights how a focused and empowered Rev Ops team can drive meaningful improvements that resonate across the entire organization without any additional improvements in their product or major changes to their commercials.

AI’s Role in Strategic Rev Ops

- **AI-led forecasting:** Go beyond historicals—use AI to account for seasonality, behavior patterns, and external signals to produce reliable revenue forecasts.
- **Dynamic territory and capacity planning:** AI supports continuous modeling, adjusting plans as the market or team evolves.
- **RevOps automation:** AI bots can handle repetitive data clean-up, enrichment, routing, and reporting—so humans can focus on optimization.
- **Intelligent alerts:** AI can surface anomalies or early warning signals in pipeline, performance, or customer behavior before it's too late.

With AI, Rev Ops shifts from reactive reporting to proactive revenue acceleration.

Key Shifts to Consider

To unlock sustainable growth, compensation must do more than reward sales—it must guide behavior across the entire GTM motion. These key shifts will help ensure your incentive structures drive alignment, accountability, and high-quality revenue.

1. Elevate Rev Ops from Tactical to Strategic

Move beyond spreadsheets and manual reporting. Empower Revenue Operations to drive strategic decision-making through system-supported planning, forecasting, and cross-functional alignment.

2. Centralize GTM Data for Better Decision-Making

Unify data across Sales, Marketing, Customer Success, and Finance to enable real-time insights that improve forecasting accuracy, territory planning, and performance tracking.

3. Drive Alignment Across the Funnel

Rev Ops should serve as the connective tissue between GTM teams—aligning goals, processes, and metrics to ensure everyone is driving toward the same revenue outcomes.

4. Measure and Optimize Efficiency, Not Just Output

Shift the focus from volume metrics to efficiency metrics (e.g., pipeline velocity, revenue per rep, cost to acquire, expansion rate). Rev Ops should continuously assess where to invest or scale back.

5. Enable Smarter, Faster Execution

Use Rev Ops to streamline workflows, eliminate bottlenecks, and implement tools and processes that accelerate execution without increasing headcount

Conclusion: Looking Ahead

While many organizations are performing better than they were in 2023, 2024 has remained a challenging year for 50% of organizations. The reality is that companies still relying on pre-2020 Go-to-Market (GTM) practices may be missing significant opportunities to enhance their internal structures, improve efficiency, and drive greater revenue success.

Looking ahead, the future of Go-to-Market resource planning will undoubtedly bring changes across all five core GTM teams, making it essential to adapt and innovate for sustained growth.

Modern GTM organizations are shifting from siloed, reactive, and manual approaches to integrated, insight-driven, and strategically aligned systems that prioritize quality, scalability, and efficiency.

Siloed, Reactive, Manual	Integrated, Strategically-Aligned
Siloed staffing	Unified GTM teams
Cost-based decisions	Value-based resource allocation
Volume-based pipeline	ICP-aligned pipeline
Tech-first spending	GTM Motion-focused investment
Disconnected Excel data	AI-powered, integrated insights
Generic comp models	Goal-aligned incentives
Isolated tools	Connected, cross-functional systems
Gut-based leadership	Data-informed strategy
Manual RevOps	Strategic, system-supported RevOps

Source: GTM Partners' New Playbook for Territory and Compensation Planning

About GTM Partners

GTM Partners, a data-driven Go-to-Market Analyst firm, helps organizations achieve efficient growth by transforming their GTM strategy. We work with high-growth companies to help them unify their GTM teams and to provide them with lasting strategies and frameworks. GTM Partners, with a mission to make Go-to-Market simple, aims to be the voice of the industry for all things GTM.

We do this by offering:

1. Data and benchmarks collected from data providers, including G2 and Bombora, as well as our community of the world's fastest-growing companies.

2. Research, best practices and design frameworks to provide guidance on the best-in-class approaches to strategizing, executing and tooling your Go-to-Market approach.

3. Personalized advice and support from experienced leaders and practitioners that help you address business challenges in a manner that is authentic and specific to you. Our consulting work focuses on areas such as Go- to-Market strategy, creating a Point of View and Go-to-Market project execution strategy across the 8 pillars of GTM.

4. Events and networking with industry leaders looking to define the category of Go-to-Market and revolutionize the way we create value for our organizations.

Our Analysts

Bryan Brown
Cofounder, President

Bryan is a SaaS pioneer and thought leader in the marketing and sales tech industry. He has both created and brought to market innovative software products and ideas while helping thousands of companies in their effort to grow revenue more efficiently. Bryan is a co-founder with multiple exits (Vtrenz), has led strategy teams in Fortune 100 Companies (IBM) and has helped multiple organizations scale their products and Go-to-Market approaches from point solutions to platforms (Silverpop, Terminus).

Lindsay Cordell
Partner

Lindsay is a practitioner turned analyst who studies best practices and trends in Go-to-Market and develops actionable models and blueprints for our clients. She has held both practitioner and leadership roles in almost every aspect of Go-to-Market, including Product, Marketing, Sales, RevOps, and Enablement in Fortune 500 companies including AT&T, Hearst and Cox. She most recently ran the GTM Center of Excellence for the Account-Based Marketing Platform Solution Terminus.

Sarah Allen-Short
Head of Research

Sarah brings more than 20 years of experience of B2B marketing and sales leadership to her role as a GTM analyst. She's worked in technology, nonprofit, government, and higher education, with a specialty in B2B SaaS. She excels at taking the skills and experience she developed working with Fortune 500's and billion-dollar companies and helping startups and scaleups apply those lessons in practical, agile ways. Sarah specializes in combining strategic and tactical approaches for maximum impact.

Sangram Vajre
Cofounder, CEO

Sangram is a three-time best-selling author and co-founder of several organizations, including Terminus, The Peak Community and most recently, GTM Partners. Sangram has been at the forefront of B2B marketing trends, the Flip-my-Funnel movement, and defining the Account-Based Marketing category ushering in a new generation of marketers. He has previously held CMO roles at Pardot, a Salesforce company and Terminus.